T-KIT 6
Training essentials

The training kits series

Youth Partnership

Partnership between the European Commission
and the Council of Europe in the field of youth

EUROPEAN UNION

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

T-Kit 6
Training essentials

Second edition

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Welcome to the T-Kit series

Some of you may have wondered: what does T-Kit mean? We can offer at least two answers. The first is as simple as the full version in English: "training kit". The second has more to do with the sound of "T-Kit", the word that may easily recall "ticket", one of the travel documents we usually need to go on a journey. For us, this T-Kit is a tool that each of us can use in our work. More specifically, we would like to address youth workers and trainers, and offer them theoretical and practical tools to work with and use when training young people. The T-Kit series is the result of a collective effort involving people from different cultural, professional and organisational backgrounds. Youth trainers, youth leaders in NGOs and professional writers have worked together in order to create high-quality publications that address the needs of the target group while recognising the diversity of approaches across Europe to each subject. The T-Kits are a product of the partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth. To find out more, visit the website: pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership.

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Introduction

Welcome to the second edition of the T-Kit on training essentials!

We proudly present your ticket to European youth training and a brilliant option for diving into non-formal education training. If you want to develop your training competences and learn more about the quintessentials, concepts, tools, practices, resources – and very likely tips and sometimes even tricks – this handbook is invaluable, as it is written by trainers for trainers and youth workers in the European youth field.

What is essential about this publication?

T-Kit 6 – Training essentials was first published in 2002, as a tool for supporting youth work in Europe and particularly the training and education of practitioners involved in international youth work. Since then, this T-Kit has supported the work of trainers in the European youth field substantively and many training courses (and trainers) were developed using this tool.

In 2019 the EU-Council of Europe youth partnership launched the revision of this T-Kit, in view of the fact that 18 years after its publication the field of training had widened to include considerations related to inclusive learning environments, learning mobility, online learning, blended learning, a focus on competences and quality standards in the framework of training, and so forth. The discussions and conclusions of the preparatory meeting held in May 2019 showed that some key contents and concepts were still valid, whereas many other parts needed to be updated or newly developed and explored. European youth work training has reached other dimensions, has met new challenges and at the same time has offered many more opportunities – online and offline. Indeed, going hand in hand with globalisation and digitalisation, the field has quite substantially changed. Hence, you will find a much thicker and richer T-Kit at hand right now, which reflects the current state of play in youth training in Europe today.

While finalising this T-Kit in spring 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic brought another challenge and dimension to European youth work training, where overnight all residential courses were cancelled and new online learning opportunities mushroomed instead. A trial-and-error period introduced a new area in the field of online and blended learning, as well as youth work and activism, in general. Despite the fact that it has only been a few months, it has been a very rich period of bringing online and blended learning in non-formal education to a new level. Hence, we will present some conclusions and things to think about from this latest steep learning curve in the European youth training field.

In general, it is important to know that this T-Kit is inspired by the format of a training course considered from start to finish, admitting of course that certain elements can be considered at different moments, or simultaneously, or on several occasions.

Chapter 1: Training in context considers the field of training at the moment, and the context from which this publication has emerged. It moves from the environment of the European youth work context to the trainers that work within it, and begins a reflection on the questions of trainers' values, ethics, roles, well-being, as well as competences. The section concludes with an initial consideration of intercultural learning, and how it permeates our kind of training.

Chapter 2: Training in teams looks at the challenge of working not just in a team, but in a multicultural team of trainers, which is one of the signature elements of European youth training. The aim of this section is to provide an overview of issues, with applied activities, which can help teams to build sustainable relationships and pre-empt difficulties by reflecting on different ways in which they work together.

The largest section, *Chapter 3: Training in motion*, deals with the often-exhausting process of educational and logistical planning. This section works through the educational process from needs assessment to session design and evaluation (including online and blended options) and tries to provide a framework for making the organisational side of things as painless as possible.

Once in motion we move to *Chapter 4: Training in action*, a section that concentrates on the processes which emerge during an activity and what they mean for individuals, the group and the subject. It considers issues that require trainers to practise flexibility and ongoing assessment and adaptation, such as conflicts in the group and the need to redesign and plan a training programme.

Chapter 5: After training deals with the issues of transfer and multiplying, and how participants can integrate their learning from the training course into their professional (and personal) lives.

The team of authors are experienced trainers in the youth field: Snežana Bačlija Knoch, Sabine Klocker and Stefan Manevski. The initial reflection and writing was supported by a T-Kit revision team consisting of Adina Marina (Calafateanu) Serban, Gisèle Evrard, Mara Georgescu, Marta Medlinska and Mark E. Taylor, and also in the final stages the authors' work profited from their feedback, as well as the feedback input from Rui Gomes. Special thanks go to Mark for being a resource person and sparring partner throughout the process. Furthermore, this publication benefited greatly from the wise co-ordination of Viktória Kárpátszki and the creative touches of our brilliant illustrator Vanda Kovács.

We would also like to acknowledge the work of the authors of the first edition of this T-Kit on training essentials, namely: Goran Buldioski, Cecilia Grimaldi, Sonja Mitter, Gavan Titley and Georges Wagner. They gave us a solid foundation upon which to build for the coming decade.

In the preparation meeting for the relaunch of this T-Kit we were mostly concerned with two questions: what is still essential to keep from the first edition of the T-Kit? And, what is crucial to be added and not missed in this new, second, 2021 edition? We aimed to provide an up-to-date picture of the European youth training prerequisites, requirements and status quo, as well as the competence development needs and opportunities for trainers. Moreover, we wanted to develop a training manual that can be a relevant source of inspiration or learning opportunity for youth trainers/workers for the next 20 years. This is a good starting point for beginners in the field, and at the same time, a tool to rethink and enhance common training strategies and practices for already experienced trainers in the European youth work training context.

What we felt had changed significantly from the first to the second edition was the focus on trainers' competences and competence development. The Council of Europe and SALTO-YOUTH have done a lot of work on this, in addition to introducing training standards and quality criteria for non-formal education training. The work on recognition of non-formal education has made a huge step in the right direction, which we wanted to acknowledge and highlight. Furthermore, accessibility and diverse-ability dimensions have become much more developed in the European training field and society in general. Topics such as access, gender, environment and sustainability have become key in training. And of course, the options when it comes to online courses and blended learning, as well as digital tools at hand, have innovated and enriched the training field. Through digital tools many more young people are reachable and new forms of participation in youth training have been explored. Furthermore, the new focus on learning environments, emotional management and the well-being of the trainer was important for us to include. Also, plenty of new opportunities on how to produce a training report, communication channels among a training team and possible follow-up for training will be explored, in order to be up to speed with young people's realities, networks and needs.

In addition, you will see that we kept the quintessential elements of what proved to be a solid basis for non-formal education training, planning and management, providing key concepts, up-to-date educational theory, all sorts of training resources and plenty of inspiring links for further exploration and learning. In essence, we aimed at presenting a fair mix of theory and practice.

A relevant question to clarify from the beginning is: how do we see training? In this publication, training is seen as a pedagogical approach based on the principles of non-formal education, hence a participant-centred learning process, steered by a multicultural team. These terms and their relevance are discussed in detail in the upcoming chapters, being also our solid platform for choosing what is included as essential, and what is omitted.

When it comes to intercultural learning we want to point out that this is more than an element in our overall discussion of training. If this T-Kit had a subtitle, it would be *training essentials with an intercultural dimension*. Intercultural learning provides an overall educational and ethical framework for this text, as training in our context thrives on a richness and diversity of ways of seeing the world, of learning, valuing and being, and needs to consider this in every aspect of design and implementation.

A final note from the authors of this T-Kit: the text is cross-referenced to its companion volumes in the T-Kit series, but only to a certain extent. While we have not assumed every reader has access to all other editions, we have tried not to replicate material that is already available. We chose to present a wide range and overview of practical and theoretical training essentials, whereas most other T-Kits go into the specific nitty-gritty of a certain training topic.

We hope you will feel inspired and empowered while you learn and grow reading this T-Kit, enjoying the odd "aha moment", and hopefully using and abusing it in your daily work. We look forward to hearing from you on how it flies and flows in the colourful world of European youth training. Above all, we do hope it can make a fruitful contribution to training and trainers, as well as to the young people you work with – the whole reason and inspiration for engaging our time, energy, competence, experience and heart ❤ in this publication.

Your T-Kit team

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Chapter 1

Training in context

1.1. TRAINING, TRAINING AIMS AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

> *Learning never exhausts the mind.*
> ***Leonardo da Vinci***

1.1.1. What is training in the European youth work context?

Training is present in nearly every field of our societies today, from business and politics, in public roles and in aspects of our private lives. In the introduction, we mentioned that in this publication, training is seen as a pedagogical approach based on the principle of non-formal education, hence a participant-centred learning process, steered by a multicultural team. To be more specific, this publication addresses non-formal and informal education and learning in the specific contexts of international or intercultural youth work and co-operation. Nevertheless, as this is an EU-Council of Europe youth partnership publication, we will focus mostly on European youth work training, practice and contexts.

The following definitions of European youth work and training will help to create a common ground of understanding.

In the youth partnership, the term "training" is defined as follows:

> Training is a process by which someone is taught the skills that are needed for a certain purpose (job, art, sport). In the European framework, the term has different meanings depending on the context. In the youth sector, training aims to empower young people at large through developing knowledge and competences for personal and (increasingly) professional life that are intrinsically relevant and useful for young people and youth professionals as individuals, as citizens and as employees/self-employed workers (including youth leaders, youth workers, youth trainers, youth researchers, youth policy-makers).[1]

In the European Training Strategy competence model, training in the youth field is described as follows:

> Training in the youth field denotes a targeted educational activity based on the principles and values of youth work and non-formal learning. Training in this area is targeted at young people and those who create the conditions for young people to engage in activities that foster their individual development (youth workers, youth trainers, public officials, leaders, counsellors, etc.). They do so by supporting the development of young people in various ways and by promoting the acquisition of the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that are necessary for quality youth work.[2]

What the two definitions above have in common is that youth training aims at the empowerment and competence development of a young person, an individual, a youth worker, youth leader, youth professional, or simply a citizen, in order to prosper and participate in society and sustainable youth work.

European youth training focuses on non-formal education and social inclusion[3] and, hence, these activities are quite different from training in the corporate world. European youth training focuses on the challenges Europe is facing in relation to economic, political and social changes which have a direct impact on young people. Special attention is dedicated to the challenges that socially excluded groups are facing. Hence, the training courses focus on the role of youth workers and youth organisations in supporting young people going through those changes and in stimulating their active participation.

Therefore, training in this context can refer to a variety of processes and actions depending on the organisational and cultural context in which they take place and on the aims and values of its organisers. Some general elements are, however, of relevance to any training in the field of intercultural and European youth work and they will be explored in this publication.

1. Glossary on youth, available at https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/glossary, accessed 13 August 2020.
2. *European Training Strategy in the field of youth*, available at https://ec.europa.eu/youth/sites/youth/files/eu-training-strategy-youth_en.pdf, accessed 13 August 2020.
3. *T-Kit 8 – Social Inclusion*, available at https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/T-kit-8-social-inclusion, accessed 13 August 2020.

European youth work is quite a broad term, encompassing many things. Some might also wonder why we are not referring to international youth work as well. However, Yael Ohana has clarified the term "European youth work" in her report "What's politics got to do with it?" as follows:

> European youth work should be understood in a broad sense, as the work with young people (mainly of an educational nature) which a) considers "Europe" or "European issues" as a key framework consideration or context, and/or b) uses funding from European youth work programmes or is organised centrally by one of the European youth work support institutions, and/or c) takes place between different countries in Europe (international) or in one country in Europe (national with a European dimension), and/or d) is conducted by organisations whose capacity has been built by European youth work programmes. In our understanding, any combination of at least two of these criteria would qualify a youth work project as European youth work.[4]

The following link provides you with the EU-Council of Europe youth partnership glossary on topics of youth, youth work and training, and for any open questions and terms that you might have: https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/glossary.

In addition, all the upcoming chapters will acquaint you with the essentials in youth training.

To start with, we would like to familiarise you with the key actors in the youth training field.

The European Union youth programmes: Erasmus+ and SALTO-YOUTH

Erasmus+ is the EU's programme to support education, training, youth and sport in Europe. It provides opportunities for over 4 million Europeans to study, train, gain experience, and volunteer abroad. National Erasmus+ agencies play an important role in choosing training priorities, support individuals wishing to participate in training courses, and have their own annual Transnational Cooperation Activities (TCA) budget.

SALTO operates within the Youth sector of Erasmus+. Through Erasmus+ Youth, young people and youth workers can participate in international exchanges, long- and short-term volunteer placements and other international professional development activities.[5]

The other relevant European Union initiative is the European Solidarity Corps, which creates opportunities for young people to volunteer or work in projects in their own country or abroad that benefit communities and people around Europe and beyond.[6]

SALTO-YOUTH Resource Centres (hereafter SALTOs) are additional functions entrusted to designated national agencies of Erasmus+ in the field of youth and the European Solidarity Corps. They consist of teams that support all national agencies (NAs), the Commission and stakeholders involved in the development and quality implementation of activities, projects and strategies in the youth field. SALTOs work on behalf of the European Commission Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sports and Culture.[7]

The network of SALTOs was created in 2000 to support the implementation of the European youth programmes, with a particular focus on quality, capacity building, thematic and regional development, and knowledge. Currently, the SALTO network consists of seven Resource Centres which support the implementation of the youth chapter in Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps, and are entrusted by the Commission to the following national agencies:

- Eastern Europe and Caucasus, Poland
- EuroMed, France
- European Solidarity Corps, Austria
- Inclusion and Diversity, Belgium (Flanders)
- Participation and Information, Estonia
- South-East Europe, Slovenia
- Training and Cooperation, Germany

The mission of the SALTOs is to improve the quality and impact of the European Solidarity Corps and the Erasmus+ projects in the field of youth.

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4. Ohana (2020).
5. For more information, see the European Commission, Erasmus+ website, available at https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/node_en, accessed 13 August 2020.
6. See: European Solidarity Corps website, available at https://europa.eu/youth/solidarity_en, accessed 13 August 2020.
7. For more detailed info about SALTO-YOUTH, please refer to www.salto-youth.net/about/, accessed 13 August 2020.

The EU-Council of Europe youth partnership

The partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth (routinely known as the EU-Council of Europe youth partnership or, within the field of youth, "the partnership") is a co-operation programme between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth, created in 1998. It is based on the principle of a balanced involvement of the partner institutions in terms of political priorities, management, funding and visibility.

The overall goal is to foster synergies between the youth-oriented activities of the two institutions, by working on themes of interest for both institutions and on issues that justify a common European approach. The activities of the EU-Council of Europe youth partnership address the needs of young people and the wider youth field, including decision makers, governmental experts, youth researchers, youth practitioners and youth organisations.

Geographical coverage encompasses the European Union and the Council of Europe member states, other signatory states of the European Cultural Convention and neighbouring south Mediterranean countries.

Priorities:

- participation/citizenship, including new concepts and tools;
- social inclusion with a focus on outreach, access to rights and counteracting discrimination against vulnerable groups;
- quality development of youth work.

The youth partnership's magazine *Coyote* began life focused on training and has widened its themes to cover all the partnership's priority areas of work. It devoted a recent issue to the theme of European youth (work) training.[8]

The partnership's work and priorities are also reflected in this publication and the entire Training Kit (T-Kit) series, which is a large collection of theoretical and practical tools to work with and use when training young people.[9]

For more information, please refer to the EU-Council of Europe youth partnership website.[10]

The Youth Department of the Council of Europe

The Council of Europe is the oldest intergovernmental organisation in Europe, which was set up to safeguard peace on the continent through the protection of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The youth sector of the Council of Europe works with 50 governments and many youth organisations through a co-management system, which allows young people a meaningful space to set and manage the agenda of the institution's work. The Council of Europe remains the only European intergovernmental organisation which has two educational establishments – the European Youth Centres and staff specialised in intercultural non-formal education activities over the last nearly 50 years. The role of the European Youth Centres in the development of non-formal education and training has been quite instrumental in the past decades, leading the innovation, development and support of approaches, tools and resources.

The Council of Europe runs its work through a strategic triangle of standard-setting, monitoring and co-operation. This means that it sets standards in the area of its work, monitors the implementation of these standards in the member states and implements co-operation activities to support the states in reaching these standards. The role of training in the co-operation activities is crucial, and in the youth field it often comprises training representatives of youth civil society, youth councils and public authorities responsible for youth. But sometimes the training courses are also offered to other stakeholders who have a role in securing young people's access to rights, the youth work systems or specific inclusion and non-discrimination work done with youth.

Some of the key Council of Europe standards which describe the importance of non-formal education and training include:

8. *Coyote* magazine, Issue 28, available at https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/coyote-magazine/do-we-leave-enough-space-for-experiential-learning, accessed 13 August 2020.
9. Training Kit series, available at https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/t-kits, accessed 13 August 2020.
10. The EU-Council of Europe partnership website, available at https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/home, accessed 13 August 2020.

The Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education – CM/Rec(2010)7, which asks member states to recognise (NGOs and youth) organisations and their activities as a valued part of the educational system, provide them where possible with the support they need and make full use of the expertise they can contribute to all forms of education. Furthermore, it asks the states to provide teachers, other educational staff, youth leaders and trainers with the necessary initial and ongoing training and development in education for democratic citizenship and human rights education.

Recommendation CM/Rec(2016)7 on young people's access to rights calls on member states to invest in quality and inclusive education (formal and non-formal) and remove barriers to ensure access to education for all.

Recommendation CM/Rec(2017)4 on youth work looks at training as a tool for youth work development. It calls for the development of frameworks, strategies, programmes and pathways for the education, training, capacity building and professional development of youth workers based on the agreed set of competences.

Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)4 on transition of young refugees to adulthood also calls on member states to support youth organisations and youth work offering non-formal education/learning opportunities for young refugees in transition to adulthood, through the funding of programmes and projects and the creation of specific and relevant training opportunities for youth workers, including peer learning and the exchange of practices.

The youth sector of the Council of Europe works through four key instruments:

- the European Youth Centres in Strasbourg and Budapest, where a specific programme of activities takes place aiming to train multipliers and provide quality non-formal education activities;
- the European Youth Foundation which grants projects that often contain training courses as activities;
- the intergovernmental co-operation in the field of youth which promotes the development of policies and capacity building for member states;
- the youth partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe.

More information about the Council of Europe's work in the field of youth education and training can be found on its youth portal – www.coe.int/youth.

International/non-governmental organisations (I/NGOs)

NGOs and INGOs play a crucial role in European youth work and non-formal education training. There are many NGOs that are flagging up the needs of young people in Europe, doing a brilliant job in training young people through non-formal education, helping them to develop their competences, as for example shown and highlighted in the "Study on the impact of non-formal education in youth organisations on young people's employability".[11]

Many organisations are producing and investing in their own training, as well as research material, toolkits and training publications, for their specific target groups or regarding special (needs) issues. Of course, many of those activities are co-funded by the institutions, but the initiative and ideas were sparked bottom-up from young people within their youth organisations and networks. In the following, we would like to present you with a few best-practice examples from the outcomes of NGO training courses or relevant INGO training materials:

- IFM-SEI (International Falcon Movement – Socialist Educational International) has produced many valuable resource materials, such as: *Rainbow resources – Compasito companion on sexuality and gender*, or *Peace education handbook*, or *On the move – Educational resource on migration. Refugees. Visas and regional youth work*,[12] to mention a few.
- WAGGGS (World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts) has answered their members' needs with publications such as: *YESS movement Covid-19 survival strategies handbook* or *Girl powered nutrition challenge* (Edition 1-6).[13]

11. Souto-Otero et al. (n.d).
12. See: http://ifm-sei.org/publications-2/, accessed 13 August 2020.
13. See: www.wagggs.org/en/resources/resource-listing/, accessed 13 August 2020.

- OBESSU (Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions) has produced its own toolkits and valuable publications, such as: *All included – Toolkit for migrant student empowerment*, or *Guidelines on peer education*, or *Coloured glasses – Manual for intercultural and global citizenship education*,[14] etc.
- SEEYN (South East European Youth Network)[15] has done immense work in training its member organisations' digital competences during Covid-19, providing them with toolboxes, responding to an urgent need, and offering bottom-up training "on the fly".

1.1.2. Training aims of European youth work training

Within the European youth programmes, training serves to support the youth programmes of the European institutions and the work carried out by youth organisations, groups and services at different levels. Specifically, "the training courses organised within the European youth programmes aim to enable those actively involved in youth questions to play a more active, efficient and informed role in international and intercultural youth work" (Council of Europe 2000: 2). Training thus aims to increase skills, knowledge, raise awareness and change attitudes or behaviour, in order to increase the effectiveness and quality of the work of youth workers and youth leaders at international level, or at local or national level with an intercultural or European dimension.

Youth organisations and youth projects are places for political, social and cultural initiative and involvement. They are also places for non-formal education and learning. When asked by the European Youth Forum to specify what young people learned through participation in organised youth work, practitioners in the youth field focused on personal and social development. In personal terms they mentioned such effects as increased self-esteem, responsibility, creativity, tolerance and critical thinking, and in terms of social development the cultivation of active citizenship and participation, group and leadership skills, communication strategies and knowledge of social issues. If training aims to better equip youth workers and youth leaders for their work, then these are the factors that it needs to address. It needs to provide a space for personal and social development, and to empower for political, social and cultural participation. Target groups to be trained are many and varied, ranging from youth workers to those working with young people on a regular basis (teachers, social workers, civil servants, etc.).

Training in European youth work is value-based.[16] Many would also consider this training field as training with a human rights perspective. What do we mean by a human rights perspective? The key educational approach is based on co-operative learning, participation and learning through experience. In human rights education one explains it as: learning about human rights, through human rights and for human rights.

- "*Learning about human rights* starts from what people already know, their opinions and experiences and from this base it enables them to search for, and discover together, new ideas and experiences.
- *Learning through human rights* encourages young people to participate and to contribute to discussions and to learn from each other as much as possible.
- *Learning for human rights* supports people in translating their learning into simple but effective actions that demonstrate their rejection of injustice, inequality and violations of human rights." (*Compass*,[17] Chapter 2.3. HRE, process and outcome)

Change is the end result of all true learning.
Leo Buscaglia

Change is the end result of learning and at the same time is the aim and end result of human rights education, education for democratic citizenship, as well as sustainable youth work/training.

Human rights education and education for democratic citizenship is increasingly seen as a defence against the rise of violence, racism, extremism, xenophobia, discrimination and intolerance. The Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education is an important reference point for all those dealing with citizenship and human rights education and a way of disseminating good practice and raising standards

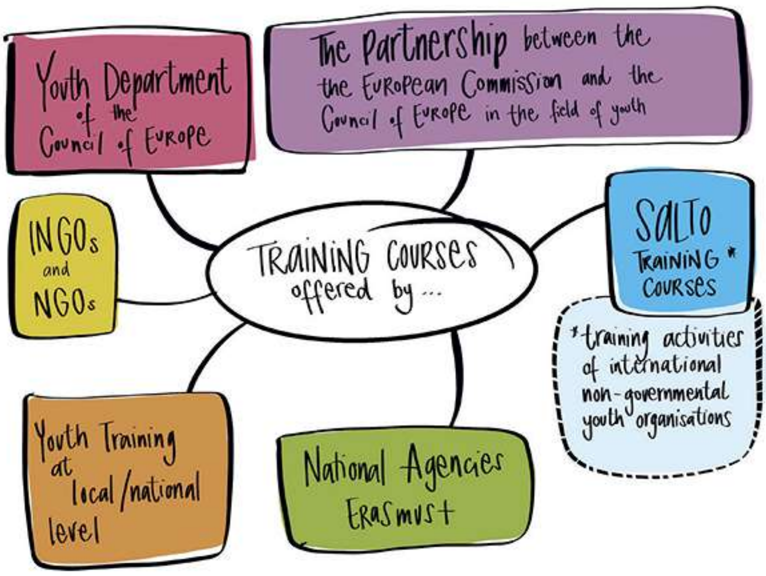
14. See: www.obessu.org/resources/publications/, accessed 13 August 2020.
15. See: www.seeyn.org/, accessed 13 August 2020.
16. T-Kit 14 on value-based learning in mobility projects (forthcoming) covers the topics touched upon here in much more detail, available at https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/T-kits, accessed 13 August 2020.
17. *Compass: manual for human rights education with young people*, available at www.coe.int/en/web/compass, accessed 13 August 2020.

throughout Europe and beyond.[18] In youth training young people are being prepared to be active in society, to be agents of change. There is no pretence at a neutral educational process; training should support the work of young people aiming at European societies based on fundamental values. According to the European Commission, these values include solidarity among young people throughout Europe and beyond, intercultural learning, mobility and a sense of initiative and entrepreneurship. This means combating the marginalisation of young people in society, fighting for the respect of human rights and against racism, xenophobia and discrimination. It involves engaging with cultural diversity, our common heritage and shared fundamental values, promoting equality and introducing a European dimension to local youth work. These basic values are largely shared by the European institutions and by many youth organisations.

Within this framework, training can take various forms. Some youth organisations, services or centres have set up training strategies that continuously train within the spirit and aims of their organisation, which ensures a certain level of competence in the continuous turnover between the "generations" of youth workers and leaders. Other organisations offer training on a more sporadic basis, based on upcoming or perceived needs and interests. Depending on the objectives of particular activities, training might prioritise results or processes, focus on developing specific skills, facilitate personal development, or plan a specific action being undertaken by the organisation. Training can also be issue-based. For instance, the Council of Europe organised a variety of training courses to empower minority youth leaders within the framework of *Enter!*[19] – Access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods[20] or the Roma Youth Action Plan;[21] or SALTO-YOUTH organised trainers' skills workshops, such as "The art to reflect"[22] or "Using IT tools in youth work".[23]

Ideally, the training activities offered by the different actors in the European youth field and at varying levels of activity should be complementary and subsidiary to each other. This can be visualised by the mind map below, which – without attempting to give a complete overview of all training offers in European youth work – focuses on the training offered by European institutions and youth organisations.

The European level should offer only what cannot be offered at local/national level, and each training offer should be specific in terms of training aims and contents, and with regard to its target group and geographical, organisational and cultural context.



Please also refer to Chapter 3, section 3.4.6 on types of training courses.

18. Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education, available at www.coe.int/en/web/edc/charter-on-education-for-democratic-citizenship-and-human-rights-education, accessed 13 August 2020.
19. Lyamouri-Baija (2020).
20. Enter! Access to social rights for young people, available at www.coe.int/en/web/enter, accessed 13 August 2020.
21. Roma Youth Action Plan, available at www.coe.int/en/web/youth-roma/home, accessed 13 August 2020.
22. Report of the trainers' skills workshop, "The art to reflect", available at www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-3938/Report%20TSW%20Art%20to%20reflect-final.pdf, accessed 13 August 2020.
23. Report of the trainers' skills workshop, "Using IT tools in youth work", available at: www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-3646/TSW%20on%20IT%20Tool%2C%20report.pdf, accessed 13 August 2020.

Quality standards and criteria for training

The question of defining the quality of non-formal education training has been an essential issue in different discussions and initiatives. The need to define quality is linked with the need to improve the way training is done in the youth field, what training can do for the youth field and why training should be part of the youth field. These and similar questions are part of a range of efforts undertaken to improve recognition of training, seeking to explain its formal, social, political and self-recognition.[24]

The Council of Europe has defined quality standards applicable to all education and training activities organised by its youth sector. Its approach is to define "quality" in non-formal education and training as minimum standards and definitions related to the essence or type of activities. It refers to what should be in certain activities and also relates to how they are prepared, delivered and evaluated. Quality in non-formal education should be seen as a permanent endeavour by those responsible for its practice. Quality concerns the whole spectrum of context, partners, people, methods and stages of the activity or project. It is defined implicitly or explicitly, but a minimum common understanding of what it entails is needed. These quality standards should be understood as this minimum.

The notion of quality is socially, institutionally and culturally marked and, therefore, not always understood by all partners in the same way. As the education and training activities of the Council of Europe are not value-neutral, the understanding and practice of quality standards must take this factor into account too.[25]

The standards below intend to provide practitioners with a minimum set of criteria. Many of them may be difficult to measure in the short or even medium term; however, this does not mean that they cannot be evaluated. The standards should apply to all the activities organised by or in co-operation with the Youth Department.[26]

1. A relevant needs assessment.
2. Concrete, achievable and assessable objectives.
3. The definition of competences addressed and learning outcomes for the participants.
4. The relevance to the Council of Europe programme and Youth Department priorities.
5. An adequate and timely preparation process.
6. A competent team of trainers and facilitators.
7. An integrated approach to intercultural learning, participation and human rights education.
8. Adequate recruitment and selection of participants.
9. A consistent practice of non-formal education principles and approaches.
10. Adequate, accessible and timely documentation.
11. A thorough and open process of evaluation.
12. Optimal working conditions and environment.
13. Adequate institutional support and integrated follow-up.
14. Relevant visibility and communication.
15. Concern for innovation and research.

Recognition of non-formal education and learning

Non-formal education/learning in the youth field provides unique learning opportunities to thousands of young Europeans every day. This is done through a diversified youth work structure often based on a voluntary and participative approach and a special educational field which provides added value for society and individuals. Learning in and from youth work forms the basis for active citizenship, cultural expression, self-development into confident adults, for a European civil society, political participation, human rights, health and well-being, social inclusion, and so on.

24. "Pathways 2.0 towards recognition of non-formal learning/education and of youth work in Europe", p.14, available at https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/pathways-paper, accessed 13 August 2020.
25. Quality standards in education and training activities of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe, available at https://rm.coe.int/ddcp-yd-etd-2016-202-quality-standards-yd-et-activities/16807c8bb9, accessed 13 August 2020.
26. Milutinovits and Chardymova (2019).

It is for this reason that the European institutions, the European Union and the Council of Europe work to bring youth work and non-formal education and its formal, social and political recognition higher on the political agenda, welcomed by all relevant stakeholders in the field. The Council of Europe has a specific Recommendation Rec(2003)8 on the promotion and recognition of non-formal education/learning of young people, as well as the more recent Committee of Ministers Recommendation on Youth Work to member states, where they are asked to promote the recognition of the values, attitudes, skills, knowledge and critical understanding developed through participating in and delivering youth work. Overall, the recognition of non-formal learning in the youth field should be the responsibility of all players in youth work, a shared ownership between the public sector working with youth, the organisations, trainers and other stakeholders who should recognise, value and promote non-formal education and training.

The most important European initiative offering a comprehensive strategy for the recognition of non-formal education and youth work is the "Pathways" document, currently in an updated/upgraded 2.0 form.[27] It is particularly important in putting forward the different levels of recognition, which helps clarify the terms and frame the analysis by making a distinction according to who recognises the learning and for what purpose. The forms of recognition outlined in the Pathways 2.0 document are: formal recognition, political recognition, social recognition and self-recognition. In order to secure recognition of non-formal education for young people, beyond the field of youth, all levels should be addressed and handled.

The European Youth Forum and the SALTO Resource Centres have also been working on quality assurance and the further development of training.

In this regard it is important to mention Youthpass, as a recognition tool for non-formal and informal learning in youth projects funded by the EU youth programmes. In the non-formal education field, Youthpass has become a widely known and used approach to establish quality criteria and competence development. The European Training Strategy competence models (for trainers and for youth workers) are another effort towards the recognition of non-formal education and the development of quality standards in terms of competence development in youth training courses. The Competence Model for Trainers Working at International Level will be used as a reference throughout this publication.

Reflection moment

- What is your definition of quality youth training?
- What is the place of training in your organisation?
- What kind of quality criteria and standards do you have for your training activities?
- For whom do you organise training?
- What are the contents of the training courses?
- Where and when do you organise training courses? Which resources do you have available?
- Are you co-operating with any of the mentioned European institutions?
- When it comes to validating and recognising European youth training activities, have you come across the paper Pathways 2.0 or have you used Youthpass before?

1.1.3. Informal, formal and non-formal education

In the following section, we provide a clear overview and in-depth explanation of informal, formal and non-formal education, as outlined in *Compass*.[28]

Informal education

Informal education refers to a lifelong learning process, whereby each individual acquires attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from the educational influences and resources in his or her own environment and from daily

27. Pathways 2.0 towards recognition of non-formal learning/education and of youth work in Europe, p.14, available at https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/pathways-paper, accessed 13 August 2020.
28. *Compass: manual for human rights education with young people*, available at www.coe.int/en/web/compass/approaches-to-human-rights-education-in-compass, accessed 13 August 2020.

experience. People learn from family and neighbours, at the market square, at the library, at art exhibitions, at work and through playing, reading and sports activities. The mass media is a very important vehicle for informal education, for instance through plays and film, music and songs, televised debates and documentaries, and browsing the internet. Learning in this way is often unplanned and unstructured.

Formal education

Formal education refers to the structured education system that runs from primary (and in some countries from nursery) school to university, and includes specialised programmes for vocational, technical and professional training. Formal education often comprises an assessment of the learners' acquired learning or competences and is based on a programme or curriculum which can be more or less closed to adaptation to individual needs and preferences. Formal education usually leads to recognition and certification.

Non-formal education

Non-formal education refers to planned, structured programmes and processes of personal and social education for young people designed to improve a range of skills and competences, outside the formal educational curriculum. Non-formal education is what happens in places such as youth organisations, sports clubs and drama and community groups where young people meet, for example, to undertake projects together, play games, discuss, go camping, or make music and drama. Non-formal education achievements are usually difficult to certify, even if their social recognition is increasing. Non-formal education should be:

- voluntary;
- accessible to everyone (ideally);
- an organised process with educational objectives;
- participatory;
- learner-centred;
- about learning life skills and preparing for active citizenship;
- based on involving both individual and group learning with a collective approach;
- holistic and process-oriented;
- based on experience and action;
- organised on the basis of the needs of participants.

Formal, non-formal and informal education are complementary and mutually reinforcing elements of a lifelong learning process.

Informal education has been defined in many ways, generally as education that happens outside the formal education system. Clearly this can take many forms, and you may see the term applied to describe a variety of activities. Some see it as learning that goes on in daily life; the multiple ways we learn to function and interact in our societies. Some use it in relation to the "learning projects" that we take up in our free time, be they hobbies or new skills. In this context, the term is often applied to the learning that results from being involved in youth and community work. To avoid confusion, we will use "non-formal education" to describe the world of youth training, while acknowledging that there are still debates to be held on the terminology.

A complementary approach can involve non-formal education developing and augmenting subjects dealt with in schools, or emphasising a participative approach to learning. It can also involve replicating some of the features of the formal sector in the non-formal, with the aim of accrediting training or similar work. European institutions have set up quality standards and means of certification for non-formal education at European level, in particular for training. For further reading on the topic, please consult: the Council of Europe Youth Work Portfolio for youth leaders and youth workers,[29] the European Training Strategy (ETS) Competence Model for Youth Workers to Work Internationally,[30] the ETS Competence Model for Trainers[31] or quality standards in education and training activities of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe.[32]

29. European Portfolio for Youth Leaders and Youth Workers, available at https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/european-portfolio, accessed 13 August 2020.
30. European Training Strategy, A Competence Model for Youth Workers to Work Internationally, available at www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-3460/CompetencemodelForYoutworker_Online-web.pdf.pdf, accessed 13 August 2020.
31. ETS Competence Model for Trainers, available at www.salto-youth.net/rc/training-and-cooperation/trainercompetencedevelopment/trainercompetences/, accessed 13 August 2020.
32. Quality standards in education and training activities of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe, available at https://rm.coe.int/ddcp-yd-etd-2016-202-quality-standards-yd-et-activities/16807c8bb9, accessed 13 August 2020.

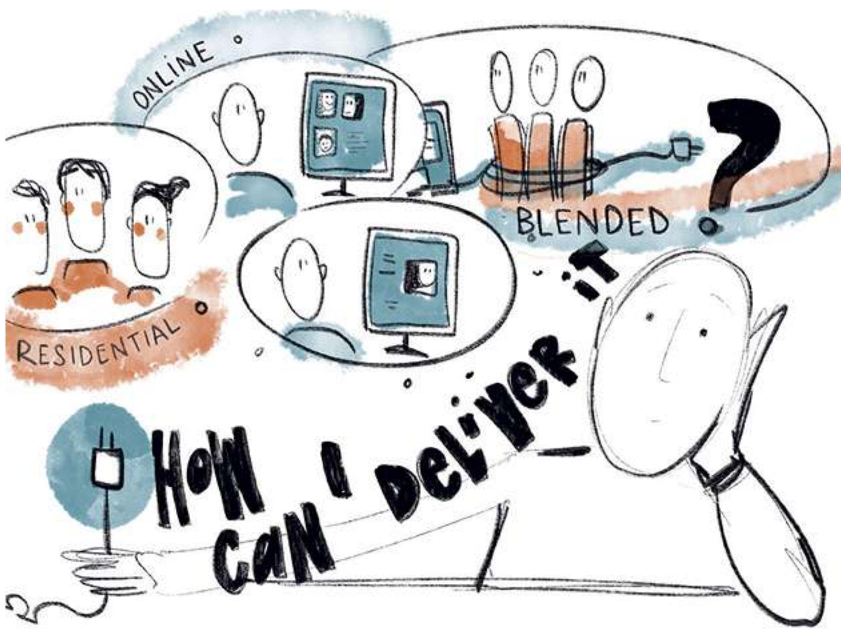
Reflection moment

- What are your personal definitions of informal, formal and non-formal education?
- How would you explain informal, formal and non-formal education in a few sentences to youngsters attending a training activity?
- What are your personal experiences in this regard?
- When do these fields overlap in your daily lifelong learning experience?

1.1.4. Residential, online and blended training courses

Non-formal learning in general, and training courses in particular, can take place in many different contexts: from youth organisations to outdoor expeditions, from conference rooms to youth clubs. Diversity of possible contexts and learning environments is in fact one of the advantages of non-formal learning; however, most of the contexts that we have mentioned require interaction of learners in person.

This has changed quite a lot since the first edition of this T-Kit and now we cannot only talk about face-to-face or residential meetings when referring to training in the European youth field. Online learning in various forms has been gaining momentum, in particular accelerated by the adjustments needed due to the Covid-19-induced lockdown, and has become almost omnipresent in the European youth field. That said, before we close this chapter, which sets the ground for our T-Kit, we will look at three types of training contexts that we will be referring to throughout: residential, online and blended.



Residential training courses

Residential contexts are probably what most of those reading this T-Kit have in mind when thinking about training courses. This particular setting is something that most of us can relate to and have experienced as part of our own professional development. Some people also use the term "face-to-face training", but there is more to residential training courses than that. Face-to-face training courses imply any kind of learning happening when two or more people are present in the same learning environment; for example, in a classroom at university or in a one-to-one coaching session. But in the international and intercultural settings, there is an additional element of staying together in a residence (venue) during the course. Therefore, during a residential course, learners share both working and living environments together, thereby enhancing opportunities for informal learning. Undertaking a training course in a residential setting is a special element of international and intercultural training courses, which enables different dimensions and levels of learning. The majority of this T-Kit has residential training as a "default setting" and focuses on how to set up and facilitate these courses, which is why we will not go into any further detail here.

Online training courses

Less common, but increasingly found, are training courses based on online learning. On the Digi Youth Portal,[33] developed by SEEYN,[34] there is the following definition:

> Online learning, at least in this article and this portal, is defined as an organised distance learning, facilitated by one or more educators, involving a different-sized group of learners, who are all connected through Internet tools (usually a platform for learning).

If we look at this definition, there are several elements that can be found in residential settings, e. g. the learning is organised and facilitated by educators and it involves different-sized groups of learners. But the fact that there is no face-to-face contact (hence, distance learning), and that the medium which connects the learners is the internet, is what makes all the difference. Online training represents quite a different learning environment compared to residential training. It is hosted online, it starts and finishes online, and learners are not in a common physical space together.

Online learning and e-learning are terms that are often used interchangeably, but it is precisely the distance aspect that differentiates them. E-learning is any learning that includes some type of digital technology or tools and it can also happen in any context where non-formal learning is taking place. On the other hand, online learning (as the name suggests) is only happening online and learners are connected via the internet only.

Even with a steep increase in online learning opportunities during Covid-19, online learning has still not reached its full potential in European youth training, as it is a relatively new format compared to decades of running residential training activities. However, there are already some aspects that are considered to be highly beneficial. Arguably, the main benefit of online courses is a possibility of a much wider reach compared to residential courses – both in numbers and in the profile of learners. On the one hand, some may argue that the costs of running online courses are generally lower. On the other hand, there are many different costs involved, for example more technical support is needed, more digital training for trainers is needed, different types of content are generated, for example videos, animations, visuals, etc. which cost time, money and specialist support, as well as equipment. Still, one does save on other expenses, such as travel costs or board and lodging for participants. An advantage is that, for example, in a MOOC (massive open online course) participants can organise their own learning, in their own time, whenever most convenient for them. A disadvantage is that it is easier to lose participants and it takes more effort and expertise from the trainers to build a group-dynamic process. In the case of courses that do not include many synchronous elements (for example, video meetings), the principle of self-directed learning is very present, as participants are able to choose their rhythm and their own pathway through the training content. In fact, the possibility of creating multiple learning pathways is one of the key advantages of online learning, as it caters for different learning preferences and abilities. Not all online courses allow for 100% self-paced learning, but a great number of them involve some degree of it. Furthermore, for those learners that are not so keen on group learning and exchanging, online courses allow for more individual learning, while still having the possibility of using the group as a resource. Online courses are ideal for extensive inputs, since more information and theory can be conveyed, as well as more time for practice, in case the course involves practical tasks. At the same time, they can have certain limits in terms of the depth that they can reach, as well as development of specific areas of competence.

Finally, those online learning opportunities that are entirely based on or involve some degree of videoconferencing sessions benefit from bringing along intimacy from people's homes, offices or outdoor surroundings. Michael Kimmig has written an excellent article on how to include participants' environments in the learning process, while being truthful to non-formal educational methodology and methods.[35] It involves a whole new way of thinking and creativity in developing new non-formal education methods that are an asset to the learning process and which are possible because of the online context. Kimmig highlights many options on how to ideally prepare your remote working space and learning environment, and on how to design the learning space in your flat and also outside your home. There are many unique opportunities which residential activities cannot cater for: for example people being in their familiar environments, in their own chairs, with their own mugs and surrounded by their friends and family.

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33. Volf I. (2019), Online courses, online learning in non-formal education, Digi Youth Portal, available at www.digi-youth.com/, accessed 13 August 2020.
34. South East European Youth Network, available at www.seeyn.org/, accessed 13 August 2020.
35. Kimmig (2020).

Online training courses can also take place in a variety of different settings (platforms) and in a variety of different formats. Below are some of the main characteristics/formats of online courses that can help provide a more practical understanding of them:[36]

- **Synchronous and asynchronous courses.** Synchronous are those courses or elements of an online course that require learners to be online and engaged at the same time. Webinars, dialogue sessions or virtual exchanges are just some of the examples of synchronous online learning. During the times when learning mobility is not possible, synchronous activities bring individuals and groups together and enable connection, sharing and a fair degree of intimacy. On the other hand, asynchronous courses or asynchronous elements of online learning are those where learners can engage with the content in their own time. Asynchronous online learning also provides for possibilities to create multiple learning pathways that learners can choose or combine based on their needs and preferences. Synchronous courses require considerable planning and co-ordination among the learners, which is why longer courses, or those with more participants, are usually asynchronous or combine the two approaches.
- **Paced and self-paced courses**. In paced courses, it is the facilitator who determines the order and pace of the course and its content, much like in residential courses. They can still be asynchronous, but the order of units/sessions is predetermined (they might even be released at some pre-set times), and there are certain deadlines in which to fulfil the task, etc. Self-paced courses mirror self-directed learning to a large extent and learners can be free to choose what they want to learn (from the content that is offered), in which order and within which time frame. Often the courses combine the two approaches and are somewhere between the two extremes.
- **Facilitated and "stand-alone" courses**. Depending on the engagement of facilitators, at one end of the spectrum there are fully facilitated courses where facilitators have a very similar role to that in residential training courses. Stand-alone courses still rely on facilitators when it comes to learning, but only to the extent of setting up the course and its content and then leaving it up to the learners to engage with it. In non-formal education contexts, facilitated courses are more common.

One specific course format, which can only be found online are MOOCs. A MOOC is a massive open online course and is characterised by open enrolment, which means that anyone can join based on their own motivation and interest. MOOCs contribute greatly to reaching out to a large number of learners and offering possibilities to those who are not able or not selected to attend residential training courses. In the European youth field, each MOOC gathers between several hundred and several thousand learners. The existing MOOCs have so far tackled a variety of topics, such as: the Erasmus+ programme, the European Solidarity Corps programme, Competence-based development for youth workers, Essentials of youth work, Essentials of youth policy and Digital youth work.

The year 2020 brought a steep learning curve to the European youth field, as the Covid-19-induced lockdown prevented all learning mobilities and many activities needed to be transformed to fit online learning settings. This meant a significant increase in online offers, especially in terms of synchronous, facilitated activities (mostly through videoconferencing), which were not so present before. The impact was seen in a great diversity of formats, which sprouted like mushrooms after rain! These included weekly online workshops; training courses condensed into one week of online sessions and connected "offline" tasks (for example, on-arrival courses that are part of the Training and Evaluation Cycle for the European Solidarity Corps volunteers, interns or employees); and large training events such as MOVE IT[37] events taking place either for a few days back-to-back or stretched over several weeks.

Blended training courses

While exploring online contexts, formats and tools, many organisations, institutions or even individual trainers are more likely to go for something in between or, in this case, going for a "blend" or a combination. This is a bit like when you like tea, but pure green tea is a little bit strong, so then you take a blend that enriches, but also softens that green tea, such as ginger or lemongrass. Feeling more comfortable with introducing bits of online learning into the training courses is therefore one of the reasons for turning towards blended learning. But it is not the only reason.

Blending training courses allow for combining the best from both worlds by having:

36. Volf I. (2019), Online courses, Digi Youth Portal, available at www.digi-youth.com/, accessed 13 August 2020.
37. MOVE IT, available at www.salto-youth.net/tools/european-training-calendar/training/move-it-youth-mobility-in-the-digital-era-online-event.8749/, accessed 13 August 2020.

- **online parts** that extend the course by allowing for longer interaction among learners, enable more comprehensive inputs, allow for bringing in the local community of learners through practical tasks, enable informal check-in moments within the group and ensure support in the preparation and follow-up phases of the residential course, using the group and the participants' environment as a source of social learning;
- **residential training courses** that enable face-to-face interaction among learners themselves, as well as learners and facilitators, which utilise the group as a source of learning, stimulate intense and stretching learning experiences, provide opportunities for working on the level of attitudes and values and, furthermore, support intercultural processes.

And while there are a lot of benefits, blended learning implies more investment in terms of time and resources, combining two different learning contexts, group dynamics, as well as having facilitators of learning that are competent to combine them into a logical, flowing learning process.

Just as it was with online learning during the Covid-19 challenges and achievements, more blended-learning formats have been developed. This enables not only a combination of online and residential elements spread in a linear way along the timeline, but also online and face-to-face elements of a learning process happening at the same time. For example, there can be a "hub" for a learning activity in one place, with all the facilitators, speakers and technical support gathered together, with learners participating online. Or the whole group can come together online and do the same things, at the same time, each of them at their home or office (for example cooking or doing community mapping). Or, for example, small groups can meet face to face in their village, city or town and then join together for the "international meetings" online. These are just some local examples, and hopefully more ideas will be popping up as the concept of blended (or hybrid) learning gets further developed.

To conclude this section, online and blended activities provide a rich array of opportunities for learning. Bearing that in mind, it is still important to emphasise that online learning is not and should not be a replacement for residential face-to-face work. The dimension of leaving home (and living together) for learning is missing, which is one of the essential ingredients of European and international youth work. In addition, as Marco Frimberger highlights:

> [this] is not a "black or white" discussion. Including digital aspects in your work is not intended to substitute working directly with people, it's just a way to enhance them, find new channels of communication or maybe even reach out to the young people, who are feeling more secure in these settings.[38]

Online and digital tools allow for connections and learning to take place, which can be a very effective addition to learning mobility.

We have dedicated more space to online courses and online learning here, because we are mostly focusing on residential and blended learning in this T-Kit. However, we are aware that we have only scratched the surface and there is much more to be said and discovered about online learning. For more information, feel free to check Digi Youth Portal[39] or the *Coyote* article "Smart and digital youth work resources: where to find more",[40] as well as use the online context and tools for conducting your own enquiries into this exciting world.

Reflection moment

- Have you considered trying out different learning environments (online, residential, blended) to tailor your training to the needs of the learners and specific objectives?
- Which criteria do you use when deciding which learning environment will be the most appropriate for your training: online, residential or blended?
- What are the limitations of online learning? What can and cannot be achieved in your practice online?
- Have you tried out online and/or blended learning as a learner? How was the experience for you?
- How is your personal attitude towards online learning? Is there openness and curiosity to give it a try?
- What kind of knowledge, skills and attitudes would you have to develop to be able to facilitate learning online?

38. Frimberger (2020).
39. Digi Youth Portal: http://digiyouth.seeyn.org/, accessed 13 August 2020.
40. Kriauciunas (2020).

1.2. TRAINING AND THE TRAINER

1.2.1. Different understandings of the trainer

Since there are different ways to define and understand training, it comes as no surprise that the word "trainer" has a variety of meanings and associations. They create considerable complexity and ambiguity, which in turn makes it challenging to define the role.

Participants, and also trainers themselves, come from a range of cultural and educational backgrounds, which create many different images and expectations of the trainer, based on different understandings of their role and place in the learning process. To make things even more complicated, the word trainer is not the only one used to name those who are active in providing training in the European youth work field. No doubt you have heard or even used one of the following: educator, facilitator, moderator, speaker, coach, teacher… In fact, most of these roles get activated at different points in one's work as a trainer, for example when speaking when delivering an input about a relevant theory or inspirational practice. Or when moderating a panel of practitioners sharing experiences with a group of learners. Or when coaching individuals and small groups during their practical work. That said, in this T-Kit, we still focus on the role of "trainer", given that it is the one that in a magical way expresses so much of what we mean.

As defined in the ETS Competence Model for Trainers, "'trainer' is traditionally used to refer to those who shape, guide and accompany the learning processes of individuals or groups".[41] In other words, a trainer is the facilitator of learning in a training context. The Latin word for "easy" is *facilis* and facilitation is therefore "the act of making something easier". In a non-formal education context, a facilitator makes it easier for learners to go through the process of learning and self-discovery. "Easy" here implies "easier to learn", but not necessarily "easy learning". If the difference is still not clear, let's use an example. Making it "easier to learn" means enabling conditions for the learning to happen – ensuring an encouraging learning environment, preparing the "right" questions, using different approaches to stimulate participants with different learning preferences, finding the right balance between challenge and comfort, and so on. Often "making it easier" also means challenging people to experience something that stretches their understanding and abilities and stimulates them to gain new insights through this process. The trainer's role is to support participants and to make it easier for them to go through it and discover their learning outcomes.

To connect it back with the ETS Competence Model for Trainers, "in the youth field, trainers design and implement educational activities based on the values and principles of youth work and non-formal learning, they create conditions that promote the learners' individual development, and they shape the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values necessary for youth work".[42]

To carry out this complex and yet exciting process, trainers can take different roles, as we have seen above, and these roles cannot be separated so clinically. They might be very clear which role they inhabit at a given moment, or it might just come out spontaneously. Even if that is the case, trainers need to think through their roles in relation to each other and assess the impact they might have on the learners. On the other hand, trainers could reflect on their training style or styles and preferences in order to frame their role, to themselves at least. The questions below – related to training and trainers in the youth field – might help your considerations.

Reflection moment

- Can everybody be a good trainer?
- What makes a good trainer?
- How familiar should the trainer be with the topic of the training they are facilitating?
- How far should the trainer go in directing participants to reach the conclusion that the trainer wants them to reach?
- Should the trainer leave personal values and world views at home?
- To what extent should the trainer follow participants' needs and learning intentions?
- How measurable should training results be?
- Is the main purpose of training and of the trainers to transmit knowledge?
- Should the training be as practical as possible?
- Besides the role of the trainer, can you recognise any of the other roles in the above questions?

1.2.2. Trainers' competences

The first question above is something that can be heard very often: can everybody be a good trainer? To turn this question around a little, we might ask: what makes a good trainer? Is there an overview of what a person needs in order to be a trainer? The same complexity and ambiguity we experience when defining "trainer" apply for the recommended educational pathway or the competences needed. To help us navigate this ambiguity a little, we will refer to two competence frameworks that list competences related to the work of trainers in the European youth work field.

The first, mentioned above, is the ETS Competence Model for Trainers, which was developed by the SALTO-YOUTH Training and Cooperation Resource Centre and a number of international experts.

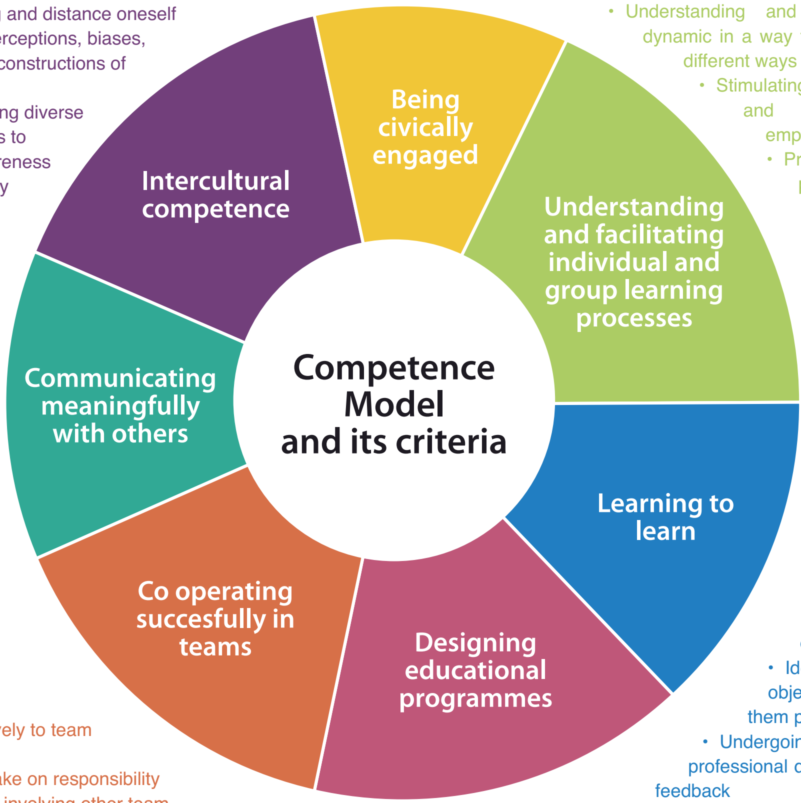
41. European Training Strategy (2018), *A competence model for trainers working at international level: tools to get started*, available at www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-3858/Booklet_Tools_to_Get_Started_Final.pdf, accessed 13 August 2020. See also footnote 31.
42. ibid.

ETS Competence Model for Trainers
with competence areas and competences

- Reflecting acceptance of ambiguity and change
- Maintaining awareness of one's own identity
- Showing a willingness and ability to look at identity, culture and related aspects and dimensions from different perspectives
- Critically reflecting and distance oneself from one's own perceptions, biases, and stereotypical constructions of reality
- Reflecting and using diverse ways and methods to increase self-awareness
- Being able to apply human rights principles

- Connecting [youth] policies and educational programmes
- Integrating values and beliefs
- Supporting learners in developing critical thinking
- Applying democracy and human rights princibles

- Selecting, adapting or creating appropriate methods
- Creating a sate, inspiring learning environment
- Support learners in identifying and meeting their learning needs & overcoming any barriers
- Understanding and facilitating group dynamic in a way that is conducive to different ways of learning
- Stimulating active participation and motivating and empowering learners
- Promoting creativity, problem-solving and out-of-the-box' thinking
- Effectively managing one's own emotions in training situations; respecting ethical boundaries vis-à-vis learners



- An ability to listen actively
- An ability to be empathetic
- An ability to clearly express thoughts and emotions
- An awareness of identity-related issues
- Being diversity-aware

- Assessing one's own learning achievements and competences
- Identifying learning objectives and pursuing them proactively
- Undergoing personal / professional development through feedback
- Acknowledging and dealing with unexpected learning moments and outcomes
- Identifying and providing appropriate resources to support individual learning

- Contributing actively to team tasks
- Being willing to take on responsibility
- Encouraging and involving other team members
- Learning with and from others
- Being aware of the team processes and how they affect the team's effectiveness
- Managing disagreements constructively

- Developing an educational approach based on the principles and values of non-formal learning
- Transferring knowledge or values related to the activity to learners
- Integrating learners' socio-political backgrounds into the educational programme
- Where relevant, integrating ICT, e-learning and other tools and methods into the educational activity
- Designing an evaluation process and impact assessment
- Choose & design appropriate methods for collecting, interpreting & disseminating information (data, resources, findings, etc.)

Competence Area

The competence model is divided into six competence areas, each with their own criteria plus one or several indicators.

Competence

The term 'competences' refers to a system of values, attitudes and beliefs, and skills and knowledge that can be applied in practice to manage various complex situations and tasks successfully. Confidence, motivation and well-being are important prerequisites for someone wishing to apply existing competences.

Attitude

...are Core Qualities or Challenges...

The attitudes are grouped per competence and competence area. Remember you don't have to cover all attitudes in all competence areas.

The ETS Competence Model for Trainers currently defines seven competence areas:

- Understanding and facilitating individual and group learning processes;
- Learning to learn;
- Designing educational programmes;
- Co-operating successfully in teams;
- Communicating meaningfully with others;
- Intercultural competence;
- Being civically engaged.

Under those seven competence areas, there are 39 competences and even more specific criteria (knowledge, skills and attitudes). This does not mean that in order for a person to be a trainer they need all of them fully developed, because this would be the requirement of a super-trainer, which to our knowledge does not exist. But it means that the model can be used to define a framework for trainers in the international youth work field, as well as to support individuals in developing themselves on their pathway as trainers. Just like in all other professions, the trainer never stops learning. And this adds another important role to a trainer – a learner. In their commitment to the (professional) development of others, trainers need to be committed to their own (professional) development and be a lifelong learner. One's curiosity to learn and develop will often be the strongest asset in supporting others in their own curiosity.

A great reference and resource centre to work with is the trainers' library (www.trainerslibrary.org), which is divided into the seven competence areas of the ETS Model and provides you with an endless amount of tools, resources, up-to-date material and processes in this field. On the other hand, the Council of Europe has a competence framework, developed in the context of the Pool of Trainers of the youth sector. For the Council of Europe, a trainer is an educational consultant with strong experience in non-formal learning/education, youth work and/or youth policy. In order to be considered for the Pool of Trainers, one should have extensive experience of facilitating or running education and training activities, particularly with young adults, as well as considerable experience in working with international and multicultural groups of participants. Competences in this framework are requirements from the trainers, which also require them to be familiar with the values and principles of the work of the institution, so that they can ensure these are well reflected in the educational activities.

These competences are:

1. Understanding the institutional framework of the Council of Europe and its youth sector (institutional awareness).
2. Competence to organise an educational activity in co-operation with the Youth Department.
3. Good knowledge and experience of youth work in at least three of the following areas:
    - human rights education and education for democratic citizenship;
    - youth participation, democratic citizenship and the development of youth work and youth organisations;
    - promoting gender equality through youth policy and youth work;
    - environment and sustainable development;
    - intercultural youth work in a multicultural environment;
    - promoting responses to racism, intolerance and discrimination;
    - youth work for peace building, conflict prevention and transformation;
    - promoting global solidarity and co-operation;
    - youth information and counselling;
    - promoting young people's access to social rights;
    - non-formal education/learning as a means of facilitating the social inclusion of young people and children;
    - promoting intergenerational dialogue and solidarity;
    - supporting youth and child policy development at national level;
    - using e-learning in non-formal education activities;
    - using information and communication technology in youth work.
4. Experience as a trainer and/or member of a team of trainers in international and intercultural youth work activities.
5. The ability to contribute constructively to and assist in the preparation, running and evaluation of the activity, based on intercultural non-formal education.

6. The ability to run parts of the activity independently (such as selected workshops or working groups).
7. The ability and willingness to work in an intercultural team.
8. Intercultural competence, especially in working with multicultural groups. The trainer is aware of own biases, understands tolerance of ambiguity and is able to take a distance from social roles.
9. Facilitation of the team and group work process.
10. Facilitation of learning processes.
11. Competence to facilitate intercultural learning processes and culture-sensitive communication.

When it comes to online or blended learning, it is becoming evident that there is a need to consider digital competences of trainers as well. In *Leading groups online*, the first one of 10 principles is "Be you" and implies that facilitation of online learning is not that much different from facilitation in person, and that "We have yet to find a good educator who can't also teach online."[43] What might be necessary is a paradigm shift in the trainer's thinking and what you, as a trainer, are expecting from the contact with participants. Furthermore, it is about allowing yourself to be a good online facilitator! Trainers should bring their existing competences online and everything they know about learners and groups still applies.

On the other hand, based on the experience of many practitioners, being a highly competent trainer in face-to-face and residential training activities does not always imply a smooth and easy transition to the online context or being able to handle a blended-learning process. The principles of non-formal education are still applied online; however, the learning environment is different, the process itself is different and, therefore, specific competences might need to be further developed and some additional ones added. For example: the ability to listen and speak in an online environment and to "read" non-verbal cues; the ability to write clearly and concisely (instructions, scripts for videos, etc.); knowledge of methods to implement the experiential learning cycle online; openness to new learning environments and digital tools; sensitivity to videoconferencing fatigue; and readiness to adjust the process.

One thing that differs from the residential settings to a large extent is the use of technology. Related to that, the second principle in *Leading groups online* is: Practise the technology. "Whatever platform you use to connect, you and the participants may be learning the technology for the first time, too. If you can, we strongly recommend practising the technology you will be using ahead of time."[44] Therefore, being open towards experiment and trying out, learning about new tools and platforms and developing skills in using them are definitely some of the competences that are linked to facilitating online learning. Connected to that is the concept of a Digital Mind, which "includes acquiring different attitudes, such as open-mindedness, authenticity, creativity and inspiration".[45] And then there is also the importance of experimentation. Although online learning is not such a new field, many trainers are still more used to residential, face-to-face activities. Therefore, trying out and experimenting, as well as not being afraid of the failures, is part of a personal experiential cycle that serves development of digital competence as well. "After all, there is no one recipe for online youth work that would work in every situation, every group of young people and every set of youth workers."[46]

Within the framework of competences for trainers by SALTO-YOUTH, there is currently an ongoing process of transversally adding the digital dimension of trainers' competences (as well as solidarity and civic engagement competences). This will be available and included shortly. In the competence assessment platform for trainers[47] you can also find a set of digital competences for trainers. Furthermore, we encourage you to work with the Competence Framework for Digital Youth Work Practice,[48] as well as the Digital Competence Framework for Citizens.[49]

43. Rewa J. and Hunter D. (2020), *Leading groups online: a down and dirty guide for leading online courses, meetings, and events during the coronavirus pandemic*, available at www.leadinggroupsonline.org/ebooks/Leading%20Groups%20Online.pdf, accessed 13 August 2020.
44. ibid.
45. Domagoj M. (2020), *Exploring digital competences*, Logbook Issue 6, available at https://magazine.poywe.org/magazine/logbook-issue-6/3843/, accessed 13 August 2020.
46. Kiviniemi (2020).
47. See: https://appraiser.badgecraft.eu/.
48. Competence Framework for Digital Youth Work Practice, available at https://digipathways.io/resources/competence-framework, accessed 13 August 2020.
49. The Digital Competence Framework for Citizens, available at https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/bitstream/JRC106281/web-digcomp2.1pdf_(online).pdf, accessed 13 August 2020.

1.2.3. Trainer values and their impact on training

Open your arms to change, but don't let go of your values.
Dalai Lama

Often when discussing what makes a trainer, even without venturing into what makes a "good trainer", the dilemma presents itself whether with the same knowledge and skills a trainer could be working in the youth work field, business training, military, sports, and so on. It is most often their underlying values and attitudes that place a trainer in one context or another. Non-formal education and youth work carry with them certain social, cultural, political and ethical values, and so does this T-Kit. In the youth field, the values of non-formal learning are connected to personal development (e.g. independence, critical thinking, openness, curiosity, creativity), social development (e.g. the ability to interact, participative democracy, solidarity and social justice, responsibility, problem solving) and ethics (e.g. acceptance of others, human rights, intercultural learning, intercultural dialogue, peace and non-violent behaviour, gender equality and intergenerational dialogue).[50] This section considers the nature of the trainer's values, their relation to the trainer's motivations, and their influence on the training process. It examines to what extent those values are present in a trainer's work and in a training room and to what extent they get transmitted to the learners.

We begin by looking at some questions that can help in understanding those underlying values that motivate personal training practice.

In a training situation it is the core values that should guide the way of planning and conducting training, as well as ways in which trainers conduct themselves during the process. The values a trainer has in relation to training reveal themselves in:

- the choice of training topics;
- how this choice is made, including factors such as the needs assessment (see section 3.1) and the degree to which the participants are included in the planning process;
- the degree of training participation made possible by the methodological choices (do trainers deal with expectations, use feedback and evaluation possibilities, and employ active and experiential methods);
- the extent to which trainers are willing to make interventions, reveal and act on their values.

In the above-mentioned ETS Competence Model for Trainers, each of the competence areas have values as their integral part. However, there is one particular competence area which deals with the way in which trainers act on their values, inside and outside the training space: Being civically engaged. This competence area was not included in the original set but was added due to a strong demand from the trainers' community, based on their understanding of trainers as political beings, who facilitate value-based education. One of the four competences is "connecting [youth] policies and educational programmes" and it is a strong indication of how trainers in their work need to keep these two levels, and interaction between them, in mind.

Being civically engaged as a trainer underlines the importance of values in one's training practice, ability to integrate them and use them for the learners' benefit.

At the same time, the trainer's values should not overtake the learning process and they need to be balanced out with the learner's own values, the topic of the training and the purpose of the organisers.

These dilemmas imply that a very important set of values should also be mentioned here, what could be called professional ethics. Discussions on professional ethics may be familiar to us from the world of politics, or journalism, and it is also a concept that trainers must consider in relation to their own personal list of dos and don'ts in training.

1.2.4. Walking the talk

As we have established, trainers work in the international youth work field, which is not value-free, and in their role, trainers are constantly in a position to communicate and act on the values. Fairly often the topics of their training are focused around some value-loaded topics as well, for example, when working with human rights education, which is not just (talking) about human rights but is also through human rights

50. European Training Strategy (2018), *A competence model for trainers working at international level: tools to get started*, available at www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-3858/Booklet_Tools_to_Get_Started_Final.pdf, accessed 13 August 2020.

and for human rights. This implies living those values, embodying them in every aspect of one's life. Hence, when working on human rights, trainers should be able to walk the talk and talk the walk, or in other words, do what they say (and promote).

Something to think about

The everyday life of a human rights trainer might put trainers in many dilemmas about how to walk the talk and make sure they are living in accordance with human rights, and not only doing educational activities for human rights. There are many examples of when living the everyday life of a human rights educator or trainer can present conflicts and disharmonies between what you speak about, stand up for and the way you live. Below are just a few examples, and even if they do not reflect your situation: where would you stand?

1. How does your organisation deal with human resources? Your management speaks about human rights and at the same time they do not always respect the human rights of their staff – including trainees and volunteers.
2. When you go shopping with your friends and they buy clothes with brand names of companies that you know do not respect the human rights of their workers and are also known to make use of child labour.
3. You know you earn more in a day as a human rights trainer than an average teacher in a low-income country earns in a week.
4. Participants in your training course are openly racist. They recognise that what they say can be seen as racism but insist on the right to say it as they should have "freedom of speech".
5. You are working as an international trainer and get paid significantly less than your international trainer colleagues who come from richer countries.
6. A training course on sustainable development where you are invited to run sessions and you take a flight in order to get there on time and then leave for another meeting.

Being a trainer can be a very demanding role. Placing oneself as a trainer in a training situation means developing an awareness of what trainers stand for, what they can offer, the limits they set, and, importantly, how they deal with the expectations of others. In the framework of value-based non-formal education trainers owe it to themselves to live their values, but at the same time let others live their lives too. This means at the same time being open and inviting, as well as assertively speaking one's mind. While trying to balance these two things, trainers need to be aware of the power that comes with the role. How to send the message: "I am OK, you are OK" and not "my ethics are superior to yours"?

This incomplete description simply aims to point out that being a trainer is a complex task, and sometimes even a burdening duty. It demands self-awareness, continuous training and a variety of knowledge in relation to the realities in which trainers work. This might, once again, ring the alarm bell of having to be a super-trainer; however, it is more about one's own approach to learning and development.

Walking the talk also means the approach to learning. Because if a trainer's main job is to facilitate learning, they should surely be a lifelong learner themselves; dedicated to their development and advancement of quality. And this all starts with self-reflection and self-awareness. In other words, where do I stand, what are my core values, how do I behave and how does that influence learners. Self-reflective practice is certainly one of the important aspects of being a trainer, since it contributes to deepening self-awareness, recognising mistakes and seeing the way forward.

From the trainer's perspective, engaging in lifelong learning means that they should engage in and seek out further training opportunities and keep informed of emerging educational issues, debates and questions.

Reflection moment

- What makes an ethical trainer? Am I an ethical trainer by my own standards?
- How do I live my values in the work that I do? How do I ensure not to (over)impose those values on my colleagues and participants?
- How do I walk the talk?
- Am I a lifelong learner? How do I know? Do I invest in my professional development?

1.2.5. The well-being of the trainer

Training, especially youth training, can be demanding, tiring and even stressful.[51] Every trainer has, at least once, experienced coming home after a week-long training feeling exhausted, perhaps happy, perhaps empty, or somewhere in between. A few days off will be welcome (if not always possible) in order to recover and make contact again with life at home, with partner or friends and with the rest of the world! Being involved in the life of a training course is not a classic nine-to-five job. For the team of trainers it often means that the day starts with a working breakfast and hopefully stops sometime close to midnight, during or after some social activities. The intense situation of a training course, very often learning and living together, can be very supportive for the learning process, allowing participants to stay in constant contact with each other, and sharing formal and informal moments together. Being fully involved in this process, not to mention dealing with organisational issues and the training programme itself, can become an all-consuming task for the trainer. On the other hand, working trainers are not just responsible for the functioning of training and (within limits) for the well-being of the participants, but also have to take care of themselves and their energy levels to maintain (and sometimes improve) the quality of work.

There are many ways to make training life less stressful – before, during and after the training. The following questions can be seen as a personal checklist for taking care of oneself during training and before subsequent sessions.

Making life easier! Hints and suggestions

Before the training – blended version	How much time can I spend on the screen without getting my eyes too tired? How do I balance the online work, with all the other things I need to do?
Before the training	Which environmental conditions (atmosphere, comforts, personal time, sports and hobbies, special diet) do I need for this training? What issues from the outside world (my organisation, other projects) do I need to block out or delegate so that I can really focus on the training and not be distracted by other things? What "luggage" (health or private problems) do I carry with me? Who (within the team) could I share this with and what kind of support do I need during the training?
During the training (residential)	How do I ensure that I am being in the here and now (check the subsection below), without being stretched between different tasks and obligations elsewhere? How can I sleep well during the training? (Arrive earlier and check the room and its suitability; is it near potentially noisy environments? Other strategies: use earplugs, bring my own quilt and pillow, use relaxation methods when I am stressed...). What support do I need during the training or for short-term preparation on location (persons, material, books, media...). How can I share the responsibility for the evenings with my team colleagues to ensure some free evenings or more sleep? How do I ensure moments of silence or focus during the busy times at the training? To what extent do we address well-being as a topic for the whole group? Is there a space to introduce well-being activities in our work with the group, ensuring the well-being of others as well? How can I stay connected with my partner/friends and the rest of the world, without being distracted in my work?
During the training (online)	How do I avoid videoconferencing fatigue – how many hours can I survive and be productive? How can we distribute the breaks? How do I deal with too much screen time, excluding the training activity as well? How do I take care of my diet and exercise during the long days online? (If doing the training from home), how do I make a meaningful separation between professional and private space? How do I reclaim personal space after the end of the training day?

51. Good general information about stress management can be found in *T-Kit 1 – Organisational management*, available at https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/T-kit-1-organisational-management, accessed 13 August 2020.

After the training General aspects	How did I organise my own learning process and professional development? How do I assess the range of "simple" and "complex" training subjects and participants I engaged with during the last year? In what areas am I asking too much of myself, and when is it just the opposite? What does my life as a trainer and my absences mean to those with whom I am living in a private or professional capacity? In this context, what is the price I am willing or have to pay for this existence? What is the price the others have to pay? How is my circle of friends? How much contact do I have with different groups, or friends outside my work context? With whom can I share difficult professional situations and (personal) problems? What did I do or read during the last months that were not connected to my professional activities? How much time do I really have for myself? Is there anything left after commitments to my family or my partner, my job, participants and other people?

Being "here and now"

Part of ensuring well-being is striving to be in the here and now as much as possible. With the nomadic life of trainers working at international level this is quite a challenge, but this lifestyle requires even more balancing and grounding breaks, to really feel in the present, wherever the trainer is currently at work. To bridge different elements of their life and to be present in all of them is quite an achievement.

Being here and now also means accepting that you do not have an impact as a trainer on what will happen after, when the training process is concluded. Trainers have a minimal influence over what participants will make of the learning, the situation and the experiences shared in the here and now. It is about letting go of what you have no hands on, but cherishing what is happening in a given situation, thanks to the experience, in training.

One of the ways to work towards grounding yourself in the here and now is to try to be aware of yourself and your environment. And while days in training are very busy, taking a few moments in the morning to bring calm and focus into your day can be very rewarding. Either by being in silence and focusing on your breathing or by engaging in a meditation practice, having a short walk in nature, doing some yoga, whatever works best for you – a few conscious minutes to start your day – can make a huge difference. You may want to use one of the grounding apps that are out there, so they can follow you wherever you go.[52] And if you are feeling very adventurous, you can bring these practices into the training room as well. So, instead of starting with a set of energisers, you can start with "focusisers" or "meditisers" (mindfulness work and the like), some yoga poses or contact improvisation instead. Bring your group into the here and now with some breathing exercises, or Morning Pages app or free sharing in the circle. This might help you and the group to enter the day in a calmer, more focused way and help you collect the energy in the room.

1.3. INTERCULTURAL LEARNING AND TRAINING

The field of intercultural learning in youth training is addressed by an entire T-Kit 4[53] in this series and it is also a big part of T-Kit 11 – *Mosaic, the training kit for Euro-Mediterranean youth work*.[54] Nevertheless, this T-Kit is also concerned with the subject. Intercultural learning has a long history in youth work training and this whole publication is informed by a philosophy of interculturalism, and the various factors in training are approached from this fundamental premise. It is the authors' view that intercultural learning is not just something you do in a workshop, or on a rainy Tuesday afternoon (although it is clearly important and beneficial to deal with it as a subject in specific programme components); it is an attitude, an ongoing, quintessential process, as well as a constant learning opportunity or sometimes challenge for trainers and participants. It is a political philosophy that motivates international youth work and a body of educational practice that should arguably be ever-present. And crucially, it is a body of knowledge that demands reflexivity

52. App for meditation and sleep, available at www.calm.com/, accessed 13 August 2020.
53. *T-Kit 4 – Intercultural learning*, available at https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/t-kit-4-intercultural-learning, accessed 17 August 2020.
54. *T-Kit 11 – Mosaic: The training kit for Euro-Mediterranean youth work*, available at https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/t-kit-11, accessed 17 August 2020.

and the development of key competences by the trainer. As outlined in the introduction, this is something to bear in mind while reading very different sections, and intercultural learning is also explicitly addressed in other parts of this publication. The aim of this section is a bit like the blurb on the back of a best-selling novel: giving the basic idea, and stimulating the reader to look for these things inside the covers. Learning is considered elsewhere in this resource section 3.2, but considering intercultural learning means at some point grappling with that most disputed of terms, "culture".

1.3.1. Culture

To put it bluntly, "culture" is a complex and disputed term. Clifford Geertz (1973), in his celebrated work *The interpretation of cultures*, notes that many works which seek to "explain" culture tend to create more ambiguities in their pursuit of certainties. This is a realisation echoed by Jacques Demorgon and Markus Molz (1996), who argue that attempts to define culture cannot escape the fact that it is itself culturally produced. This is an obvious, yet fundamental premise; as the English writer Raymond Williams illustrates in *Keywords*, culture is a concept with a history, and therefore cannot be approached as a scientific state of being, but instead, as a socially constructed way of conceptualising the way we live.

Definitions of culture have changed over the years and range from an essentialist view (the idea that culture is predefined and static) to a more constructivist view (culture as dynamic, in continuous evolution and multifaceted). The essentialist view states that people and things have "natural" characteristics that are inherent and unchanging. Essentialism allows people to categorise and divide people into groups. Cultural essentialism is the practice of categorising groups of people within a culture, or from other cultures, according to essential qualities. While essentialism is a simple way for individual people to categorise, it can be a serious problem for societies. Hence, this approach is inadequate and out of date, as people often migrate or travel physically and virtually, living in continuous interaction with one another.

The constructivist view is defined through interactions among people; it is fluid in its expression and continuously evolving and adapting to changing realities. Culture evolves and reshapes itself throughout the years; it is a never-ending, ongoing process. It is influenced by the interaction of its members with members of other cultures, and with their surroundings, by cultural and economic exchanges and by globalisation.

Another type of discourse refers to culture as a making process, as multifaceted and diverse in its values, beliefs, practices and traditions – some of which may be recent interventions. Hence, in this view, culture is negotiable and subject to personal choice, and a dynamic process through which the understandings and the boundaries of groups or communities are renegotiated and redefined according to current needs.

Hence, it is impossible to speak of culture as a kind of closed system, and of enculturation as a straightforward, common process. The repertoire of cultural influences that people are exposed to is constantly increasing, and some writers argue that the world is experiencing the development of third cultures through processes of hybridity. That is, the constant flow and meeting of people, objects, ideas and images are creating cultures that extend beyond the traditional markers of nation, family, ethnicity, religion, and so forth.

In many ways, international youth seminars can be seen in this light. Participants are encultured in different forms, yet it must also be emphasised that they may have many things in common; frames of reference, values, types of educational capital, youth sub-cultural lifestyles, organisational cultures, political commitments, and the list could be extended much further.

1.3.2. Culture and identity

The way in which we view culture determines our interpretation of cultural realities; it influences the way in which we interact with people, how we perceive our identity and the identity of others.

Identity in relation to culture is constantly under reconstruction; it is a lifelong learning process, influenced by living conditions, different abilities, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, political allegiances and various other factors.

If we consider identity as something static, given at birth, we tend to presume in a way that "fits into the box", by what we and others believe that specific identity to be – based on expectations about cultural norms, gender roles, religious beliefs, and so forth (T-Kit 4: 16).[55]

Furthermore, Oana Nestian Sandu and Nadine Lyamouri-Bajja state that:

> if we view our identity and the identities of other people as something that evolves and reshapes continuously in interactions, we allow ourselves to continuously reshape our identity according to our expectations from the world, not according to what the world expects from us. More importantly, we allow other people to construct their own identity and we refrain from putting them into boxes, from labelling them, from looking at them through the lens of stereotypes.[56]

Identity can then be perceived as belonging to certain groups and still differentiating from others (in that group), with variations and different degrees of notions and feelings of being "inside" or "outside". Depending on with whom and in which context we interact, we continuously reshape our identity. For example, being the only gay man in a group of hetero couples, your notion about gender/sexual identity might be stronger than among a (queer) LGBTIQ group. Therefore, many speak about the concept of "multiple identities" (for example Burke and Stets 2009), which is often used to describe people growing up in multicultural backgrounds, moreover it can be used to refer to any person, in changing social contexts.

Intercultural learning aims at deconstructing the meaning of "having an identity". Peter Weinreich defines a person's identity as:

> the totality of one's self-construal, in which how one construes oneself in the present expresses the continuity between how one construes oneself as one was in the past and how one construes oneself as one aspires to be in the future; this allows for definitions of aspects of identity, such as: "One's ethnic identity is defined as that part of the totality of one's self-construal made up of those dimensions that express the continuity between one's construal of past ancestry and one's future aspirations in relation to ethnicity".[57]

A psychological identity relates to self-image (one's mental model of oneself), self-esteem and individuality.

We can conclude that at an individual level, identity is permanently evolving – just like culture – and that it does not only depend on our auto-identification (how we identify ourselves) but also on hetero-identification (how others identify us). Most often, the identity one person assumes is different from the identity that is "given" (perceived) by others.[58]

When it comes to cultural identity individuals usually identify with more than one group, either related to interpersonal relationships and social roles (such as mother, partner, son, friend, etc.), or, personal attributes (such as tolerant, conservative, open, fun-loving, etc.). These multiple identifications with social groups, relationships, roles and attributes help individuals to orientate their position, find their place in society – in a social world relative to other people.

In order to be involved in meaningful and authentic intercultural encounters, one needs to find a balance between acknowledging the cultural specificities of a certain group and carefully listening to the person in front of you with an open mind and without labelling.

People use different strategies in order to maintain a positive self-identity or a secure feeling in their identity, for example one distinguishes between in-group ("us") and out-group ("them"). Hence, an artificial opposition and categorisation is created, where one focuses on the differences and reduces similarities. This often results in competition, confrontation, and in some cases it fosters violence and leads to discrimination. The focus on "difference" and "others" may become evaluated negatively or even seen as a threat. We do not have to search far in the societies around us to see these processes at work.

55. *T-Kit 4 – Intercultural learning*, available at https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/t-kit-4-intercultural-learning, accessed 17 August 2020.
56. ibid. p.16.
57. Weinreich P., Definition of identity, available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Identity_(social_science), accessed 17 August 2020.
58. This is strongly linked to self-perception and the awareness of others, which is, for example, analysed in the Johari Window, developed by Luft and Ingham (1995).

Reflection moment

- Why is it important to talk about culture and identity in international youth activities?
- To what extent is intercultural learning also happening in national youth activities/contexts?
- Are stereotypes and prejudices related to culture?
- Which cultures do you belong to? How do these influence your personal identity?

1.3.3. Culture, identity and intercultural learning

Intercultural learning promotes the view that no culture is better or worse than any other, that there is no hierarchy of cultures. It leads to an understanding that the definition of groups of belonging, of in-groups and out-groups, can be superficial and changing (T-Kit 4: 17).[59]

For a long time, culture was considered to go hand in hand with nationality or with the borders of a nation, or even an entire region (for example European, Arab, African culture). Intercultural learning acknowledges that there are certain characteristics of a culture, but there are a million different ways and specificities of how a culture is lived. Moreover, cultures themselves are internally heterogeneous. Hence, instead of putting people "into boxes", intercultural learning looks into how people are influenced differently by their dominant culture, as well as how they identify with elements and characteristics of other cultures, in order to create their own mosaic of identity.

Putting people "into boxes" due to their passport, birthplace, their appearance, habits or any other element enforces a categorisation based on stereotypes. Furthermore, considering participants in a training course as "ambassadors" of their country is a biased way of intercultural learning. One might be born or live in a certain country, but it does not mean that this person can speak for all its inhabitants and all the realities present, political decisions taken, for example in that country.

Intercultural learning helps participants understand the impact of their cultural background on their identity development and on their interpersonal and intercultural relations. Intercultural learning processes give young people a chance to adjust their images, prejudices, stereotypes and perceptions about cultural groups and individuals belonging to cultural groups, while actively listening and trying to understand others, by offering them space and time to freely manifest their cultural identity. In this process, they learn to refrain from labelling people, from putting them into boxes and categories which were created before the actual encounter.

Hence, space for identity exploration, opportunities for self-analysis, individually and in relation to others, is key in intercultural learning. Learning about us and learning about others is an interdependent process, and as a result, the better we understand ourselves, the better we understand others, and vice versa.

Reflection moment

- When you met others, for the first time, in a training setting, how did you represent your identity and your way of living culture/s?
- Did you think about the clothes you wore, the jokes you told, the type and speed of the information you offered about yourself?
- Did this differ from person to person?
- Can you trace the development of your roles within the group?
- At what stage in the training activity were your personal and cultural identity made public?
- To what extent was it possible to "read" other participants from very limited contact and information?
- What stereotypes and categories of interpretation did you use?
- Have any of these interpretations remained the same, throughout the training activity?
- Could you read their reading of you, and if so, did you attempt to adapt or reinforce these?

59. *T-Kit 4 – Intercultural learning*, available at https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/t-kit-4-intercultural-learning, accessed 17 August 2020.

While we may attempt to control the way we are interpreted by the way we represent our identity, reflecting on the way that we interpret others may indicate how successful this is likely to be.

1.3.4. Practical considerations: intercultural learning and the trainer

Intercultural learning is not just an important session or evening activity which needs to be run in almost every European/international training, it is a whole underlying, quintessential, non-stop ongoing process: among participants, trainers, between participants and trainers, the people working at your training venue in a country-specific context, the outer public, local inhabitants you encounter during your training experience. It refers, so to speak, to the micro and macro contexts, the triangle of self–others–society.

Non-formal education and intercultural learning processes are facilitated while considering that the primary learning responsibility lies among the group of participants who are influenced by the learning context and physical or online setting. Nevertheless, trainers bring their knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, personal qualities and characters, their own interests, cultural backgrounds and preferences into the learning process. Due to that reason, certain factors need to be taken into account when preparing and running intercultural learning processes.

As mentioned earlier, intercultural learning involves a process of understanding and de-/reconstructing one's identity. It can be challenging for participants and trainers alike. Trainers need a high level of flexibility, ability to deal with complex emotions, competences in group dynamics, ability to handle conflict, commitment to foster social change and a set of many other competences. Hence, in every training session trainers will reflect on their own identity again and again, as well as engage with diversity, needing to take into account their group, possible sensitive issues related to participants and the given social and political context. Therefore, trainers need to know their own limits, perceptions, stereotypes, prejudices and insecurities. They also need to trust their ability to challenge participants without risking their emotional safety and offering support without risking the integrity of the group, as well as the educational experience. Trainers need to be able to interact and handle in an open way opinions and standpoints that might strongly differ from their own, while sticking to a human rights framework. This also includes the utmost importance of creating a safe learning space, where it is possible to voice everyone's opinion, thoughts and feelings, without the fear of being judged. Hence, it is crucial to safeguard a learning environment that is inclusive and participatory, promotes equal relations and authentic self-expression. Moreover, trainers need to be able to make a political and social analysis of society in general, specifically related to the young people with whom they work: know their challenges and issues, participants' life experiences, beliefs and need for social change. It is the task of the trainer/s to make relevant links from educational activities to participants' lives, as well as from the ongoing intercultural learning process to their own lives. This relates again to "walking their talk" (section 1.2.4), being a source of inspiration, a role model and provider for interultural learning and a lifelong learner themselves (who learns non-stop through participants as well as the given micro and macro environment) at the same time. As a result, even for the most experienced trainer intercultural learning is never completed – you will never be an expert in it or the all-knowing trash heap! ☺ It is part of the process and beauty of working as a trainer in multicultural contexts that participants keep on challenging you (as a person with all your values and beliefs). Furthermore, political and social dynamics change, hence, you keep on evolving and growing, questioning and finding non-stop new answers and questions yourself – just like your participants!

Intercultural learning generates profound changes of attitudes and behaviours. Participants and trainers experience new emotions, values are questioned and they adopt new strategies of learning about themselves and others. Trainers need to find the right balance between challenge and support. Participants will be challenged to encourage themselves and others to change and question; at the same time, certain needs and limits need to be respected in the process. Too much support or too little challenge – both are not ideal. In *T-Kit 4 – Intercultural learning* (p. 43) as well as in this publication (section 3.5.2) one can find the model of Karl Rohnke's comfort, stretching, panic zone, which is a useful model to apply in order to plan and analyse intercultural learning experiences in non-formal education training.

For a profound look and exploration of trainers' intercultural learning competences, please refer to the ETS Competence Model for Trainers on "intercultural competence".[60]

60. European Training Strategy, The competence model for trainers and its criteria and indicators, Intercultural competence, available at www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-3754/180320_SALTO-CompetenceModel_Trainer_06_o.pdf, accessed 17 August 2020.

If you would like to discover more intercultural learning resources and related concepts, please refer to:

- T-Kit 4 – Intercultural learning[61]
- Seminar report on Intercultural learning in European youth work: which ways forward?[62]
- T-Kit 11 – Mosaic: The training kit for Euro-Mediterranean youth work[63]
- Education pack: All different – All equal[64]
- Compass,[65] Intercultural education under section of 1.2.4. HRE and other educational fields
- The developmental model of intercultural sensitivity[66]
- The White Paper on Intercultural dialogue "Living together as equals in dignity" (Council of Europe 2008)[67]

61. *T-Kit 4 – Intercultural learning*, available at https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/T-kit-4-intercultural-learning, accessed 17 August 2020.
62. Ramberg I. (2007), Intercultural learning in European youth work: which ways forward? Seminar report, available at www.coe.int/en/web/youth/-/intercultural-learning-in-european-youth-work-which-ways-forward-, accessed 17 August 2020.
63. *T-Kit 11 – Mosaic: The training kit for Euro-Mediterranean youth work*, available at https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/T-kit-11, accessed 17 August 2020.
64. *Education pack: All different – All equal* (2016), available at https://rm.coe.int/1680700aac, accessed 17 August 2020.
65. *Compass: manual for human rights education with young people*, available at www.coe.int/en/web/compass, accessed 17 August 2020.
66. Bennett (2017).
67. White Paper on Intercultural dialogue "Living together as equals in dignity" (2008).

Chapter 2

Training in teams

2.1. MULTICULTURAL TEAMWORK

2.1.1. Why work in a multicultural team?

Learning and competence development, as well as intercultural learning processes, rely heavily on the competences and abilities of the trainers and facilitators responsible for the activity. Multicultural teams of trainers and facilitators secure through their complementary roles and competences the consistency of the activity and its relevance to the learners. Furthermore, some desired qualities of a team include a safeguarded gender balance, geographical and cultural diversity, complementarities of expertise, experiences and direct experiences with the themes of the activity, or for example, when activities are specific to a country or region, the presence of trainers and facilitators from that country or region.

Working in a team with people of different backgrounds and with a variety of experiences, approaches, views, values, abilities and opinions may sometimes involve disagreements and arguments, and require increased flexibility, tolerance and openness to other modes of perception and behaviour. It requires making efforts to understand the other members' points of view and making compromises. Intercultural teamwork can therefore sometimes seem to be ineffective, as team dynamics disrupt concentration on the tasks at hand (but this also happens easily in a homogeneous team where everyone shares the same background). If thought through and managed well, the resources and competencies of the different team members complement each other to produce a rich and creative intercultural learning process and results that complement the complexity of the task and target group. This is intercultural teamwork as an exciting, stimulating and also highly effective process. Intercultural teamwork is a deep mutual learning experience for all team members, as well as a source of mutual support in carrying the workload, responsibilities and stress of the training.

Maybe most importantly, diversity within the team suggests that a number of essential issues likely to come up during the training course should be signalled and discussed in the team beforehand. Personal preferences and experiences, cultural differences, different social realities, various abilities or educational systems across and beyond Europe influence our approaches to learning and training. In common with participants, trainers have different ways and styles of learning, training and working together, set different priorities, have different abilities and prefer different methods. Discussing and finding a balance between them lessens, at least to some extent, the cultural specificity of the training and increases the likelihood of coming up with an approach, or a combination of approaches, that the participants can refer to and will find useful.

Reflection moment

Diversity – what does it mean?

- A variety of aspects can be considered when forming a "diverse team" for a seminar or training course: country or region of origin, ethnic or cultural background, organisational background, age, sex, different abilities, etc.

1. Which factors do you consider important when selecting members for a training team?
2. Are there institutional requirements of your organisation or service that you need to consider? What are they?
3. How to ensure a diverse and stimulating learning atmosphere in the team?

2.1.2. What makes a team a team?

And who is part of the team? In most cases, the organisers of the training activity and trainers are part of the team. Usually, it will not be the trainers alone who define and decide on the training course. The organisers will also be there and actively take part in the process, most likely having slightly different expectations and aims, being concerned about the broader framework and the bigger picture of what the team should deliver.

Just because people have been put together in a team, due to the many good reasons already mentioned in the preceding chapter (such as competences, experiences, background just to mention a few decisive factors again), it does not mean they feel or function as a team already. What does it take? What is at stake?

The three Cs

- Connected
- Coherent
- Competent

Apart from being diverse, a team becomes a success when it is connected, coherent and competent. Connected, meaning taking care of each other, supporting each other, helping each other out. Coherent in terms of "walking their talk", contributing at all times to the aims and objectives, vision and mission of the training course, complementing each other in terms of contents, and building up on each other's inputs and sessions. The term competent means being equipped with the right set of competences and experiences, such as being competent on the main topics and contents of the activity, how to handle a group, a training course and a complex learning process (residential and online).

Reflection moment

- What is the basis of successful teamwork for you?
- Have you ever worked in a "dream team"? What made it special? Which factors contributed to the team feeling, flow and success?
- To what extent do you think that participants appreciate the work of a "dream team" as much as the team members?
- How can one establish a climate of connection, trust and encouragement to express ideas, opinions, disagreements, feelings and questions in a team?
- When working in training teams before, could you contribute your personal resources, qualities and competencies to the success of the work?
- How have you dealt with conflicts in training teams (if they arose) before?

After some inspirational food-for-team thought, we will look at how one can potentially make a team work. The next section outlines some aspects to consider and some ideas for methods to use within your team.

2.2. TEAM BUILDING AND TEAM LIFE

2.2.1. Forming the team

Like many other aspects connected to the world of training, forming a proper team for the event is not entirely straightforward. There are many variables that come into play, starting from a variety of organisational, practical and financial criteria. But perhaps even more important, the topic of the training and the target group of participants should be important aspects in determining which trainers have the appropriate competences, experience, background and approach for the training course. Moreover, the team should, ideally, represent a balance of geographic and cultural backgrounds and approaches that reflect the composition of the target group of participants. While individual trainer competencies are essential, it is crucial to look at complementarities when thinking about composition. A team works best when competences and resources complement each other and are used constructively in relation to the course objectives and participants' learning needs.

The working languages of the different team members deserve careful reflection. Team communication is essential, and expressive capacity in the working language(s) can severely influence possibilities to contribute and affect power structures within the team. Selecting trainers with a good knowledge of one common working language might therefore be a wise decision. This does not mean that it is not beneficial to have other working languages of participants represented in the team. On the contrary, using different working languages and other ways of communication to ensure access for everyone during the training course (maybe only in smaller working groups) creates more equal chances for participation and diffuses the power structures that language may create among the participants. It can also help to visualise the cultural determination of many of the concepts used in youth work.

Once it has been decided who will be in the team, the common work can begin. Before the start of the training course, the programme needs to be developed and the team should be able to find out how it can work together to run and reach the objectives of the training. If the training is implemented through the blended approach, the first online learning phase would be a good point to understand the dynamics of the team.

Many essential aspects can best be taken care of in a preparation meeting. The following is a list of points to consider.

- Are there one or more preparation meetings before a training course?
- What can be discussed by videoconferencing, e-mail or chat?
- Which online tools are going to be used to support the development of the training programme, task division and overall work facilitation and management?

Even though there are many online tools and opportunities, nothing replaces a meeting where all team members meet to share and discuss their ideas and agree upon the basic values, objectives and programme of the training. Especially if all or some team members have not worked together before, a team meeting to prepare the training course is also the first experience in working together and getting to know each other as colleagues.

Besides clarifying the course framework, understanding the needs and expectations of the participants, preparing the programme and distributing the tasks, some time should be reserved to build the team and evaluate the meeting. Before ending the meeting, establishing a clear division of tasks with deadlines for their completion is essential. Who should do what by when? What can be done online, what not? It is useful to decide on a co-ordinator (or rotating co-ordinators) for the process of team communication after the meeting to ensure that the process is actually followed up before the next meeting.

2.2.2. Creating a climate of trust, support and personal expression

Team building is instrumental in creating an atmosphere that allows team members to get to know each other and to find their place in the team. It is the basis for creating an open climate of trust and respect which is needed to encourage personal expression and contribution, mutual support and a constructive use of team diversity during the training. Team building could include, among other things, sharing the trainers' :

- expectations of the training course;
- expectations from the team and general preferences when it comes to teamwork;

- motivation for being part of this team and the training;
- competences they feel they are bringing into the team;
- areas of competence development that might be addressed within the team;
- prior experiences in youth work and training and other experiences of relevance for the particular course.

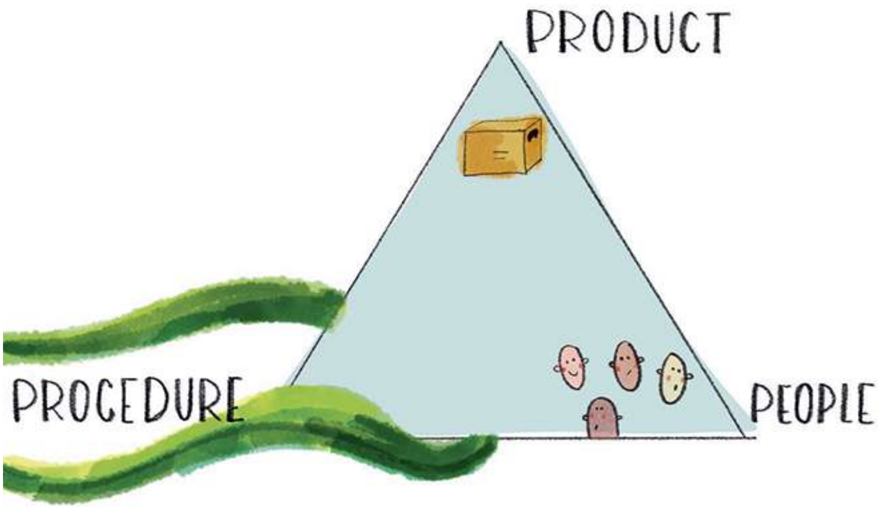
Further elements of team building can be getting a first idea of everyone's ways of working and some of their strong and weak points. Finally and importantly, it should provide an opportunity to enjoy each other's company and the prospect of working together. Yes, we should say that working together can be fun! Team building can be done by talking about these points during the meeting or informally over dinner. It can also be done through activities that can get the team started on these conversations.

There are a number of ways of facilitating this conversation and one example, developed by a colleague trainer,[68] can be found in Appendix 1. It is a co-working style questionnaire that offers questions to the team to discuss together. What is important is to allocate enough time in the preparation to understand each other's needs and preferences and to agree on some essential aspects of working together.

If the team is more focused on the competences, there is a booklet with practical tools and methods, developed in the framework of the ETS Competence Model for Trainers, which offers a variety of possibilities for teams to look at their competences as a team: www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-3860/Booklet_Practical_Tools_and_Methods_contentpages_final.pdf.

In addition, there is a collection of methods based on competence cards, called "Hold your Aces", which offers individual methods to look at competences, but it can also be done in a team. The competence cards can be used individually, in newly formed trainers' teams, in existing teams or trainers' pools. It is downloadable here: www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-3857/Hold_your_Aces_Methods_final.pdf.

Product, procedure, people: the triangle of the three Ps



The triangle of the three Ps – product, procedure and people – represents the different poles that any team needs to consider in its work. Many teams tend to focus on the product, on the result to be achieved, as this seems to be the most effective way to work given that time is always limited. However, it is in making sure that the different factors are in equilibrium that teams could enhance training. Attention to the individual team

68. Nik Paddison, Co-worker profiling questionnaire.

members is important. How do they feel about the work and the team? How does this impact on the team process? Allied to this, to organise its work a team needs some structure, some rules and a division of responsibilities and tasks. Too much of this, however, can be detrimental to creativity and spontaneity. Between the product, the procedure and the people, it is the balance that counts.

In a non-formal education activity, which represents an inclusive space, in line with human rights values and principles, where the safety and needs of the group (namely the people) have priority, people would nearly always have priority over process or product. A team has to be flexible and might sometimes have to give up on an objective or a programme element if the needs of the group require something different. One might have to slow down a process, in order to handle a conflict between people, which may lead to highly important learning and highly important foreseen aspects (for example a toolkit, recommendations, establishment of a trainers' pool) needing to change to something completely different during an intense learning process, according to the needs of people (participants and their organisations). In some instances, however, the team may also have to speed up the process in the best interests of people, the group of participants, the responsible organisation, and the like.

The three Ps model can be used in different ways. A more extensive description of it can be found in *T-Kit 3 – Project management* (pp. 77-78). *T-Kit 1 - Organisational management* introduces it as a way of looking at leadership (p. 46).

2.2.3. Co-ordination, ownership and participative decision making

In many cases a team has a designated "leader". This might be a person who has been appointed by the organising institution or organisation to co-ordinate the training event or, specifically, the team of trainers. Or, a co-ordinator could be chosen within the team, according to their specific competences and previous experience, and decided by a participative process. In either case, what might make more sense is to talk about a system of co-ordination rather than the particular role of a leader or co-ordinator.

Throughout the work process, there are certain co-ordination tasks to be fulfilled. They include, for instance, chairing meetings (ensuring that decisions are taken, that the agenda is followed, etc.), dealing with administrative tasks (such as contracts, invitations to participants, communication with participants), writing reports of team meetings and co-ordinating team communication between meetings. They can also encompass the overall functioning of the team, their well-being and communication among the different members. These tasks can be delegated to one person in the team, or some, or even most of them, can be shared among the team. This can help create and maintain team ownership of the course and the team itself. It is important to bear in mind that a democratically structured team, where members have equal responsibilities, also develops certain power structures. Essentially, dealing with leadership in teamwork is a question of how these dynamics and structures are handled. Team members are perceived differently by each other and by the participants, as they have different qualities, competencies and personalities. The challenge is to nurture support rather than competition within the team as a result of these differences.

Creating participative and interactive teamwork and decision making does not mean that every member of the team contributes in the same way. But it does mean that everyone can, and hopefully will, contribute to their full potential. ☺

Reflection moment

- Does your team have a clear system of co-ordination for different tasks?
- How are decisions taken?
- Can everyone in the team contribute to their full potential? If not, why is that the case?
- Who decides what priorities are set when?
- When does the result become more important than the process?
- How are tasks distributed?
- Who gets the attractive tasks (such as running a nice exercise or giving an important plenary input), and who does the necessary yet invisible, less attractive work?
- What can the team do to create equal chances for participation?

2.2.4. Roles in a team: contributing personal resources, qualities and competences

Working in different teams of trainers, there are some fairly common situations: some people talk a lot, others less. Ideas presented by some people are usually taken up by the team, while other ideas are ignored. For some people coming up with creative ideas comes naturally, while others tend to focus on practical details. Some push the team forward and challenge its work, while others ask painstaking questions. Some members have a strong sense of objectives, while others are good at promoting team spirit. There are many roles that people can take on in a team. All of these roles are important and can be complementary for productive teamwork. Depending on the team composition and the particular situation, people might change their roles. Different people bring out different qualities in us and a specific situation can demand specific behaviour and action.

And since behaviours are knowledge, skills and attitudes in action, a great source of inspiration here can be the ETS Competence Model for Trainers. Besides all the other competences that influence how a trainer will behave in a specific team and which role(s) they will take, the "co-operating successfully in teams" competence area encompasses specific knowledge, skills and attitudes that play an important role when it comes to training teams. Contributing actively to team tasks, being willing to take responsibility, encouraging and involving other team members, and other competences in this competence area, will influence not only one's position in the team, but also a tendency for taking on specific tasks, including the co-ordinating ones.

For effective and fulfilling teamwork, it is important that all members can contribute according to their competences and take on roles that they feel comfortable with, which furthermore are recognised as well as valued by others. This is easier said than done. Behaviour that is different from our own easily annoys us. Understanding theoretically that people have different needs and ways of contributing is far from being able to accept this situation and to use it constructively. This is especially true for multicultural teams, where personal and cultural factors intermingle in determining team behaviour. Last but not least, good teamwork also depends on how a trainer values the work with their team colleagues as a chance for personal learning and on how the team fosters this development. Reflective team analysis and careful feedback are essential elements in this process (see section 2.3.2).

When it comes to online learning, there might be a few specific roles that need to be considered. Inspired by the quality standards in education and training of the Council of Europe Youth Department, they are as follows:

1. a facilitator who takes care of the process, the dynamic of the activity, the participation of participants;
2. a technical (digital) facilitator, or someone who is responsible for the technical support, setting up the different spaces, providing quick alternatives and making sure there is a smooth technical flow of the activity;
3. if needed, one or a few experts providing knowledge and information, or engaging in dialogue. Some longer sessions might even have special guests or a musical act, for example, trying to keep the attention and engagement of the participants;
4. rapporteur – the role of the rapporteur is also more dynamic, being responsible for taking notes, but also to summarise those notes for all participants during the discussion.

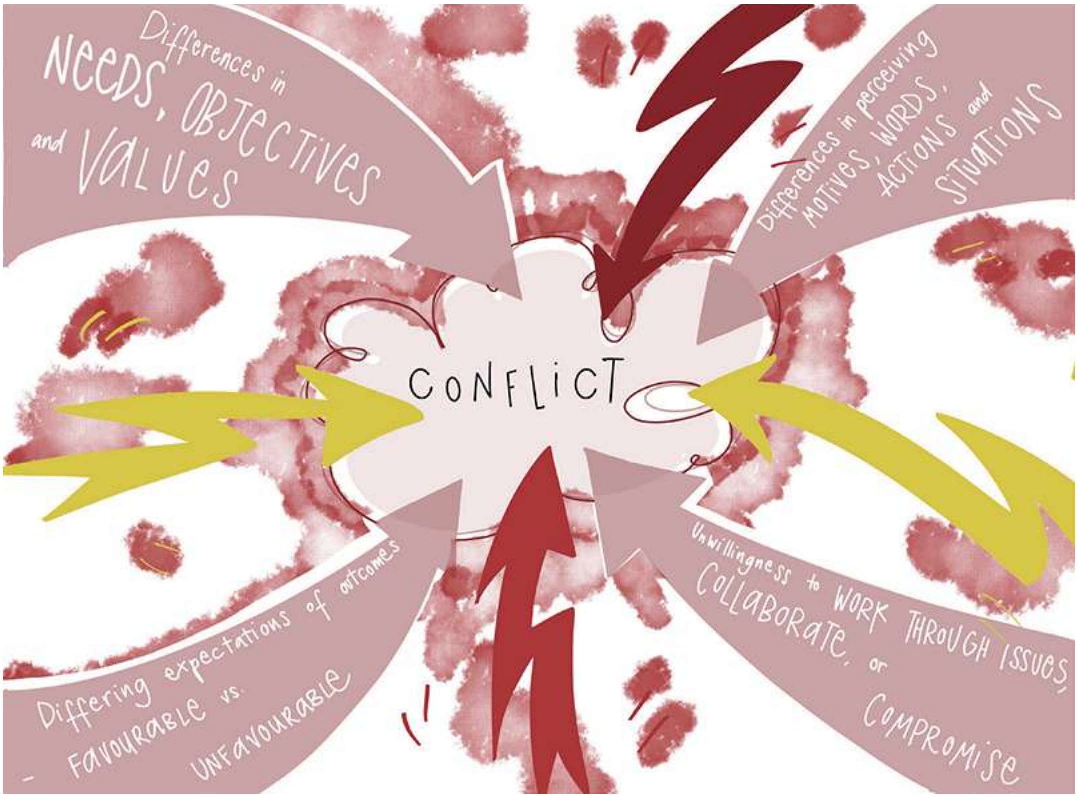
The teams can also have other people with other roles depending on the scope of the activity.

2.2.5. Viewing disagreements as an opportunity for improvement and creativity

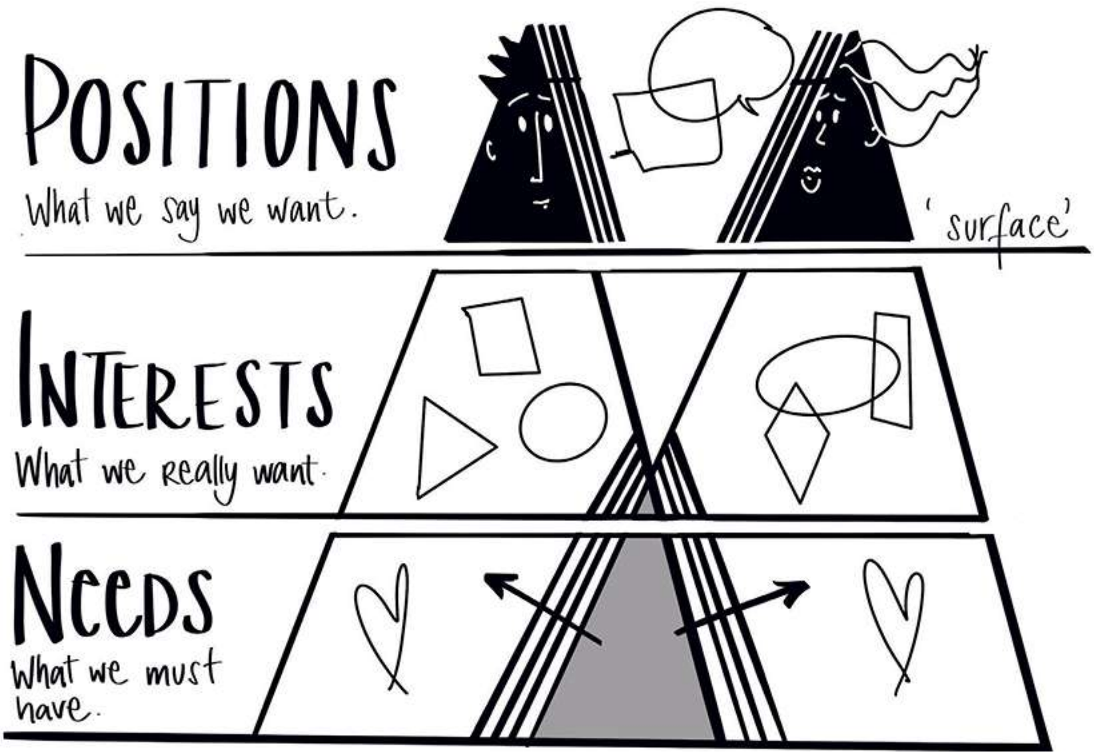
Sometimes it is assumed that the team works best when it works harmoniously without major disagreements. Working in harmony is of course very nice, as long as it is certain this is the case for everybody. While not suggesting that everything is not always what it seems, quite often apparent team harmony is the avoidance of disagreements and frustrations that exist but are not expressed. When different people are brought together to work on a creative process, which comes with planning and facilitating a training course, many different ideas, perspectives and needs come into play. These differences are beautiful and are the driver of that creative process, but they are also the source of tensions, challenges and disagreements, which are usually not pleasant and can slow down the working process, so it is no wonder people often tend to try and prevent them from showing their provocative heads.

Nonetheless, by doing so, there is a risk of at least two things: to keep having some members with unfulfilled needs and frustrations and not to utilise the potential for growth that comes from different views and perspectives. Therefore, we would argue that constructive teamwork includes working with disagreements among team members and accepting them as an integral element of team communication. There are several essential things to consider when it comes to approaching disagreements in teams.

One is that conflicts in teams mostly evolve for four different reasons.



Another one is that when tensions are high and team members express their frustrations and strong positions, they are often masking their real needs. This fact is shown very nicely in the "PIN model" of conflict resolution.[69]



69. PIN model of conflict resolution, available at www.researchgate.net/figure/Onion-representation-of-PIN-model-of-conflict-resolution_fig2_263918045, accessed 17 August 2020.

Without addressing the underlying needs, the team has very little chance of moving forward, and can not profit from disagreements and grow and develop.

Many theories suggest that disagreements and conflicts are best dealt with if they are addressed openly, consciously and directly. In some particular contexts and styles of working, however, openly and directly stating disagreements and related feelings might not be acceptable and conflicts are dealt with in more indirect ways. Section 4.2 takes a closer look at dealing with conflicts in groups or teams.

2.2.6. Acceptance of tensions and ambiguity

Tensions and ambiguities are an inherent part of intercultural teamwork. Fundamental tensions and ambiguities include:

- Tension between individual interests and the collective interest, between "being myself" and "serving the whole". Both sides are essential, and suggest another key element of the balancing act that is teamwork.
- Tension between the need and challenge of change, flexibility and innovation, and adherence to established structures, principles and points of orientation.
- Tension between the wish to set and reach ideal aims and the knowledge that they will never be fully reached (Pohl and Witt 2000).
- Acceptance of ambiguity. Intercultural teamwork requires of its members a continual recognition that there are various modes of perception and behaviour. Different approaches to the same idea exist; different perceptions and interpretations of the same situation must also be recognised as such.

Ambiguity has increasingly been a topic for the work of trainers and one of the usual explanations is that the world around us is changing faster and faster. Norms, frames and reference points that trainers are used to and their participants are used to are less and less certain for each of us. The future is getting harder and harder to predict, to grasp, to master. And when putting people from many different contexts together, this just adds an additional layer (or a few) of ambiguity and complexity. On the one hand, this brings excitement and encourages creativity, but on the other it generates anxiety and fear of the unknown. Facing these tensions and ambiguities can throw trainers off balance and make them doubt their own views and convictions, leading to feelings of insecurity, confusion or frustration. This is common and expected, and the process of establishing common values, objectives and basic agreements can provide valuable stability for the team.

Knowing that learning is about change, and change creates ambiguity, implies that learning is a lot about ambiguity as well. To be able to accept this while still operating often proves to be a challenging and difficult aspect of work with team colleagues, but at the same time very much needed. And as with other challenges, developing acceptance to ambiguity is a very rewarding learning process for any trainer. Acceptance and the ability to work with ambiguity can be seen as a personal competence, but also a competence and approach to be developed together in a team. In particular, learning and being able to "let go" is one of the key competences in the overall process of dealing with ambiguity; to let go of one's preconceived notions, of ideas on how things should be done (because they have always been done that way?). This is easier than it sounds and it needs considerable effort and competence, both in life, but in teams as well.

Reflection moment

- How do you personally deal with ambiguity (and change)? Do you have any specific strategies in place?
- How do you facilitate the process of change for others? How do you address ambiguity?
- How will you explore and address each other's certain and uncertain views and positions in a team?
- How will you navigate ambiguity together in a team/group?

Exercise for exploring acceptance of ambiguity

- Below are little activities that you can do in order to explore your acceptance of ambiguity and change. You can do them all together or just pick and choose.

1. Think about the last major change in your life. How did you deal with it?
2. Go out for a walk. Find a spot and look around: do something a little bit risky for you – push yourself just a little bit. How does that feel?

3. Find a spot in your home or somewhere outside. Describe the same spot, in written form, looking from three different positions/angles. Write down what you notice. How does the same spot change when observed from different perspectives?
4. Change something in your appearance – step by step until it feels awkward/uncomfortable. Describe this feeling. How will you deal with it? How can you make change more comfortable?
5. Think of a challenging situation you are facing regularly (in work or private life). What is the reason for it? Write your explanation down on a piece of paper and then "let it go" … burn it or bury it or make a paper plane out of it. How does that feel? How can "letting it go" help you in accepting ambiguity and change?

2.3. FROM PREPARATION TO PRACTICE: TEAMWORK DURING THE TRAINING COURSE

2.3.1. Predicting the issues

The experience of how the team actually works together in practice only starts at the beginning of the training course. In the heat of the training, the pressure to work competently with the participants can be stronger than good intentions regarding the functioning of the team. It is worthwhile to pre-empt some issues that are likely to arise, and to form team strategies in relation to them.

Team meetings and team feedback: Set aside time for regular team meetings, even if there is a programme to prepare and run and pressure to spend social time with the participants. In most meetings, the evaluation and planning of the programme will determine the agenda. Nevertheless, make sure to take some time to check how every member feels about the course, the team and their own role in it. You might want to reserve some time in advance for team feedback, for instance: "on Wednesday evening we will have a longer team meeting and take one hour to share how we feel about us as a team."

Experts: Fragile team dynamics can be upset by the presence of invited experts or lecturers that work with the team for a short while. Discuss how you want to deal with this issue in your team. What role does the expert have? To what extent does she or he need to be integrated into the team?

Time management: Team members might have different relationships with time, especially but not exclusively in intercultural teams.

- When a team meeting is set for 6:00 p.m. does it actually start at that time? If not, why not? Is it okay to wait for each other (or always for the same person) or not?
- During the programme, how strictly do you plan and handle the schedule? What if a working group has not finished its discussion? Do you as a trainer stop it?

Basic agreements on how to deal with time might contribute to the smooth running of the course and give the team members more security in dealing with specific situations.

Team and participants: Team members may have different expectations and attitudes towards their relationship with the participants.

- How important is it to spend time with the participants during their social time? How much time should be spent with participants?
- How do we deal with participants' feedback about the course, especially while the course is happening? How important are their interests and opinions in relation to the priorities set by the team?
- What kind of power sharing is going on in this course? How much responsibility for the programme and the course do we want to hand over to the participants?
- What do we consider a "professional relationship" between participants and trainers?
- To what extent do we need to agree on these questions?

Team and organisers: Team members and organisers most likely have different expectations and priorities.

- To what extent can the organisers steer the learning process?
- How is the responsibility for the activity distributed or divided?
- How are the political or value-based priorities of the organisers reflected in the training?

2.3.2. Evaluation and feedback

Evaluation is a means to improve our work in the future and is therefore a central part of teamwork. The team should evaluate the programme, the learning of participants, how the programme and process reach the objectives, and also their own work. The topic of evaluation is further elaborated in section 3.6 and, furthermore, there is an entire T-Kit dedicated to it: *T-Kit 10 – Educational evaluation in youth work*.[70] When evaluating teamwork, it is necessary to consider such elements as team performance and dynamics, leadership, decision making, roles, communication and conflict management.

Here are four ideas on how to evaluate your teamwork.

Evaluation rounds

Many teams decide to have daily or otherwise regular rounds of evaluation during a training course. Sitting together in a confidential and relaxed setting might be the most comfortable way to evaluate your work, share concerns and find ways of dealing with critical points. To reinvigorate the dynamics of the team, you might wish to change the space you normally work in for a meeting of this kind. With daily evaluation meetings during a training course, you may want to make sure that their purpose is clear and to the point, and maybe even set a time limit for them. In some contexts, research has shown that meetings without a time limit can last until midnight or 2:00 a.m., and might be more tiring than fruitful for the team and the ongoing training process.

Our teamwork: where do you stand?

Step 1: Each member writes one sentence expressing their opinion about the team on a sheet of paper (for instance "the team does not handle its differences constructively"). Everyone can write several sentences on several sheets of paper.

Step 2: One person puts their paper in the middle of the space and reads out the sentence written on it. The team members then place themselves around it and explain and share their opinions. The less they agree with the statement, the further away they stand from the paper. One by one, all sentences are read out and team members comment on them.

Used in this context, this method should be handled flexibly, allowing time for discussion and sharing of thoughts where necessary, and for taking the time to address sensitive issues.

The three Ps triangle

The model outlined in section 2.2.2 can form a useful basis for evaluating the priorities your team sets in its work. Another way to go about it is that each team member gives a score out of 10 for each point on the triangle. Each person explains their scores and the reasons for them. Then it is possible to discuss questions like where does the team place the focus? Is there anything the team needs to change or adapt?

Questionnaire about team co-operation (Appendix 2)

If the team is working together for a substantial period of time this might be a useful way to begin an analysis. Ask everyone to individually complete the questionnaire. Then share, compare and discuss the results in your team. What works well? Which points would you like to improve? You might want to invite an external trainer to facilitate the discussion following the completion of the questionnaire. In addition, the co-working style questionnaire (Appendix 1) mentioned earlier, as an example to start the team co-operation, could be used, specifically at the end, to look back at how the co-working actually went and what was learned in the process.

2.3.3. Feedback

Feedback is the breakfast of champions.
Kenneth Blanchard

Constructive and personal external feedback can speed up the process of learning immensely. Feedback is the driver for personal and professional development! It is a helpful tool when it comes to your self-assessment of competences (see section 3.2.2). To develop your full potential, you almost always need an expert/peer in

70. *T-Kit 10 – Educational evaluation in youth work*, available at https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/T-kit-10-educational-evaluation-in-youth-work, accessed 17 August 2020.

the field who can give you external professional advice. To introduce feedback culture among a trainers' team and group of participants is a huge asset, when handled with care in a safe space of trust.

Personal feedback: why, when and how?

Keep in mind that feedback needs to be given in a spirit of goodwill for the person receiving it. How do I see you as a trainer and as a team member? Feedback in a team about each other's qualities and performance is a sensitive issue and should be handled with a lot of care. Even if the focus of feedback is (and should be!) on the behaviour of the trainer (not at identity level), training involves personalities, and this means placing part of us into an often dynamic and intense process. And, as with all life roles, criticism can hurt, create insecurities and strike at hidden issues, even when offered in a constructive spirit.

Constructive feedback is based on a specifically exact observation and the focus is on returning a possible improvement at the behavioural level (definitely not at the identity level).

Most of the time, it is more than enough to give a maximum of two statements. It makes no sense to overload someone. If you choose the most important topics it might also be possible that other things improve automatically when it is implemented in the new actions!

Positive feedback is important to enforce good behaviour and to motivate the feedback-giver to do more of it. Its aim is not necessarily praising or complimenting someone.

Constructive feedback can be hard to take. Positive feedback is important and very nice to hear, but that alone does not help us much to improve our work. Constructive feedback needs to address our weak points, but in a helpful way which allows the person receiving the feedback to improve. If there is enough trust in the team/among a training group, feedback can be a fruitful learning experience and an occasion for self-reflection and self-improvement, helping to create more confidence and better working conditions. The focus of team feedback can be the functioning of the team and the roles that team members are taking on. It can also be the competencies and working styles that the individual team members have shown during the course to date. How feedback is used depends on how far a team wants to go in evaluating its performance.

> *The greatest good you can do for another is not just to share your own riches, but to reveal to him his own.*
> ***Benjamin Disraeli***

The above quote can be a great motivation and starting point for constructive feedback, which always aims at being helpful for the person receiving it.

In order for the feedback to be helpful it is important that the person receiving feedback:

- understands the information;
- is able to accept the information;
- is able to do something with the information.

Furthermore, please be sensitive about group dynamics when using feedback. Choose an adequate environment and timing, take your time for it, think about the atmosphere in the group and the implications of undertaking feedback at any given moment, so that everyone feels secure and comfortable in order to engage with honest feedback and fruitful evaluation.

Some guidelines for giving and receiving feedback

(as outlined in T-Kit 10, p. 76)[71]

Giving feedback

- Speak for yourself by using "I" instead of "you" or "we" when you give your feedback to the group. If speaking about your personal opinions and feelings, they should not be related as being those of others even if you feel they are representative.
- Begin your feedback with a positive review rather than with negative statements.
- When you give feedback to one particular person in the group address that person directly rather than the group as a whole. This involves saying who the feedback is for.

71. *T-Kit 10 – Educational evaluation in youth work*, available at https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/T-kit-10-educational-evaluation-in-youth-work, accessed 18 August 2020.

- Do not judge other people. Rather, you should describe your personal perception of a situation or your feelings.
- Give feedback in relation to the here-and-now situation rather than to past events.
- If something "conflictual" arises, try to be constructive rather than destructive. Be supportive to those who propose ways to deal with difficulties and conflicts. It can help to remind oneself of the human potential for learning and for change.
- It is alright to praise somebody! Express what you liked most in somebody's behaviour, what made the most important impression on you or what you suggest for someone to do in future.

Receiving feedback

- Think of the feedback you receive in terms of constructive criticism. You have a chance to receive information about how others view your performance and to understand what they think about you.
- If you feel you are being criticised, try to avoid immediately taking a defensive attitude. You do not have to justify your behaviour or to explain why something is like it is.
- Try not to interrupt the person who is giving you or the group feedback. If necessary, and agreed in advance of the feedback session by all involved, responses can be given at the end.

Reflection moment

- Think about the last time you gave feedback to somebody.
- How did it relate to the procedure and rules presented above?
- Think about the last time you received feedback from somebody.
- Did you ask for it? Were the main rules agreed upon?
- The rules above are pretty straightforward. Do you agree that feedback should not contain judgments? Is it really possible?

Three ideas on how to give feedback

Exercise about teamwork and roles in the team: The vehicle method

- In pairs or individually, imagine this team as a vehicle. It can be anything you wish, a car, tractor, steamboat or plane. The vehicle should express what you feel is the essence of the team. Make a drawing of this vehicle.
- Try to place the different team members in the vehicle. Which parts of the vehicle do you see them corresponding to? Who is the sail, motor, compass, seat, brake, global positioning system, and so forth. Why?
- Explain your drawings to each other.
- Debrief – What did we get out of this?
- Time needed: at least 1 hour for a team of four persons.

Exercise about giving personal feedback: The hot seat

- Find a comfortable space for your team. Sit in a circle, place one chair in the middle. One by one, team members sit on this "hot seat".
- From there, tell your team colleagues what you would like to get feedback about: your performance as a trainer, your role in the team, and so on. The other team members will then answer you, bearing in mind the guidelines you have agreed on.
- Set a time limit for each person's visit to the "hot seat".
- While sitting on the hot seat, you cannot react to individual comments, but you have some time for reactions and questions once the feedback round is over and before the next team member takes the chair.
- Time needed: at least 20 minutes per team member.
- Attention: this can be a very sensitive exercise. Remember to agree on some basic rules for giving feedback beforehand!

ETS Competence Model as a basis for feedback[72]

The ETS Competence Model for Trainers is one of the possible frameworks for receiving competence-based feedback from others. There are a number of different approaches that can be used with the competence model and below is one of the proposals:

- Choose one or a maximum of two competence areas that you would like to focus on as part of your professional development (alternatively, you can select a number of concrete competences).
- Think of the people that could have seen you displaying these competence areas or competences in action – you can narrow it down to your co-trainers or you can think of also involving your participants, contractors, etc.
- Ask them to provide you with feedback on those specific competence areas (tip: indicators in the competence models are a good basis for providing feedback, since they describe observable behaviours).
- You can either ask them to rate the indicators (together with providing comments) or you can have a face-to-face verbal feedback.
- Whichever way you choose, make sure that there is enough time to really go into the competences, provide examples, comments, evidence.
- Consider complementing the feedback with a self-assessment of competences (either before or after), in order to avoid building your image of yourself as a trainer solely on the assessment of others.[73]

Of course, feedback is NOT the only way for trainers' personal and professional development. Self-assessment is crucial, too. To identify yourself as a trainer, you need to choose which competences you want to continuously develop and assess, seeing if you are happy with your own performance, what you can do better next time, and so on.

Feedback among participants – during a training course

Participants give feedback constantly during any given day, through their reactions and behaviour. How they react when an activity is proposed, their level of attention, the kind of questions they ask, if they are on time or always late; there is a constant stream of indicators open to the attentive trainer. Several programme elements normally ask them for feedback explicitly as well. Giving, receiving and evaluating feedback is a constant necessity for every trainer. Its importance lies not only in establishing certain relationships between trainers and participants, but also in fostering inter-participant learning, which is also related to section 4.3.2. on group dynamics. There is no need to rush into an in-depth team meeting every time feedback is given, but it is up to each trainer to be able to keep eyes and ears (and heart) well open and act according to what is seen, heard and felt. Feedback is very easily misused, or misunderstood for various reasons. Giving and receiving feedback is a special form of communication between two people. It involves critique and solidarity, and dealing with all of the inadequacies of interpersonal communication in a sensitive situation. Therefore, clear communication guidelines should be agreed in order to limit areas of confusion or the exchange of nothing more than opinion or criticism. The following section shows you a detailed feedback procedure and a step-by-step guide for giving useful feedback.

Step 1: X informs Y of the impressions X got of Y's actions or behaviour.

Step 2: X describes the reactions that Y's behaviour provoked in X.

Step 3: X clarifies whether the personal observations are correct or not.

Step 4: Y reacts on the feedback received (optional) or even better, just says "thank you".

Note for the feedback receiver: Take the feedback without comment! Just listen, take it as it is and clarify points if necessary. It defeats the purpose to argue, react immediately or go into justification and defence mode. The best way is just to say "thank you" at the end, and then, you give it some time to sink in and digest.

Sandwich feedback

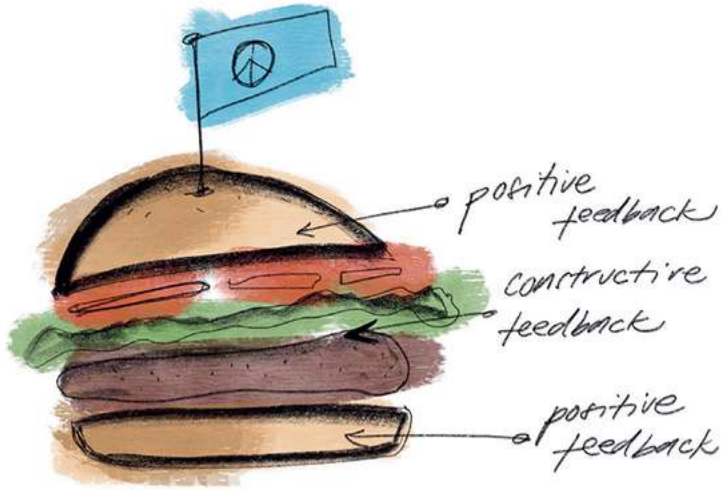
The sandwich feedback technique is a popular three-step procedure to help anyone to be more at ease with providing constructive feedback. The sandwich feedback method consists of praise followed by corrective

72. A digital tool has been developed for 360 degree assessment of trainers' competences, based on the ETS Competence Model for Trainers. Appraiser, available at http://trainersappraisal.com/, accessed on 18 August 2020.
73. See section 3.1.2, The needs assessment process: one possible way to do (self) assessment of competences.

feedback followed by more praise. In other words, the sandwich feedback method involves discussing corrective (constructive) feedback that is "sandwiched" between two layers of praise.

The purported benefits of this technique are twofold: 1) it softens the impact of the criticism or corrective feedback, and, 2) given that X is probably more comfortable with praising Y, the participant/colleague, X finds it easier to discuss problems with Y's behaviour/actions if this discussion begins and ends with praise.

Ask for feedback as part of your self-directed learning, learning plan, in a mentor–mentee relationship, in daily reflection groups, among participants, trainers, and so on.



- *Step 1*: Positive feedback, expressing positive details:

  X says: "I have heard, seen, observed…"
- *Step 2*: Constructive feedback: Point for improvement, learning chance for Y:

  X mentions: "I would suggest, I wonder if you could, I would love if… (plus, why? Why is this important for X, which personal need stands behind this)… because that satisfies my need for (clarity, understanding...)… because this would help me…"
- *Step 3*: Positive feedback: Summing up, giving a compliment for the overall performance, action or behaviour.

  X says: "All in all, I loved… Overall, I want to point out… I want to compliment you on..."

Small group exercise for practising sandwich feedback

For participants to practise sandwich feedback among each other, a good idea is to hand out feedback "cheques" (little sheets of papers, called "cheques", to be cashed in, in the form of "live feedback" among peers), for example among "reflection group" members or small subgroups.

Establish one colour for every layer of the sandwich feedback. Among a mini-group (of three to six participants ideally) each participant holds three coloured cards (or coloured pieces of paper, for example layer-step 1 colour green, layer/step 2 colour red, layer/step 3 colour blue) and their peers have to pick one card from each one of them. Then they reflect upon each other's performance, participation in the course, personality and actions. Sometimes a little preparation time to reflect and put some notes in writing can help (to formulate the sentences as suggested above) before getting together in feedback teams to share orally the feedback in person. Hence, one sandwich feedback is shared/given by three people, each one covering one layer. This is a great team and trust-building exercise and makes it easier to get started with correct, constructive and appreciative sandwich feedback in a safe setting. Everyone has their turn and while one does not have to think about an entire perfect sandwich yet, one deals with it in small portions and focuses on elaborating each layer in detail. For the person receiving feedback it is quite a luxury to have three people thinking about their learning potential at the same time and, in general, it is easier to take and highly appreciated! ☺

To conclude this chapter, one could say: there is no failure, only feedback! And most of the time, feedback tells more about the feedback-giver than the receiver!

For further understanding and use of the feedback structures and exercises given above it might also be useful to have a closer look at section 4.2.3 on conflict analysis, specifically, the principles of non-violent communication.

2.3.4. Where do we go from here?

Every team works differently, and every new team has to create and nurture its own process. Importantly, we can feed our past experiences into further developing our teamwork competencies. Difficult and problematic working processes can constitute a learning resource. Sometimes, when working in the same team for a second time or during a long-term training course, we might have the opportunity to build on the past team process to improve communication and performance. If you want to read more about aspects of intercultural teamwork, you can also consult the relevant chapters in the Project Management T-Kit and Organisational Management T-Kit. In Appendix 2 you can find a questionnaire "Team co-operation" for reflection purposes.

Reflection moment

- Do you always take and plan the time needed to discuss basic approaches and ideas, to evaluate your teamwork and to give feedback to each other?
- What are your commonly established basic values and objectives?
- What can you do better in order to accept yourself, and others? (We are all learners!)
- Are you self-responsible? Responsible for your own actions and behaviour?
- How can you better trust in and support each other's abilities and performance?
- What are everyone's limits?

Chapter 3

Training in motion

3.1. TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Needs assessment is the first step in the process of training, and a fundamental one. It refers to the initial analysis done to determine if training is necessary and whether or not it addresses the perceived needs. Training needs assessment should not be confused with the assessment that leads to organisational existence, strategy and overall action plan, which is wider and also includes a needs assessment of the community. Also, it should not be confused with the research conducted on different issues pertaining to youth at the local level or all over Europe. In a needs assessment the emphasis is on the needs that the organisation or institution, their active members and their immediate target group have in order to increase their capacities and competences and/or to improve and consolidate their work.

Needs assessment is a crucial point that often seems to be neglected and there might be several reasons for it. First of all, undertaking a serious needs assessment within organisations/institutions and their immediate environment requires a lot of effort, knowledge and money. Secondly, organisations/institutions and people working for them are often convinced that they already know the reality and needs of their target group very well and that there is no need for additional effort in deciphering them. Additionally, in the past, assessing the needs usually implied a lot of field and face-to-face work, which could often be a heavy additional burden. Nonetheless, having those very valid obstacles and concerns in mind, needs assessment still remains an essential first step and the driver for putting the training in motion and, as such, should be approached seriously.

This section briefly outlines several different aspects of the needs assessment process and hopefully eases the process of its conception and implementation. Before diving into a needs assessment process, let's first look at possible motivations for training to take place.

3.1.1. What ignites a training spark?

Training may take place because of a variety of initiatives, and for a range of motivations. This raises some basic questions:

- Who identifies the problems and defines the needs to be addressed by training?
- Who organises it?
- What is the purpose?
- Who receives the training?

Based on the divergent answers that one may have to these questions, a distinction can be made between four different reasons for moving forward with an idea for a training activity.

Training addressing the organisation's needs

(a youth organisation conducts training for its members in order to address some of their own needs)

This situation is fairly common in youth organisations. A youth organisation identifies its own needs and envisages training that will respond to them. It is entirely responsible for the whole process: identification of the needs, definition of the objectives, providing trainers, fundraising, conducting the training of its own members and evaluating the results. Many local organisations or the organisations of Scouts and Girl Guides or student organisations, for example, have well-developed schemes for training their members on a regular basis.

Training organised for several organisations working in the sector

(including participants from the organisation that is conducting the training)

In this instance, one organisation (or a network) applies for funds and conducts the training, while participants from several other organisations take part. This is common practice and donors tend to support it because of its wider reach and potential multiplying effect. Mobility of youth workers supported by the Erasmus+ Youth in Action programme (administered by the national agencies of the programme) or projects supported by the European Youth Foundation frequently fall into this category.

Training delivered as a service

(an organisation or training agency specialises in delivering training as a service to potential customers)

Specialist organisations or agencies that offer training services also exist, and may deliver their services free of charge or for a set or negotiated fee. These training organisations/agencies have professional trainers with competences in different areas in which they deliver workshops and training courses. At this point it is also important to mention the individuals who do not belong to any training organisation or agency, but deliver training to different training providers as freelance trainers. Some are members of the trainers' pools of Erasmus+ Youth in Action and European Solidarity Corps national agencies; the European Youth Forum and the Youth Department of the Council of Europe operate in this capacity.

Training as an instrument to implement policies

The role of training courses is essential as a way to ensure that new policies, approaches and ideas are implemented by multipliers. In the European youth field, the international training courses are still often referred to as training courses for multipliers, as essentially it is expected that the participants of the training will be able to implement and use their newly gained competences in their work, activism, volunteer or other engagements that they undertake.

Training in this context should not be seen as an isolated activity, based solely on the participants' needs and trainers' competences. It is more complex than that, as it involves the institutional framework where it is expected that the participants (and trainers) work or volunteer. Training courses are also an instrument aimed at improving the access of the organisations, young people and other stakeholders to the process of creating policies and decisions. This means that their role is sometimes reversed – to gather feedback, experiences and reflections back to the institutions or organisers, who use this in their planning of future programmes and assess the need for further training.

Government agencies, the big international non-governmental foundations and other governmental or non-governmental donor organisations often engage in their own needs assessment in the youth sector. A frequent response is to identify and go ahead with the type of training that is needed. The most common strategies that they practise are:

1. Organising the training by themselves. Well-known examples are the training courses of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe, training courses organised in the framework of the TCA (Transnational Cooperation Activities) or NET (Networking) activities by national agencies and SALTO Resource Centres or EU local agencies working at local level. Training of trainers (ToT) is one such type of activity and there have been several ToTs, which served as important milestones in the field. For example, ATTE (Advanced Training for Trainers in Europe long-term training course),[74] ACT-HRE (Advanced Training of Trainers in Human Rights Education),[75] ToT-HRE (Training of Trainers in Human Rights Education),[76] TALE (Trainers for Active Learning in Europe (TALE) – A long-term Training for Trainers)[77] or SALTO Training of Trainers (long-term training course under the Erasmus+ Youth in Action programme),[78] with yearly editions since 2000.
2. Funding the training activities of the youth organisations, which apply for and may receive grants to conduct the training, is often in a predetermined format. See, for example, the study session programme for IYNGOs (international non-governmental youth organisations) administered by the Youth Department of the Council of Europe or the activities financed by the Open Society Institute in central and eastern Europe.

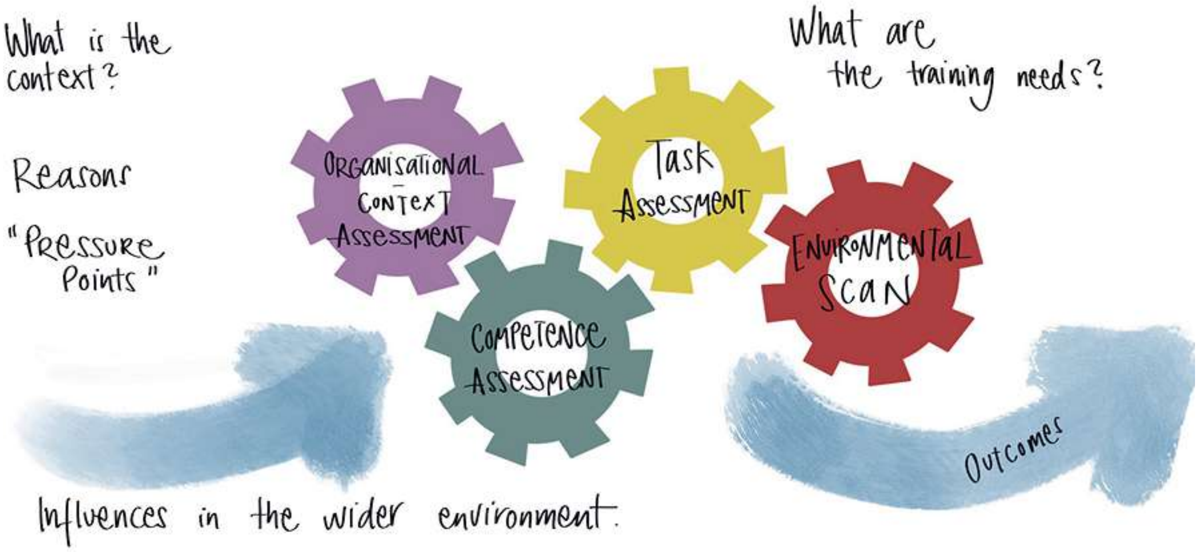
Reflection moment

- Which of the above realities is the closest to you or the most common in your experience?
- Think of the last training activity you worked on or have taken part in; who initiated the training?
- In which of the above-mentioned categories can you place that training?

74. More about ATTE is available at https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/atte, accessed 17 August 2020.
75. More about ACT-HRE is available at www.coe.int/en/web/human-rights-education-youth/training-courses, accessed 17 August 2020.
76. More about ToT-HRE is available at www.coe.int/en/web/human-rights-education-youth/training-courses, accessed 17 August 2020.
77. More about TALE is available at https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/tale, accessed 17 August 2020.
78. More about SALTO-YOUTH Training of Trainers is available at www.salto-youth.net/rc/training-and-cooperation/trainercompetencedevelopment/tot, accessed 17 August 2020.

- Who has financed the activity? Has the donor had a big say in the definition of the objectives and the outcome of the training? To what extent was the overall aim of the activity related to the vision and mission of the organisation?
- Who were the participants?

3.1.2. The needs assessment process



Adapted from Noe (1998: 51)

We will start by looking at the needs assessment from the perspective of an organisation or an institution that is tailoring training according to their own needs. In this process, there are several levels that should be taken into consideration:

- organisational (context) assessment;
- task assessment;
- competence assessment;
- environmental scan.

Basing activities on clear needs and expectations of the organisers, their partners, the institutions involved and on the political, social, cultural and educational reality they are meant to address is a prerequisite to ensuring the activities are relevant, their results are sustainable and the various stakeholders see their expectations fulfilled. It also allows the trainers and participants to stay on course with the terms of reference and to be accountable for their work. Some of the key criteria to take into account when conducting the needs assessment for a training course include:

- a proper reflection on contemporary society issues from the viewpoint of young people which the training course should address. Whenever possible, this should be linked with the learning needs of participants as clearly as possible;
- a reflection on the youth policy/youth work dimension of the training course, through a clear reference to the needs and context associated with the training courses, including their medium- or long-term function for all the partners involved;
- the reasons why the organisers are running or supporting the activity ought to be made explicit to the trainers, preparatory teams, participants, partners and other stakeholders. Accordingly, the specific expectations should also be explicit;
- the needs identification should make use, when possible, of existing relevant research on the problems addressed and results of previous similar activities.

Organisational or context assessment means considering the framework in which the training will occur. This involves analysing the organisation in context, its ongoing developments, its membership, volunteers and staff continuity and turnover. A needs assessment process aims at identifying the organisation's main areas of focus, the needs this highlights and the necessary strategy to address the highlighted issues. A brief example is that of a youth organisation which decides to emphasise human rights education during the next year. This might imply that the organisation will need to update on recent developments in the field and undertake general organisational adjustments to manage the specificity of the subject it plans to prioritise.

Task assessment identifies the work, concrete tasks and activities that must be fulfilled within the organisation in order to achieve the goals it is focused on. If we continue to use the example from the previous paragraph, a relevant task analysis will identify specific tasks, or work profiles, related to its programme of human rights education. Related to this is an inventory of competences needed to tackle the work profiles.

Competence assessment follows logically from the identification of tasks and required competences. It involves an initial overview of current capacities and competences of people for the activities planned and also identifies those in need of further development. Competence assessment encompasses volunteers, board members, staff or project officers and so forth and can be based on self-assessment, external assessment or both. Related to our example, this competence assessment would probably include assessment of both general competences, and specific competences for implementing human rights education programme(s) in a specific role/capacity. Because of the constant turnover, a competence assessment should probably be conducted more often than in other organisations.

Once all three levels of assessment have been done, the outcome is whether there is readiness and willingness for training within the organisation. Nonetheless, there is one more aspect that should be added, in order to complete the needs assessment picture.

The **environmental scan** is an analysis of the immediate and wider environment of the youth organisation or institution. The importance of this as a separate analysis is because of the significant influence of the outside environment on the work of youth organisations (for example policy documents and developments, support of major donor organisations, and so on). This element of the needs assessment maps out the possible collaborators in the field, identifies the relevant competition, maps the key "actors" in the field and investigates the relations between them. It also represents a final check of the feasibility of the training and whether it has its place in the wider constellation of things.

What we have tackled so far is a micro level of one organisation or institution, which reflects the reality of a so-called "in-house" training. In reality, the majority of training events, even at local level, are done for a wider community of learners. In this case, the whole needs assessment needs to be wider and moved beyond one organisation's narrative and context. However, the assessment steps would remain with a very similar focus. Instead of an organisation, the needs are being assessed in the field of youth work that is in focus, while the learners are then youth workers or others involved in youth work who are carrying out the work in the field.

When working at an international level, things arguably get even more complex. It is almost impossible for a youth organisation or even institution to undertake a comprehensive needs assessment, given the size of the field they are targeting. This difficulty often results in excuses not to attempt it at all and instead they offer generic needs, such as "We need more trainers for youth work" or "We need X amount of members with negotiation skills". While this might be true, what is missing is the answer to the question "why?" Why is this a need? Where does it come from? What is its context? What are the relevant policy developments that might inform it? What are the competences that need to be developed to respond to the developments and activities needed, and so on?

Every training event should be preceded by a process of establishing the needs assessment on which the entire process will be based. There is no shame involved in ending up with an incomplete needs assessment, but there is no excuse for not trying, and ending up offering something that is in fact not needed. And no, "we know that there is a need for training on using digital tools in youth work" is not a good enough answer if it is not based on an actual assessment that informs that knowledge – especially in this day and age, with plenty of online tools that can reach quite large numbers of people, as well as make available all the relevant documents. A simple survey on social media (such as SurveyMonkey or Google Forms) can take you a long way and at the same time ensure that people who are responding to it already have one foot on board your future training endeavour.

Reflection moment

- How often do you do a needs assessment when deciding on a training opportunity?
- In which way do you conduct a needs assessment? Who identifies the needs, and in which way?
- How do you conduct competence assessment and how do you use this assessment for determining the learning needs?
- When thinking about your last training events, were the participants of the training really in need of it? How do you know?
- When planning international training, how do you ensure that the needs of the community are taken into consideration?
- What can you do to improve your needs assessment?

One possible way is to do an assessment of competences (360 degree assessment).[79]

With many different ways of performing the assessment, the usual practice in the youth field is often based on external assessment and/or feedback.[80] In practice this often means that when conducting a needs assessment, someone in the organisation or institution would assess or evaluate the competences against the chosen focus of the training and this would be taken as a basis for further development. As an alternative, there is a lengthy, but definitely more insightful process of assessment that starts with a self-assessment of competences of each person who may (potentially) attend the training and then develops into a full 360 degree assessment. 360 degree feedback has been in use since the 1940s, and has evolved to become a management tool used in both the private and public sector. 360 degree assessment is an approach and a tool that gives a person the opportunity to perform self-assessment, as well as to receive comprehensive feedback from a number of sources relevant for their work (please also refer to section 2.3.3 Feedback).

The process itself is fairly straightforward.

1. Choosing a competence framework, either from the outside[81] or as defined in the organisation/institution for the particular role and getting familiar with it.
2. Performing self-assessment on the whole competence framework or areas/competences relevant for the context.
3. Collecting external assessment from a variety of feedback providers:
    i. supervisor/manager/employer/contractor
    ii. colleagues
    iii. young people – beneficiaries.
4. Based on the complete assessment, recognise competences already acquired and those that need further development.

The 360 degree assessment[82] can feed into a number of different processes, such as for example individual or organisational competence-based professional development. And as one of its types, it is a very useful tool for complementing needs assessment for future training activities.

3.2. LEARNING, LEARNING OUTCOMES AND LEARNING PREFERENCES

The previous section has outlined for us the importance of thinking through the needs that necessitate a training activity. By linking an analysis of these needs with a critical analysis of what is required to meet them, the first steps have been taken in planning a training programme. The needs analysis, then, raises the basic point that a specific training is being suggested because people need to learn something. This section continues by considering the concept of learning, and links it to the practice of conceiving and planning a training strategy and activity.

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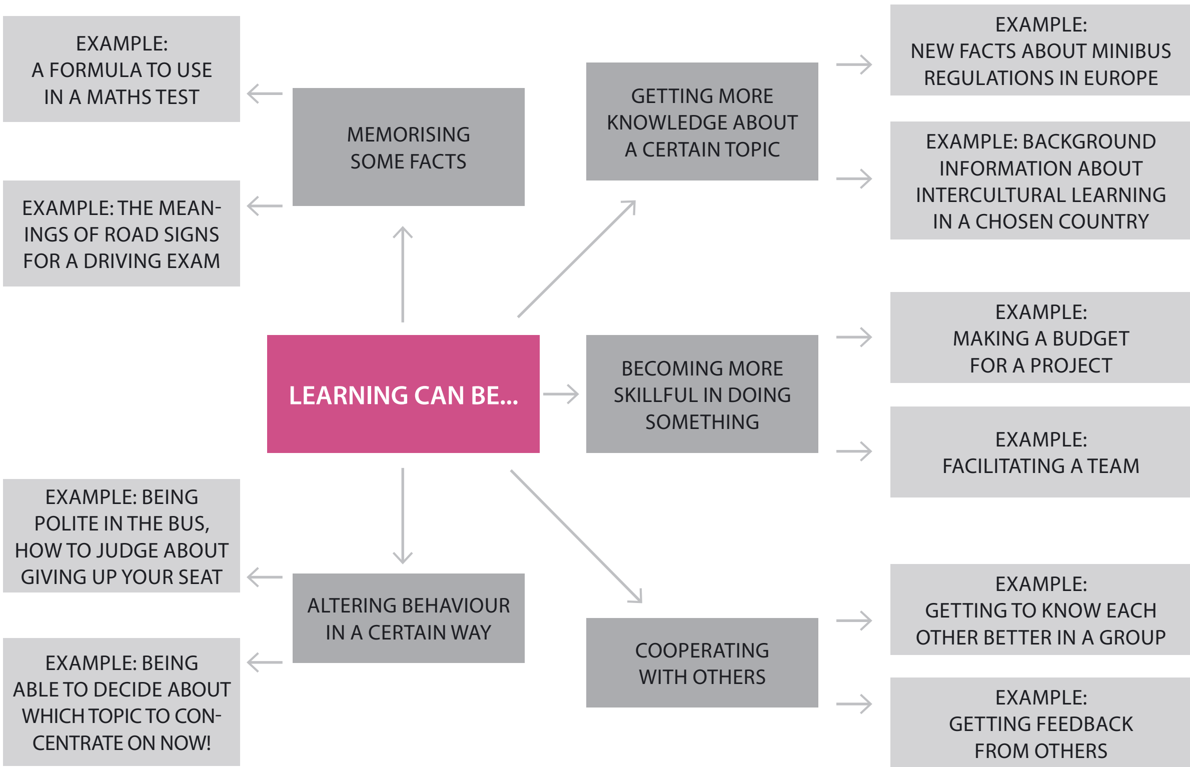
79. We will concentrate on assessment of competences here as the other analyses described in this section are covered in *T-Kit 1 – Organisational management* and *T-Kit 3 – Project management*.
80. See section 2.3.3 Feedback, ETS Competence Model as a basis for feedback.
81. Besides the ETS Competence Model for Trainers, there is also the ETS Competence Model for Youth Workers, available at www.salto-youth.net/rc/training-and-cooperation/tc-rc-nanetworktcs/youthworkers-competence-model/, accessed 17 August 2020. In addition, there is the Council of Europe Youth Work Portfolio, available at www.coe.int/en/web/youth-portfolio, accessed 17 August 2020.
82. For more information about 360 degree assessment of trainers' competences, check out Bačlija Knoch and Šumanjski (2019).

3.2.1. Learning

As a child, there were two contexts in which most of us would be asked about learning. "What did you learn at school today?", a ritual question, like asking about the weather. "I hope you learned something from this" was the other, after doing some mischief at home. To this day, you probably do not remember the specifics of what you learned in primary school, but you might remember that lighter fuel is inadequate for proper space exploration. At least some of us do...

For anyone who cares to look back at such moments, it will be obvious that we learn in different ways, at different times, depending on the situation, consequences and stimulus. We also learn different things, depending on what and whom we interact with in our environment. And, as a result, we learn according to different motivations, from the conscious need to pass exams, to the almost unconscious socialisation of learning traffic signals. Learning, then, is a differentiated and complex process, responsible for equipping us with knowledge and skills, developing our capabilities, and allowing us to know our own attitudes, values and emotions.

The image below, while not presenting the one and only definition of learning, offers a very useful overview of what learning can entail.



Source: Youthpass publication: ONE 2 ONE: supporting learning face-to-face[83]

Trainers are charged with facilitating the learning of others. Before they can do this, they need to think about what kind of learning goes on in youth training. Presumably, training continues people's social learning, as it exposes them to new environments and people, situations and attitudes, even new food and drink. In considering group dynamics (section 4.1), we have looked at how we can create contexts where people can integrate these new experiences. Yet training is not just about new ways of being, but is focused on allowing people to learn about subjects, issues, skills, needs, opportunities, and so forth.

Crucially, the aim of any training is that people will do something with this learning, that this learning produces some kind of change. And arguably the most desired change is based on the actual learning needs.

Training courses are implemented in diverse contexts, so the identification of learning needs of the participants is a balance between their personal self-awareness of learning needs and the expectations set up by the course organisers. In general, learning needs are the gap between the learner's current level of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values and the level required to perform a task or role in society. Learning needs can be looked at from different levels (or in different groups):[84]

83. Available at www.youthpass.eu/downloads/13-62-276/Publication_121_Final.pdf, accessed 17 August 2020.
84. Adapted from McGehee and Thayer (1961), "three-level analysis".

- Organisational needs – looking into what the organisers such as youth organisations, movements and institutions would like to improve or achieve through training the participants on a specific topic. Usually this is based on the strategic objectives and outcomes that the organisers expect to achieve. These learning needs are not participant-centred, but nevertheless they should be communicated to the participants clearly.
- Operational needs – these needs encompass an overview of gaps that the participants or others have identified as important to performing their role and/or tasks. These needs are often self-assessed through a process in which the participants identify what their weaknesses and/or strengths are and where they desire to improve. Often this is communicated to the organisers by expressing their personal motivation or expectations from the training course.
- Individual needs of the participants are linked with personal effectiveness, sense of achievement and motivation, and working with values and attitudes. Similarly, like operational needs, these individual needs are identified through the motivation, self-assessment of participants and their expectations from the course.

Furthermore, when thinking about the change that learning can and should set in motion, it might be helpful to have a closer look at the competence-based approach to learning.

3.2.2. Competence-based approach to learning

"Learning is a process that results in permanent social transformation and change in a learner's competences and actions. Learning allows them to become a more experienced, self-aware and self-directed individual." This definition, taken from the *ETS Competence Model for Trainers working at International Level: tools to get started* booklet,[85] among others, underlines two important aspects: that learning is a permanent process of change and that it impacts learners' competences (and actions). This sets learning in the context of a lifelong and life-wide process, where each training activity contributes to the long-term development of learners' competences. So competences then help us track the changes that learners go through as a result of training activities. So far so good. But how do we understand the competence then?

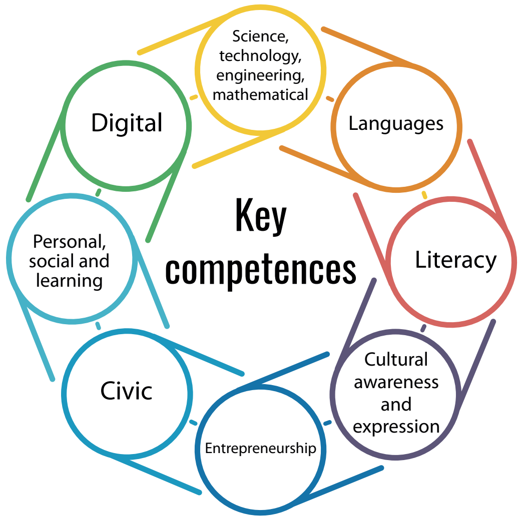
"The term 'competences' refers to a system of values, attitudes and beliefs, as well as skills and knowledge that can be applied in practice to manage various complex situations and tasks successfully."[86] Their application in practice is being seen as an action, a concrete behaviour, and it is through this (change in) behaviour that we can see the impact of a learning process. To illustrate this, we go to a favourite metaphor of learning – driving a car. What allows you to actually sit down and drive a car is the knowledge of how driving works and how traffic functions; your skills in operating the car and how to drive safely; as well as the right attitude to driving; your willingness to drive and be respectful to other drivers. But all this might still not be enough. Underneath these competences lies something more – inner readiness. It allows the competences to surface, to be expressed in a specific time and space, in a concrete here and now. The potential is developed by gaining knowledge, skills and useful attitudes. However, the missing link between potential and the acting-out moment is called inner readiness.[87]

Without inner readiness, the competence stays as a nice celebration of your own personal development, but it does not achieve momentum, get realised or put into action. Therefore, if we do not feel the inner readiness to drive (we all know that one person), the car will continue gathering dust in the garage.

Hopefully, understanding what competence is helps us to grasp the learning and potential of training in more practical terms. And managing to name those competences and collect them under a particular framework can make things even more concrete. That said, a competence-based approach can be perceived as offering a framework and a process, both with the aim of capitalising on learning throughout a whole range of activities and experiences over a longer period.[88] This approach takes into account all types of learning in many different areas and contexts, which also include learning as a result of training opportunities. At the heart of it, a competence-based approach is a competence framework which gathers and names competences that can be developed in a certain field. They can be quite generic, such as key competences for lifelong learning, which is a framework for reflecting on learning in Erasmus+ projects.[89]

85. See: www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-3858/Booklet_Tools_to_Get_Started_Final.pdf, accessed 17 August 2020.
86. ibid.
87. Paci et al. (n.d.).
88. *Youthpass for all: recognition of learning, focusing on inclusion groups* (2012), available at www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-1949/YouthpassForAll.pdf, accessed 1 July 2020.
89. Council Recommendation of 22 May 2018 on key competences for lifelong learning, available at https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32018H0604(01)&from=EN, accessed 1 July 2020.

EU key competences 2018[90]



Alternatively, they can be more specific and targeted to one particular topical area or one particular profession. For example, many trainers will, at least at some point, be training youth workers in their training activities and there are two useful competence frameworks for this: the Council of Europe Youth Work Portfolio[91] and the ETS Competence Model for Youth Workers to Work Internationally.[92] You could also check out competence frameworks that might exist in your local or national context, such as aufZAQ[93] in Austria. Or if it would be more useful to look at a topical competence framework, you can check out Competences for Democratic Culture[94] developed by the Council of Europe or DigiComp: Digital Competence Framework for Citizens,[95] developed by the European Commission. Or you could develop a specific competence framework for your organisation or a set of training activities yourself.

Having said all that, the role of the training is not only to provide competence development. In many cases, the measurement and usefulness of competences developed during a training course depend a lot on the context where a participant will apply them. Talking about competences reduces the role of the training course to "here and now", which of course makes it easier to measure and report. However, the expectations often are that participants will apply their learning outcomes in a wider context, as well as over a longer time frame. These learning outcomes are like a set of elements they carry with them, depending on the environment, relations, situations and issues; these elements engage in reactions and produce a specific action (knowledge, skill, behaviour or attitude).

Training courses often have a wider role to contribute to processes or policies set up in a democratic society by different stakeholders on different levels. Therefore, in many cases, the new behaviour, knowledge or skill is not consciously identified as a competence, as it is applied in a non-training context. Some competences can be pointed at specifically, stating exactly when, where and how this was learned, but a lot of personal change and development happens because of persistent experiences, reflections, engagements, learning, collaborations and more, hence making it difficult to extract as a single learning outcome from a single training course.

To go back to facilitating the learning of others, we need to relate the way they learn to a planned process which can achieve the desired changes. A training situation provides a potential range of experiences, and if we add a definition from Kolb et al. (1973), we can argue that learning involves a conscious reflection on those experiences: "Learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through transformation of experience" (or knowledge and other elements of a competence, in our understanding). A trainer cannot assume, however, that the training process will automatically provide the stimulus and create the conditions for learning by itself. After identifying the needs that have legitimated the training, the trainer needs to consider two learning-related factors:

1. what the learning outcomes should be;
2. how to cater for the different ways people will reach those outcomes.

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90. See: http://traveloteacher.blogspot.com/2018/03/eu-key-competences-2018.html, accessed 6 October 2020.
91. Available at www.coe.int/en/web/youth-portfolio, accessed 18 August 2020.
92. Available at www.salto-youth.net/rc/training-and-cooperation/tc-rc-nanetworktcs/youthworkers-competence-model/, accessed 18 August 2020.
93. aufZAQ, educational quality and competence in youth work, available at www.aufzaq.at/, accessed 18 August 2020.
94. *Competences for democratic culture: living together as equals in culturally diverse democratic societies*, available at https://rm.coe.int/16806ccc07, accessed 18 August 2020.
95. The Digital Competence Framework 2.0, available at http://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/digcomp/digital-competence-framework, accessed 18 August 2020.

3.2.3. Learning outcomes

"If you don't know where you're going, don't be surprised to find yourself somewhere you never intended." Are you familiar with this saying, or some version of it? Those who have been involved in training for a long time will probably groan at the sight of it, not just because it is a cliché, but because it so often proves to be true. Carefully defining the starting points and end goals that participants will progress through is of crucial importance, and these following sections emphasise a range of factors which need to be considered during a preparation phase (and any subsequent reworkings of the programme during its implementation). The first step is defining the learning outcomes of the training, and then conceptualising them as objectives.

What does a trainer really want the participants to achieve by the end of a training course (and what do participants really want)? What should participants know at the end of a workshop? What should they be able to do? What should they take home with them? Which competences should learners develop as a result of the training? To what extent are we open to and able to recognise unexpected (and important) learning outcomes? These are a few of the endless questions that could be asked regarding the final outcome of a training activity. Clearly, there is an enormous range of unpredictable factors in the life of a training course, from the expectations and learning preferences of the participants to the ways in which they are evaluated. A flexible approach to the dynamics of training and a thoroughly planned approach are not mutually exclusive, however. Thinking through learning outcomes allows the trainer to maximise the kinds of learning which the programme can support, and influences planning for this within the training strategy and methodology.

All educational activities should have explicit and identifiable learning outcomes. Training courses should have a clear set of competences (knowledge, skills, attitudes and values) to be addressed and developed with and by the participants. These competences and expected learning outcomes should be made explicit to participants and matched with the participants' learning needs and expectations. Finally, the list of competences addressed in the course shall also be used as a baseline for the evaluation of the activity.

The question still remains, however – what exactly are learning outcomes? According to Gagné and Medsker (1996), "Learning is a relatively permanent change in human capabilities that is not a result of growth processes". They continue by arguing that these capabilities are related to specific learning outcomes, which are categories of forms of learning, relating to different aspects of the mind and body. We can see them systematised below.

Learning outcomes

Type of learning outcome	Description of capability	Example
Verbal information	State, tell, or describe previously stored information.	In school being asked in history class about significant dates during the Second World War.
Intellectual skills	Apply general concepts and rules to analyse issues, solve problems and generate novel problems.	Design a project proposal that meets certain requirements.
Motor skills	Execute a physical action with precision and timing.	Learn to climb a rope of 20 metres.
Attitudes	Choose a personal course of action.	Choose to change your approach to your training sessions after participating in a training for trainers course.
Cognitive strategies	Manage one's own thinking and learning processes.	Selectively use three different strategies to identify the training needs of a particular organisation.

Adapted from Gagné and Medsker (1996)

The need to make a distinction between different types of learning outcomes stems from the need to distinguish different levels and types of training provided. If we stick with the scheme outlined in the chart, the most common outcomes in youth training are usually at the level of cognitive strategies and intellectual skills. Development of attitudes is also very often the target of the learning process in youth training, but at the same time it takes longer to be achieved. Finally, it is common that in these multicultural and multilingual contexts there is less emphasis on verbal information outcomes, and motor skills seem to be engaged less frequently, although the increasing popularity of outdoor adventure education and embodied practices in youth training is changing this.

Models such as this one are very often in youth work looked at through the prism of the system or a framework of competences. This means that when deciding on the learning outcomes, you could look at the specific competences that you would like your learners to develop or even specific knowledge, skills and attitudes that would lead to a concrete change of behaviour. Connected to this, when considering any learning outcomes, another important dimension is the question of indepthness. How "deeply" do you want to explore a particular topic or issue and what would be a desired level of change? An awareness and understanding, or perhaps a concrete change of behaviour and the way learners act? Indepthness is connected to the needs analysis, as it begins to formulate those needs in ways that can be related to the programme design. On top of this, it is necessary to consider them in relation to the participants' profile (see section 3.4.5).

In the context of online or blended learning, when deciding on the learning outcomes, you will need to take the specific type of learning environment into consideration. Running educational activities and meetings online follows the same logic in planning as any other educational activity; however, it often requires prioritisation in terms of needs. Unless online learning stretches across a long period of time, it is important to focus on the most relevant needs and then turn them into feasible learning outcomes. It is better to have one clear learning outcome from an online activity, than to have many learning outcomes which might increase stress or possible anxieties and produce a feeling that the meeting was rushed and there was not enough time. As a rule of thumb, knowledge is more easily tackled with the online part of blended learning. On the one hand, acquiring information might require time for reading/viewing and researching, and learners can decide when and how to invest this time. On the other hand, increasing the level of knowledge does not necessarily require a lot of interaction in person. At the same time, attitudes often need presence and engagement with others, in addition to an intense learning process, which is easier to achieve in residential settings or through an extensive use of videoconferencing. Nonetheless, attitudes take time to change and develop, and an extended part of blended learning after residential training can be very helpful in supporting that. As always, nothing is black and white and there are a lot of factors that influence these choices. What is important to consider are the specificities of an online or blended-learning course when setting up your learning outcomes.

3.2.4. Defining objectives

Defining the objectives can be seen as operationalising the different learning outcomes identified for a training activity. It should be noted, however, that this does not apply to all the objectives that may be set for a particular activity. In discussing the types and levels of learning outcomes, the focus was solely on individual development. In youth work (and in other fields where organisations undertake personnel training), normally two sets of objectives can be defined. The first set is composed of specific objectives at an individual level, outlining the benefits of the training for participants. The second set relates to the organisation that the individual participants belong to, and addresses the potential uses and influences of the learning in the organisation and its environment. If the aim of the course is the creation and motivation of multipliers, this second set of objectives becomes even more important.

This means that the designer(s) of a training activity have two main tasks; firstly, translating the individual learning outcomes into training objectives, and secondly, creating objectives that address the organisational improvements which can be expected after participants are starting to use their newly acquired competences. These are not easy tasks. The trainer(s) need a clear idea of what constitutes a training objective; as a result, they must formulate comprehensible and achievable ones. A very important point to consider: these training objectives must be communicated to the participants, as it allows them to negotiate their expectations with the goals of the training.

It might be easier to see objectives as a set of statements, or projections, which the team and participants will try to achieve within the life of a training activity. And, if it sounds easier, they could be called learning intentions instead.

The model below suggests the main characteristics of useful training objectives, and guidelines for evaluating them. This is a useful model, but there are others, and ultimately each trainer (or trainers' team) has to decide on the format which is most productive for them.

SMART model for writing objectives

- **Specific**: as the opposite of general or vague. It is important to define and limit the scope of what we want to achieve and to put it into words as concretely as possible. Referring to a particular competence or even better, a knowledge, skill or attitude, can make an objective much more specific.
- **Measurable**: besides making objectives even more specific, expressing them in concrete measurable terms helps in evaluating whether they have been achieved or not (or to what extent).
- **Achievable**: is an objective that can actually be reached. When deciding what is achievable, you are basically placing the bar not too high and not too low either, but making sure that it is at a level where it can be reached.
- **Realistic**: this is connected with "Achievable" above, but as a term it is more related to what is actually possible. To go back to that bar above, realistic means that it can be reached for the duration of the training and not with extra heavy machinery to lift you there.
- **Timely**: adds another dimension to be measured, by putting a time frame to your intentions.
- Note: When it comes to learning objectives, measurable and timely do not need to be repeated in every objective, since the group of learners is more likely to be fixed and the duration of the training will not vary from one objective to another.

When defining objectives for an online learning activity, it is helpful to narrow down the objectives, because in most cases the process does not allow for the same intensity or the same depth. There are a number of things that are not possible to be done online. People are more distracted when they are on their devices, since the online learning platform or a videoconferencing tool is just one of the tabs, next to their emails, social media profiles, online shopping, and so on. The mental load and screen fatigue, especially with videoconferencing, can take a toll on the focus and on actual participation.

One possible approach to setting aims and objectives of an online learning activity[96] is to start by developing objectives as if they were for a residential training course. Then once the objectives are set, try to cut half of them out and focus only on the essentials. In this way, the participants will not be overstressed with the online meeting and it will be easier for them to stay focused.

In the context of blended learning, when setting objectives and especially when wondering whether they are achievable and realistic, bear in mind that you have an extended time period at your disposal. On the one hand, this allows you to dream a bit bigger when setting your learning objectives, and on the other, it provides a little more breathing space when thinking of how to tie in loose ends and make sure that all the objectives have been achieved.

Examples of objectives

On an individual level (determined in relation to the learning outcomes):

- to enable 24 participants to prepare, run and evaluate human rights education workshops in their local communities by March 2022;
- to increase participants' knowledge of basic human rights principles and how to work on them through different methods;
- to increase participants' knowledge and awareness of the values underlying European non-formal education;
- to develop participants' skills in considering different political perspectives on human rights in Europe;
- to increase participants' motivation for approaching and facilitating intercultural learning in youth activities;
- to provide a basic overview of different concepts of training in non-formal education;
- to support participants in assessing their own training needs and in learning from their own experiences.

96. Inspired by the Quality standards in education and training activities of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe, available at https://rm.coe.int/ddcp-yd-etd-2016-202-quality-standards-yd-et-activities/16807c8bb9, accessed 18 August 2020.

On an organisational level (larger environment):

- to introduce human rights education in workshops offered by participants' organisations upon their return from the training;
- to foster the development of innovative local youth projects on participation and citizenship by the participants (at least one per person) in their own organisations and environments by the end of 2021.

Note: in *T-Kit 3 – Project management*[97] there is a large section dedicated to the issue of defining objectives (pp. 52-56).

Reflection moment

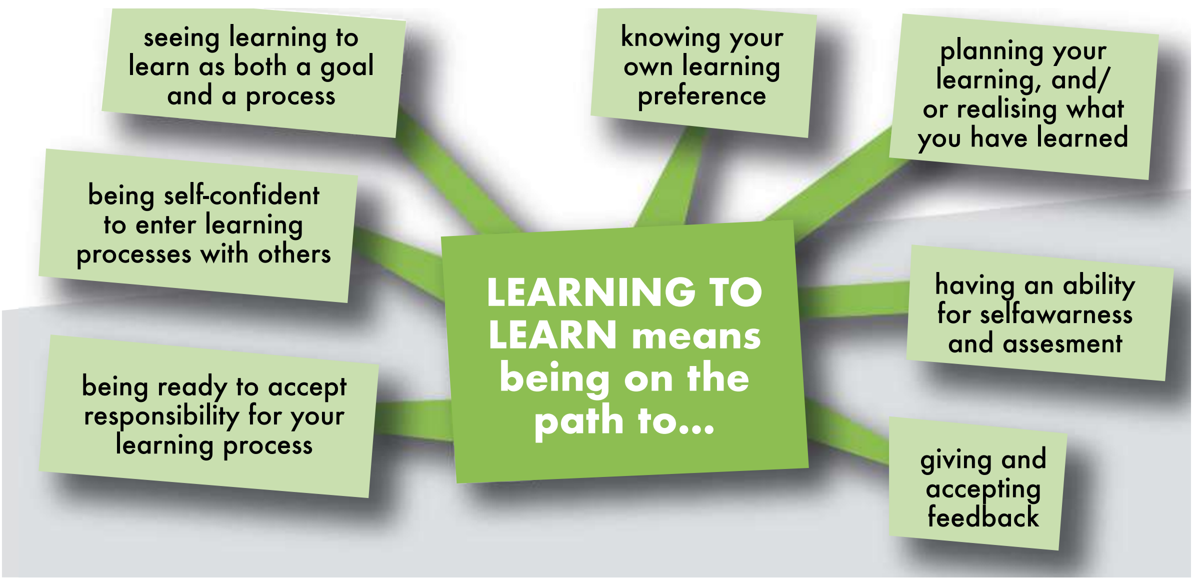
- What factors do you think are most necessary for learning to occur? Why?
- How do objectives contribute to the learning process?
- Can objectives always be measurable?
- Can you think of effective ways of communicating objectives to the participants?

3.2.5. Learning to learn

We have underlined a number of times how important it is to set a frame around a training activity, to have a clear starting point and clear end goals, as well as filter them down to the level of objectives. It is equally important to enable learners to find their own sense of orientation and direction and to choose learning objectives for themselves, based on their individual needs and competences. While course learning objectives are like a framework, individual objectives then manoeuvre within that frame. Individual learning objectives will be set when the training is in action and participants first join the training, be that online or in a residential setting. And learning objectives are one of the steps on the path of developing and practising a learning-to-learn competence.

Learning to learn sees the learner as an active protagonist on their own learning stage, someone who keeps learning how to manage and economise their own learning.

Below is a map of essential elements for learning to learn:



Source: *Handbook for facilitators: learning to learn in practice.*[98]

97. *T-Kit 3 – Project management*, available at https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/T-kit-3-project-management, accessed 18 August 2020.
98. Taylor and Kloosterman (2012).

Learning to learn is included as a competence area in the ETS Competence Model for Trainers and this competence area gives a good overview of what knowledge, skills and attitudes a trainer should strive for when developing their learning to learn competence.

- When we talk about "learning" and "learning to learn", it is essential to highlight that trainers, apart from being "learning organisers", are also learners themselves. Therefore, it is essential for a trainer to get to know him- or herself as a learner. Once they do that, they will be in a better position to facilitate the learning of others (taking into account that different people learn in different ways).

One example of the importance of the learning-to-learn competence arose with the unexpected need to move all learning processes online due to the Covid-19 lockdown and limitations. Many trainers did not do a lot of online facilitation prior to this and, therefore, a steep learning curve occurred. Learning to learn was an important vehicle to climb that curve, to adjust and to excel in a unique, newfound situation. That said, this was true for organisations as well as individual learners.

Reflection moment[99]

- How do I prefer to learn?
- Am I passionate about learning?
- What helps me in my learning process?
- What blocks me in my learning?
- How much do I see myself as a lifelong learner?
- What is my understanding of the "learning to learn" competence?
- What does this all mean for my role as a facilitator of learning?

Getting to know oneself as a learner and at the same time understanding that people learn in different ways highlights other important aspects connected to setting up a learning process in training, such as acknowledging and understanding different learning preferences.

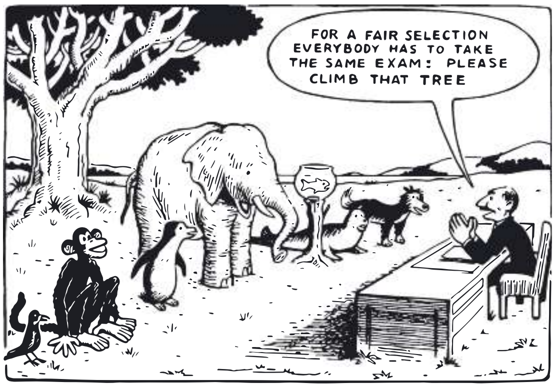
3.2.6. Learning preferences

Regardless of which definition or explanation of non-formal education you follow, one thing that most people will agree on is that it is participant-centred, and that the participant is usually motivated to be there. The aim is to create a process where the individuals can learn from themselves, from the group, and from the training. Given this participant-centredness, training involves an emphasis on learning in as many ways as possible. This is often described as the 4H approach; learning with head, hands, heart and health, which emphasises the interconnectedness of intellectual, instrumental, emotional and holistic ways of learning.

Even without reference to more specific theories, this shorthand description acts as a valuable checklist for any training. It makes the point that learning is enhanced by continually engaging the different ways in which we learn. The rationale of this checklist is that the more dimensions the training addresses, the deeper the

99. Borrowed from *Youthpass unfolded: practical tips and hands-on methods for making the most of the Youthpass process* (2010), available at www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-3553/Publication_YP-unfolded_online.pdf, accessed 18 August 2020.

level of learning that is engaged. It also suggests, as outlined in the section above, that trainers have to think about the way that they learn, consciously address these different ways of learning, and work on their relevant capabilities. If not, they risk recreating a situation similar to the one in the image below.[100]

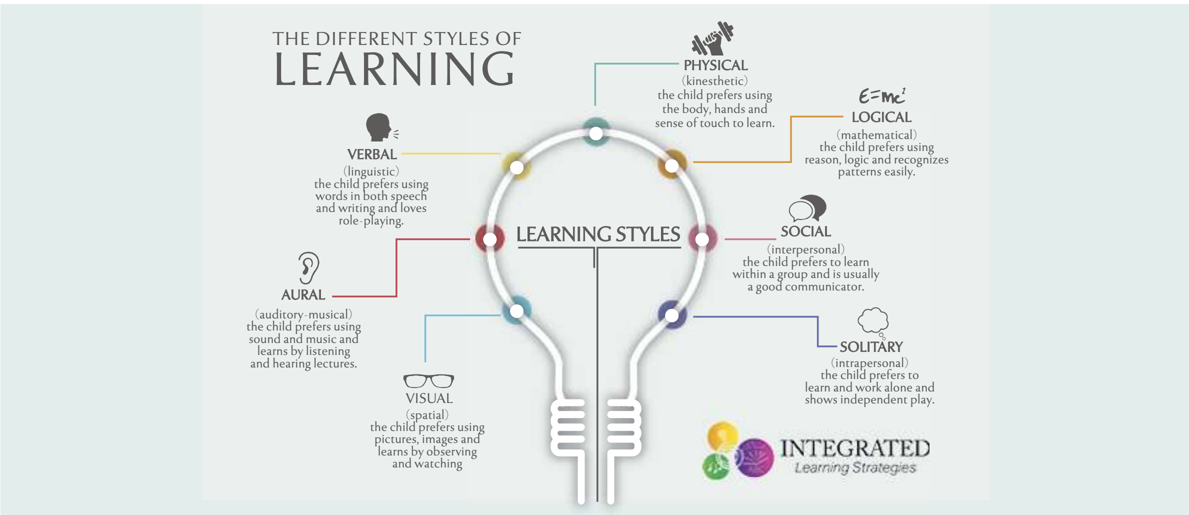


If you have facilitated learning for various groups of people, some of these questions have surely popped into your head at one moment or another:

- Why do certain young people excel in specific situations more than in others?
- Why are some young people so active in some activities and so passive in others?
- How come some young people engage in online activities and discussions, but stay quiet during face-to-face activities and vice versa?
- How come we can't find a way to engage young people in a specific activity?

There can, of course, be many different answers to these questions, but one angle to approach them from is thinking about their learning preferences and learning styles. What that means is that it is essential to acknowledge that not everyone learns in the same way or from the same sources and each of us has their own preferences and style of learning. Take learning a new tabletop game, for example. Some people prefer to read the instructions from start to end and, if possible, in silence. Some read them bit by bit, but constantly clarify the rules in conversation with others. Some go and search for answers in video tutorials, since reading them is simply not clear enough. Some wait for others to read the instructions and then summarise the game for them. And some just can't wait to start playing the game and learn (and perhaps also alter) the rules along the way! With this example we have tackled just some of the aspects of learning preferences and there are many more factors that have an impact on your and your participants' learning.

The image below[101] shows one approach to learning preferences, defined in terms of sources.



100.See: www.quora.com/What-did-Albert-Einstein-mean-when-he-said-Everybody-is-a-genius-But-if-you-judge-a-fish-by-its-ability-to-climb-a-tree-it-will-live-its-whole-life-believing-that-it-is-stupid, accessed 18 August 2020.
101.See: https://ilslearningcorner.com/2016-02-learning-styles-one-size-fits-all-doesnt-work/, accessed 18 August 2020.

Learning styles in particular have been discussed at great length and there are people who swear by them and those who think they are artificial and that they do nothing more than put people into boxes, which labels them and stops the process of reflection on their own learning. We will present you with one of the approaches and then you can decide for yourself. The work of Honey and Mumford is widely applied in the youth field. As their approach is discussed in detail in the Organisational Management T-Kit[102] (pp. 19-22), we will concentrate here on D. A. Kolb's experiential learning cycle,[103] the basis of Honey and Mumford's work.

Kolb essentially breaks down the maxim of "learning from experience" into distinct yet interrelated stages which form a cyclical process. Learning is related not just to experience, but to what we do with that experience. It needs to be translated into a learning experience and its value distilled in different ways. The cycle moves from doing, to reflecting on what has happened, to generalising and conceptualising the experience and applying the new knowledge to "doing" once more. The more learning dimensions that are engaged, the more heightened that experience will be. But the experience is useless without reflecting on what has happened, and translating that reflection into practice when relevant. An example from a training situation might be a simulation game for intercultural learning, where participants are asked to take part in an organised experience. Crucial for learning from this experience is the debriefing, analysis and transfer, which starts the critical thinking process and learning about society from a structured learning situation. Natalia Chardymova, in her article "Do we leave enough space for experiential learning?",[104] raises important questions about experiential learning and its place in international training in Europe.

In many of the theoretical approaches likely to be encountered, an ideal "integrated learner" (the one able to learn from different learning situations, environments and stimuli) would benefit from each stage in the experiential learning cycle. However, personal reflection may indicate that we all identify ourselves more with some styles than others, although this may vary according to situation, motivation and stimulus. On the negative side, a reliance on one style may benefit us in the relevant stage of the cycle, but prove to be a disadvantage when other skills are required at other stages. A key aim of engaging with theories of this nature is, once again, in "learning to learn"; in other words, concentrating on identifying the contexts where we benefit least, and attempting to improve on that. It is worth bearing in mind in relation to this that the concept of style also involves the question of speed – people learn according to different rhythms, depending on their individual pace, the programme design and the momentum of the group. It is important when discussing theories to restate one of the fundamental premises of this publication. Theories can only act as orientation, and do not provide a blueprint for training. Nobody fits neatly into these categories. The actual training reality introduces factors which are unpredictable and influential in terms of people's learning. Categories like these, if overemphasised, can stereotype and limit the scope of learning.

When talking about learning preferences, it is once again worth mentioning online and blended learning. Some people will claim that the online dimension in both of those approaches simply does not work for them and they will skip it altogether. And while this would not be accepted as an excuse in residential training settings,

102. *T-Kit 1 – Organisational management*, available at https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/T-kit-1-organisational-management, accessed 18 August 2020.
103. See more about D.A. Kolb's experiential learning cycle in section 4.4.3, Debriefing.
104. Chardymova (2019).

somehow in online environments trainers often let it pass. The answer, however, might be in more specific aspects of online learning components that do not work for certain learners; for example: the stimuli, the pace, the level of interaction. And at the same time, they will work very well for others. Therefore, like with any other aspect of learning, the learners' preference should be seriously taken into consideration when designing the online part of the learning experience. In addition, it is important to make sure that it is diverse and that it caters for different (access) needs.

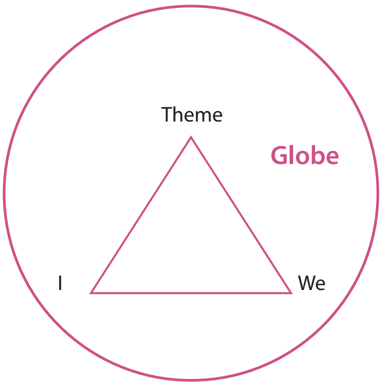
Reflection moment

- To what extent is the training you are developing providing different opportunities for learning?
- Is your training targeting different elements of competences: knowledge, skills and attitudes/values?
- Are your own learning preferences influencing the way in which you are designing a training activity?
- If designing a blended-learning experience, are the online and residential parts balancing each other out when it comes to offering diverse opportunities and approaches?
- How inclusive and open for different abilities are the learning opportunities you offer?
- Are you including different sources of information? (articles, videos, conversations, etc.)
- To what extent are you involving your learners in the creation of the programme?

3.3. STRATEGIES AND METHODOLOGY

3.3.1. Training strategies

The next step in the building process is to design training which reflects the desired learning outcomes, and caters for a variety of learning preferences. A training strategy can be looked upon as the way in which a programme flow is being planned, the logic by which the content will be developed and the methods assembled with consideration of the development of the group dynamics. There are different elements and approaches to this which are clearly not rocket science; for example, not beginning a course with a plan for future action when the aim and project have not even been defined. Yet a training strategy is important, as it brings together the interconnectedness of the training elements. The theme-centred interaction model (developed by Ruth Cohn in 1981) illustrates this interconnectedness.



It can be seen as illustrating training in general (the whole of section 4.1.3 is dedicated to this model of interconnectedness) but in this context it signals the specific and interdependent elements which need to be considered in a training strategy.

The *theme* is the aim of the training, the reason why everybody is there. It represents the topics and form of the meeting. *I* is each separate person involved in the training, be it team or participant, who bring with them expectations, different learning biographies, competences and experiences in relation to the topic, and so forth. *We* is the group, and it represents more than just physical collectivity. It is the group as a collective process, with a cultural existence involving the development of communication patterns, shared assumptions, dialogue on values, atmosphere, roles, avoidances and other dynamics. Finally, the *globe* is the context in which the training takes place, ranging from the physical and material conditions to the organisational considerations and relation to the "real world". As part of the context, there is also an aspect of whether the training will be residential, blended or facilitated solely online.

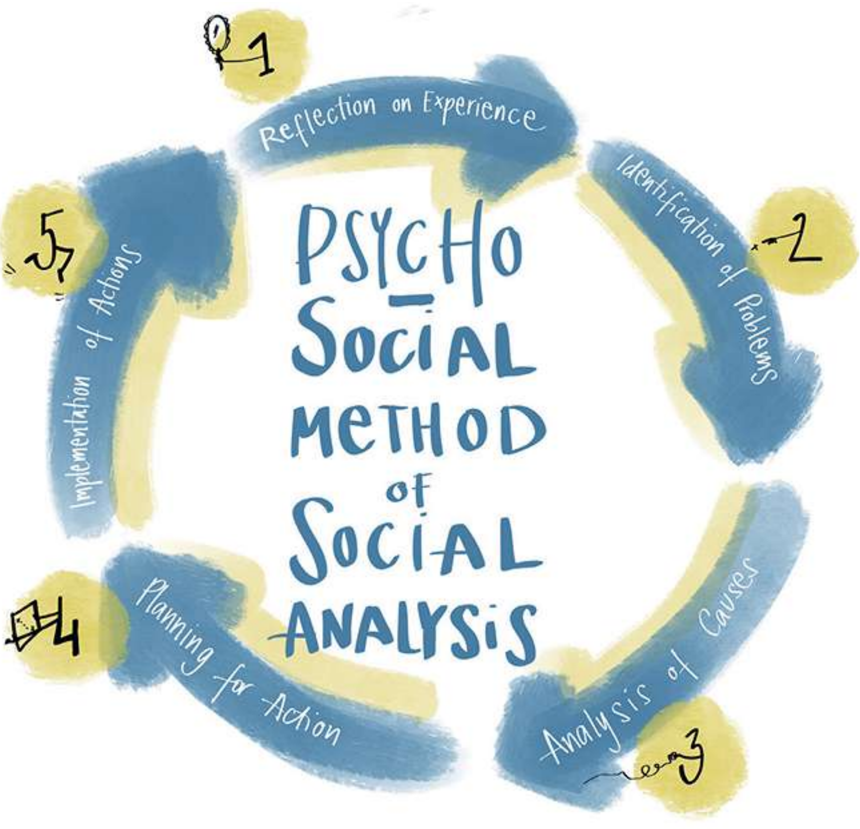
The triangle suggests that within the globe, the different elements of theme, individual and group should have balanced relations. Each axis of the triangle allows us to ask questions which shape the training strategy (the following is not an exhaustive list):

- *Theme – We*: what level of experience of the topic should the group have? What different experiences exist? Is the training inductive (providing framework and orientation to the group) or deductive (allowing the group to set the framework and orient themselves)? What expectations do we have in relation to group contributions to the topic(s)? How do we relate the development of the group to the development of the theme?
- *We – I*: How do we approach individual expectations in relation to the group? What kind of space exists for the individual within the group? Does working time and methods reflect both group and individual needs? How do we deal with disagreements?
- *I – Theme*: what expectations do individuals have in relation to the theme? What do they want to learn? How does the exploration of the theme cater for different learning preferences and rhythms? What responsibility do individuals have for their own learning, and what possibilities do they have to contribute to the group learning process? Are there individual questions of language competency, or any other factor which needs to be addressed?

The *globe* must then be factored into all of these relationships, possibilities and limitations of the working space, finances, expectations of the organisation(s), and so on.

We can examine a practical example of a training strategy in relation to the globe. The diagram below illustrates the Psycho Social Method of Social Analysis, developed by the World Studies Project (Leahy 1996: 20). This training strategy is based on the premise that knowledge is generated by a reflection on the synthesis of social experience. It therefore incorporates strong mutual relationships between the three points of the triangle; the topic is developed through group reflections, which are a synthesis of individual experiences, experiences which are fully interpreted through the benefit of group work and the focus is provided by the topic. As the cycle develops through the five stages, the training is advanced by the constant interplay of these elements.

While this particular model has been developed for social analysis, with particular reference to development education, it is applicable to a range of topics if the premises build on the training strategy you would like to adopt. Within the strategy, there are still enormous decisions to be made. The strategy provides a flowchart of the training, and that flow needs to be realised by introducing the methodology that will facilitate the training.



3.3.2. Methods and methodology

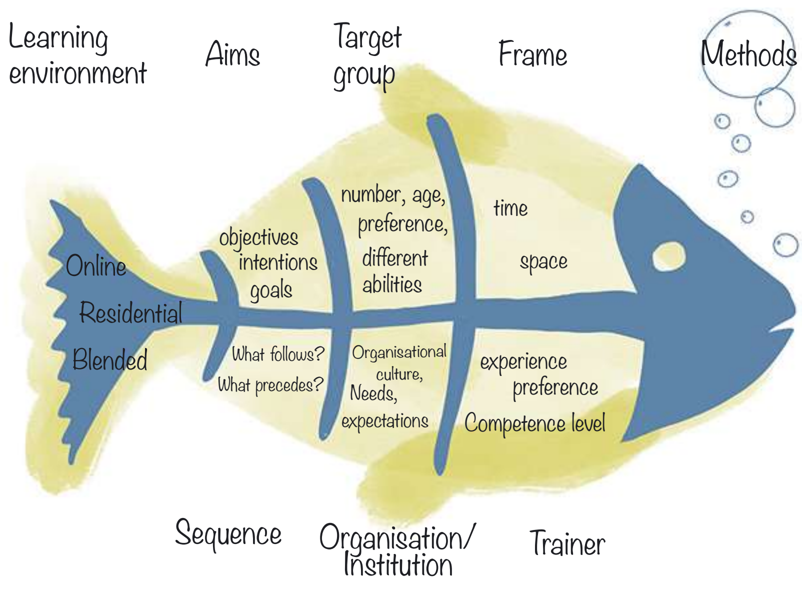
Question – what is the plural of method? Answer – methods, not methodology. This is the first point that needs clarification in this section. A method is an activity and it gives a framework to a certain part of the programme. It could be an icebreaker, a simulation game, an input. Methodology, on the other hand, is the educational logic of the methods chosen. The role-playing game "Take a step forward",[105] for example, is a method, and role-playing is a methodology based on a philosophy of experiential learning. Therefore, the chosen methodology is closely related to the training strategy; it is the rubric by which the individual methods are chosen. It is an overview of the methods in the programme, looking at the balance of types, how they relate to learning preferences, individual/group activity, and so on. What this also suggests is that choosing a method is not a simple question of finding activities which will fill the time frame available. This section addresses the range of questions which should be considered before a method is decided upon.

A method is the point at which all of the training planning is presented to the participants. As such, it is responsible for communicating a lot about this prior process. A five-hour input on participation and citizenship without questions or toilet breaks may seem a little odd. The method chosen and the relations between the axes of the triangle which it represents would not seem to fit with the values being espoused by the content or the training. As a result, at a fundamental level, the method must relate to the vision and purpose of the training – in other words, the underlying values, overall aims, as well as the specific objectives. The method chosen must fulfil a specific objective and also represent a system of values central to the whole enterprise. If we begin to collate a checklist of questions which can be referred to when choosing methods, then the initial ones would be:

- Is the chosen method in line with the values that are transmitted in the content and with the aims of the training?
- Can the method deliver the objectives specified for this stage of the training strategy? (Complete this sentence: at the end of this session I would like to see that participants…)

These questions are also useful for teams to take stock of their shared understanding. Clearly, if team members are answering these questions differently, a review of the process may have to be undertaken.

To begin relating the methods to an overview of factors, see the fish below:



The bubbles the fish breathes represent the methods that have been generated by passing through the entire body. By looking along the ribs, we can check the factors which have influenced this. We can also relate these to the elements in the globe. The following are relevant questions to consider in relation to the group.

- How does the methodology reflect the reality of the group, in other words, are different methods used in the overall programme which respond to different learning preferences, needs and speeds?
- What kind of communication does the method encourage in the group?

105. "Take a step forward" is a very popular activity from the *Compass: manual for human rights education with young people*, available at www.coe.int/en/web/compass, accessed 21 August 2020.

- Does the method contribute to the process of group building, or is that an issue at this point?
- What levels of trust and familiarity does the method presume in the group?
- Did the method respond to the level of comfort/challenge of the group?
- How does the method correspond to your understanding of the group dynamics at this point?
- How does the method address the group needs and responsibilities at this point in the training strategy?
- Is the method gender-sensitive and inclusive to different abilities?

Within these group considerations, we can add a further set of questions concerning the individual and address that axis of the triangular relationship.

- Does the method consider any individual biographical information that may be relevant? (age, education, language, sociocultural background, previous experience, relevant competence level)
- Does the method allow active participation of the learner?
- Does the method engage more than verbal-intellectual skills?
- Does it give time and opportunity for the learner to get in contact with their feelings, interests and thoughts?
- Will the learner realise that they are responsible for their learning and personal development?
- Are questions raised that motivate further investigation, training, exchange or study?
- Does the method raise reactions and emotions that can be dealt with in the context? Is the method challenging enough and yet not too challenging?
- Does the method presume certain physical capacities on the part of the participant? Is the method accessible and gender inclusive?

The method has an obvious relationship to the topic; it is chosen to advance the exploration of the topic at a particular moment. Thinking back to the training strategy, the method needs to be related to the objectives of the content and the relationship of the trainer and group to the content at that moment.

- What prior level of knowledge does the method assume? (intellectual, emotional, etc.)
- How does the method relate to what has gone before and what will come after?
- How does the method value and incorporate the contributions of the group?
- What information is provided by the trainer, and what is left to the participants to supply or find themselves?
- Which elements of the topic are prioritised by the method at this point, and why?

And finally, the globe also suggests a range of factors which have to be taken into account.

- Is the method feasible?
- Is the method secure physically and safe psychologically?
- Are the necessary materials available and budgeted for?
- How does the physical environment impact the choice of method?
- Is there enough time, allowing for small delays, to complete the activity and fulfil the objectives?
- Is it possible to adapt the method to the changing circumstances in the process and in the group?

Note: many of the questions above were suggested by or adapted from a handout "Considerations for the design of training programmes and the choice of methods", by Antje Rothemund, for "Training for Trainers", European Youth Centre Budapest, 1998 (itself adapted from Gerl H. (1985), "Methoden der Erwachsenenbildung" in Pöggeler, *Handbuch der Erwachsenenbildung*, Stuttgart).

Reflection moment

- Having studied this list of questions, can you add any more to the different categories?
- Do you find any questions particularly important or particularly controversial?

3.3.3. Methods online and online methods

You might have noticed that one of the insides of the fish is dedicated to a type of chosen learning environment – whether the training is happening in the residential setting, online or as a blended option. While this might not have such a huge influence when choosing which type of theory to offer to the learners or which kinds of questions to use for reflection, when choosing a method this is one of the determining factors. Many trainers who have ventured from residential training settings into online learning realms have tried the first logical thing – to adapt the methods used in face-to-face interaction to those new contexts. In some cases that works, in some it does not. Or at least it does not to the same extent.

That said, when you put all the other aspects of the insides of the fish together, you should also add the following considerations about online learning environments.

- Online learning platforms allow for a self-paced exploration of the content, at least to some degree. This allows for creating multiple learning pathways with different methods and activities (allowing learners to choose their own way).
- By using different platforms and tools, learning can be a combination of synchronous (online meetings) and asynchronous elements and methods. This also caters for a combination of online meetings and individual and/or collaborative tasks in between.
- Online meetings are an invaluable element to create connection and bring learners together, but at the same time it can lead to videoconferencing fatigue.
- A lot of content can be stored online and online learning platforms are a good place for gathering resources in different formats.
- Arguably, online learning caters quite well to different visual content: images, videos, memes, GIFs, you name it! It is important, however, that the visual content is accessible to all group members, with all their abilities.
- Online segments can stretch over a period of several weeks, during which participants are usually in their home contexts. This allows for research and practical tasks in their local environments.
- Learners connect to online meetings from their homes and/or offices, which means that they bring elements of familiar environments with them. This familiar environment can be utilised to break the ice and reduce the awkwardness.
- A written word is not the same as a spoken word and it does not allow for a lot of clarification. This might imply that whatever input is being made it needs to be very clear and to the point. Which goes for face-to-face inputs as well.
- A blended-learning environment allows for local groups getting together face to face, doing certain tasks and activities, and then using online elements to connect to the whole international group.

Finally, an important aspect to be considered is the trainers themselves. Whether they are comfortable online, whether they feel this environment as their own and whether they have trust that it can provide learners with meaningful insights and interactions. There is quite some resistance among youth workers and the youth training community towards the online learning environments and this is something that needs to be taken into consideration when planning training that includes an online dimension as well.

For an overview and inspiration of possible methods to be implemented online, check Digi Youth Portal,[106] Nerijus Kriauciunas's article on "Smart and digital youth work resources: where to find more,"[107] *Leading groups online guide*,[108] or DOYIT *eLearning guide* by ERYCA.[109]

Similarly, when deciding on which method to choose, digital tools are increasingly entering residential training rooms – treasure hunt apps, online quizzes, apps for quick collection of people's feelings and opinions, etc. They can be very useful and engaging, but they come with a risk of taking attention away from the here and now and into the World Wide Web, where a lot of different temptations lurk just behind the next click. That said, although humans are reportedly carrying their phones wherever they go, including to a residential session, this does not mean the end of civilisation. Trainers need to adapt to these realities and take them into consideration when choosing their methods. A number of trainers are stating that residential training settings should provide an alternative to this and therefore we can see an increase in numbers of face-to-face

106. Digi Youth Portal: *Methods in online learning – part 1*, available at www.digi-youth.com/, author for part 1 and 2, Ivana Volf, accessed 21 August 2020.
107. Kriauciunas (2020).
108. Rewa and Hunter (2020).
109. *DOYIT (developing online youth information trainings) eLearning guide* by ERYCA, available at static1.squarespace.com/static/59ab1130ff7c50083fc9736c/t/5c04f9d18985834de3f1247c/1543829976368/DOYIT+eLearning+Guide.pdf, accessed 21 August 2020.

courses and outdoor pursuits, while others are saying that we should start utilising the advantages of digital technologies and create methods that will utilise them as well. As often happens, the truth is somewhere in between and trainers should strive to find a way that feels comfortable for them and plays well with their competences. In all that, it is important to walk the talk – we are all humans as well and most of us flick through our phone while watching a series on a streaming service or seeing a quick video tutorial on how to assemble a piece of furniture.

> Technology is an enabler. What we use it for is what matters. It can make us more or less productive, based on how we use it. For every distraction that the internet throws at us (memes, click-bait news, funny Reddit threads, YouTube videos, social media and so on), it also provides us tools to cut the noise.[110]

And for some inspiration, you can check the list of tools that SEEYN – South East European Youth Network compiled on its Digi Youth Portal.[111]

3.3.4. Methods and the trainer

Ultimately, of course, the success of the chosen method depends on the trainer delivering the training. A method which involves a group in an experiential learning situation is not an exact science, and there is great value in unexpected contributions and directions. These can only be valuable, however, if the trainer is aware that they are unexpected, and can relate them to the objectives and anticipated flow of the session. Basically, a trainer needs to feel comfortable with the method and confident in their capability to see it through. The following questions can act as a guide to assessing the suitability of the method to you as a trainer.

- Do you feel confident and convinced about the method?
- Have you experienced the method fully as a participant? Or as part of a team where people have had that experience? Have you facilitated it yourself?
- Do you feel that you have the necessary competences, in particular background knowledge of the topic, to facilitate this method?
- Are you in a position to anticipate the outcomes but also deal with unexpected ones?
- Do you have a plan B if something goes wrong with the method?
- Can you make the objectives of the activity, while avoiding dogmatic facilitation? (i.e. pushing for the "right answers").
- To what extent will you be able to deal with the feelings in participants or group that might arise from the method?
- Is your method fully inclusive for different abilities?
- ...

Statements adapted from Rothemund (1998), "Considerations for the design of training programmes and the choice of methods".

The list of questions is not exhaustive (as the three dots indicate) and these are just possible aspects to take into consideration when choosing an appropriate method. Nevertheless, they should help trainers to avoid an "I have the perfect method" situation, which is based on their preferences and great past experiences and might have nothing to do with the current reality of the "theme", "group", "individual' and "the globe" (as referred to in section 3.3.1).

3.4. LOGISTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Organising a training course is like preparing yourself for a journey. One of our grandmothers used to say the better you prepare your luggage, the better time you will have. And we think she is right. Furthermore, this also applies to the context of a training course. The better you prepare it, the better prepared you are to expect the unexpected.

110. Mandiga (2018).
111. Digi Youth Portal: Everything you ever wanted to know about online learning and digital tools in youth work, available at www.digi-youth.com/, accessed 21 August 2020.

This section takes a conventional division of three phases and considers the practical and logistical issues you will encounter before, during and after. It is also worth bearing in mind that while the residential course is usually the most attractive phase, conducting a complete training means placing equal worth on every stage. Many training activities are combined with online training/use blended learning, especially before or after the residential phase, or during the practical learning (for example practice project) and applying period, or long-term training courses which consist of two residential phases and different tasks and online learning in between.

The following part is very general and contains the basic elements that need to be considered when preparing and running a residential training course. (Of course, this sequence could alternate if you have other or more stakeholders involved or if you outsource your training, have an online experience or blended learning, hence, it depends on the organisation/s involved, possible venue/s, etc.). In Appendix 4 you will find a much more detailed grid and description of the "before – during – after" logistical considerations of training.

What follows below is an example or guideline, with all the crucial elements to consider in the logistical planning of a training course. It presents the logical sequence of mainly administrative actions that need to be taken. We have avoided suggesting a time frame as this depends on many variables and specific features, from the nature of the training to the size, needs and traditions of the organisation, the various stakeholders involved or access needs of participants to consider. As a general rule, you could think of our granny, and do not underestimate the time that some administrative tasks may take, such as, for example visa requests.

3.4.1. Before

The crucial steps prior to a training course range from needs assessment, decision on topic, date, hosting organisation, type/s of event/s and deadlines to grant application, venue selection, selection of preparatory team, as well as agreeing on a preparation meeting. Ideally, the preparation meeting takes place at the actual venue, and afterwards, the call for participants and other invitations are prepared. Invitations for experts, media staff, caretakers and access staff, as well as the invitations for organisations and participants ("call for participants") are sent out. Crucial is a democratic and fair system for the selection of participants, followed by their acceptance notice, as well as visa invitation letters (if needed). Furthermore, documents such as info letters, info packs or certificates for participants need to be prepared by the organisers beforehand. In the meantime, trainers are busy preparing the content of the training course, writing their session outlines (see Appendix 5), agreeing on methods, inputs, timings and giving each other feedback on their preparatory work.

3.4.2. During

Ideally, the organisers and preparatory team arrive at the venue prior to participants. Hence, this gives them the chance to have another prep meeting to fine-tune the programme and look into all sorts of practicalities and technicalities on the spot.

Other logistical considerations, which will hopefully not be on the shoulders of the trainers (who should be mostly in charge of the content), are travel reimbursement formalities, participation fees, consent forms for pictures, social media coverage and alike. Furthermore, reporting duties, such as daily social media postings or filming tasks need to be distributed and agreed on.

3.4.3. After

The organisation in charge takes care of travel reimbursements and follows up on relevant media coverage or policy work. Depending on the practice of the organisation and grant regulations, the report may be produced in written/online format, as a video clip, podcast, website, multimedia, graphic report and/or other (see also section 5.1. on transfer and multiplying). Dissemination and sustainable follow-up largely depend on the institutional, organisational support, as well as the personal motivation of participants and trainers. If feasible, the preparatory team meets once more (residential or online) to carry out a comprehensive evaluation of the event.

For more details on the above, please refer to Appendix 4.

Clearly, there are a lot of elements to bear in mind, in terms of logistical management of training. It is important that the various responsible parties for the event (the organisation, preparatory team and to some extent the expert speakers and participants also) have an overview of the different elements which contribute to a successful event. With this in mind, it is worth pointing out that team flexibility and preparing for the unexpected are as central to the smooth flow of administrative tasks as they are to the socio-educational elements of the event. May our granny be with you!

Reflection moment

In this chapter we suggested logical steps as a sequence of action (mainly administrative) which could help you when preparing a training event. We deliberately chose not to indicate any timing for the different action, so now…it is up to you:

- Think of the size, structure, management and working modes/structures of your organisation. With this in mind, try to allocate on this timeline the timing you think is most appropriate for the suggested action sequence (one month before, or one month after, etc).

BEFORE

Actions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Timeline

____event

You can then repeat this diagram for DURING and AFTER.

Please also refer to *T-Kit 3 – Project management*,[112] section 3.2.6.1. on planning and timing (pp. 58-64).

3.4.4. Preparatory team meetings – why, when, how long?

A successful activity depends largely on a timely, thorough and complete preparatory process in which all major aspects of the activity are considered. Experience shows that cuts in the preparation time often have negative consequences on the results of the activity.

Training activities must include at least one preparatory meeting in addition to time for the selection of participants (when this is the responsibility of the educational team); this does not include possible preparatory meetings immediately before the activity. Of course, the team of trainers who prepared the activity should also be responsible for running the activity.

Ideally, a preparation meeting should take place several months before the course. The exact time depends on what needs to be done. Will the course be blended and include some online learning before the residential course? Will the participants be selected at, or after the meeting? Should experts be invited? This needs to be done in due time.

The length of time needed for the meeting depends on the nature of the course and on how well the team members know each other in advance, but if possible, a meeting should last for at least two days. Besides clarifying the course frame, preparing the programme and distributing the tasks, some time should be reserved for building the team and to evaluate the meeting.

Before ending the meeting, make sure to establish a clear division of tasks and set deadlines. Who should do what by when? What can be done by online and via digital tools, what not? Deciding on a co-ordinator for this process between meetings might be useful to ensure that the process is actually followed up until the next meeting.

3.4.5. Participant profile

After starting with a thorough needs analysis, setting the aims and the objectives of the training course and deciding on the methodology (which in our context is non-formal education of course), the prep team is looking into planning the programme (section 3.5), as well as discussing and deciding which type and range of participants to target.

112. *T-Kit 3 – Project management*, available at https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/T-kit-3-project-management, accessed 21 August 2020.

An agreed and shared participant profile is fundamental. A comprehensive description of the required profile will help organisations to decide who they are going to send to the course and/or select between candidates; furthermore, it will also help the planning team to prepare the programme and foresee the active involvement of the participants. Of course, a profile is just that – a profile which real participants step into and make real. It is not a wish list, and there are often discrepancies between written appearance and lived reality (notoriously with self-assessment of linguistic competencies). That said, using a profile allows training teams to construct a programme based on a certain number of assumptions (see the list below), and this programme can be adapted and fine-tuned according to the team's assessment of the group and the expectations and feedback which they receive. Please let us also remind you of General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) compliance when it comes to handling participants' details and personal information.

The following is a list of elements that could be taken into account when designing an application form.

- **Age:** some institutions implement age limits for their grants. In terms of group education, it is also worth considering the age spectrum in relation to your aims, objectives and working methods.
- **Language:** this is a crucial question, especially important if the planning team should also provide interpretation. It is worth indicating not just the working languages, but what level of competency is required to work in the language. Some application forms advise, for example, the ability to fully comprehend and complete the form without external assistance.
- **Experience and competences:** this part should indicate the range and depth of experiences and skills that participants are expected to have in relation to the course topic. Do participants need to possess any specific knowledge, skills and attitudes to take part in the activity? For example, if it is an advanced course on project management, the form could stipulate that participants should have been responsible for at least three projects. If the course is aimed at beginners, it could look for some previous involvement and evidence of involvement in future projects. This element is often useful for recognising and incorporating prior learning processes. The planning team could use this information regarding the participants' experience as a starting point for the programme, and build participation on their competences and evaluation of previous work.
- **Need and motivation:** 3.1 argued that a needs assessment is the starting point for shaping training. It follows that participants should really need the training if the overall aims and objectives are to be targeted. Participants may need the training for a specific reason (new responsibilities in their organisation), or for reasons relating to their general development (an advanced training for trainers for example). Questions on the form may ask participants to state why they need the training, why they feel that it will be beneficial, which possibilities for follow-up they have, etc. These questions also address motivation, and while it is a difficult task for any team to assess needs and motivations on the basis of a limited input, direct questions of this nature can often provide useful insights.
- **Access needs:** to include everyone, please refer to elements such as wheelchair access, sign language interpreter, real-time captioning, documents in Braille, easy-to-read documents, personal-assistant support and other forms of disability-related needs. For valuable input and suggestions in this regard, please refer to Appendix 3, which provides you with a template for "frequently asked questions" to complement application forms for mixed-ability groups, as well as an "access requirement questionnaire" developed by ENIL (European Network on Independent Living Youth).
- **Type of organisation and position in the organisation:** this should clarify the type of organisation that is being sought; the form could look for information on the background, aims, mission, structures and ongoing organisational development processes. Furthermore, the position of the participant within their organisation influences their ability to multiply the course results, and often to implement or suggest changes which the training highlights as necessary.
- **Gender:** might be useful, in order to address gender inequalities.
- **Diets:** make sure your hosting environment is ready to cater for the various dietary needs, such as lactose intolerance, coeliac disease, vegan, vegetarian, etc. Find out if there are any specificities in the hosting environment that may make it difficult for people with special dietary requirements to participate in the project.

Once the organisation has received the application forms short-listing can begin. An important operational principle for this process is that selection does not equal judgment. It is not a matter of judging participants' skills or abilities, but a matter of selecting participants with profiles and needs that correspond to the aims and objectives of the programme. Furthermore, it is important to see what the participant will do after the training course. Is there a clear idea how this training can be beneficial to an individual's work or future activities?

The line between selection and various forms of judgment is thin, and there may also be political or organisational reasons suggested for certain inclusions or exclusions. Teams can limit these elements by setting out clear selection guidelines in advance.

3.4.6. Different types of training courses

A basic step in the preparation of a training course is deciding which kind of course to go for (see also 3.2.3). This choice will clearly influence the educational process hugely, and sometimes the choice is left to the preparatory team. Very often the framework is provided by the organisation, relevant sponsor or institution who has established the type of course they like to run. The list below provides a far from exhaustive account of the main types of training courses you may encounter.

- A **long-term** course is planned to last over a relatively long period of time and is composed of different parts. For example, a number of residential courses, with a fixed period between them, during which time participants should carry out specific tasks while calling on their experiences of the course. The process of training, implementation and then evaluation has proved to be beneficial for both trainers and trainees in providing a fuller picture of the training loop.
- An **online** course can be short or long term. It mostly consists of modules which are available for a large group of people or a repeating course. Its advantages are that it saves resources, access is easy and there is time flexibility for participants' learning; it is particularly suitable for knowledge transfer.
- A **blended** course could be, for example, a medium- or long-term training, which consists of two residential seminars, a practical project and/or online learning modules in between (prior or after the residential activities). It helps participants to deepen and accompany their learning and personal (organisational) development in between residential training. It gives them a chance to apply their learning in practice, to deepen their competences, to exchange with their peers and to have continuous support from their trainers.
- A **one-to-one** course is a trainer-led teaching or learning experience, in which the trainer is present on the spot; depending on the needs of the particular person it can be a mix of mentoring, tutoring and all sorts of things. This one-to-one learning experience caters for private needs and access needs; the learner is not exposed and carries on at their own pace. Frequently used for a private language class, IT class, or similar.
- **Tailor-made** course**:** in NFE almost all courses are tailor-made. The programme and the content are specifically designed to meet the stated needs of participants. There are different ways of structuring it. There may be fixed aims and objectives, and the preparatory team designs the programme with the participants on the basis of these. Alternatively, even the aims and objectives could be decided with the participants during a facilitated process. A course of this nature may be used in an advanced training on a specific topic for example, or within an organisation working in an area where members train for skill or knowledge gaps.
- A **module-based** course is composed of different modules which are specific units or self-contained training courses. Modules tend to focus on a topic or issue, and can be progressively linked to each other or offered in isolation.
- **On-the-job training** is a specific training on a definite subject relating to the task or job that the trainee should fulfil. The main advantage is that the content of the training is immediately applied and the trainer has immediate feedback from the trainee.
- **A compulsory training** course has set aims and objectives and is part of a system or framework within an organisation. Participants are encouraged or required to take part in the course in order to gather specific knowledge and skills related to their tasks. These kinds of courses are common in organisations such as the Guides and Scouts, where specific training precedes specific roles or positions.
- **A mixed-design** course gathers together aspects of the courses above, designing a composite course addressing specific needs. This kind of course is dictated by the context, and attention should be paid to the educational process between elements of the overall course. An example might be a module-based course where one module deals with on-the-job training and other modules are tailor-made.
- **Study visits** serve to build capacity as part of a training process. Within a residential training course, there is a study visit (also often referred to as excursion) planned (to an NGO, an institution) which fits the content and competences to be acquired throughout the course and helps the transfer into practice/real life.
- **Practice** period/experience as part of a short- or long-term training course. Participants of a training course have a chance to develop their competences and apply their learning while giving a workshop, a seminar or running a youth exchange on a specific topic, etc.

- **Peer-group** meetings among small groups of participants in order to foster group and individual learning and exchange. As part of a training course, or as a follow-up. Peer groups help participants to apply their learning, to keep on learning together, to get feedback from their peers, in order to keep up personal development, motivation and exchange.
- **Mentoring** is a long-term relationship (for example as part of a long-term training of trainers), where goals may change. Mentoring goals are set by the mentee and the mentor provides support and guidance for future roles. Mentoring is a developmental partnership and accompanying process through which the trainer shares competences, info and perspective, in order to foster the personal/professional growth of the participant.
- **Coaching** is a partnership between client and coach. It enables an individual to move from where they are now to where they want to be. Through feedback, insights and guidance, the coach prepares the client to reach established goals. As a result, the client develops personal/professional skills to be successful in their endeavours.
- **Job shadowing** is a competence development opportunity in which one person observes another person doing their daily job and running their organisational/institutional affairs.

3.4.7. Training aids and learning environments

It is important not to forget that the optimal working conditions and environment where the training takes place will have a strong impact on the success of the activity. As a general principle, the success of an activity should never be determined by the working conditions and facilities. The standards related to the venue, working conditions or technical resources should be analysed within the broader social and economic reality in which the activity is placed, while making sure that the quality of the educational process is safeguarded. Some of the issues to have in mind include the following.

1. The activities should take place in an appropriate, accessible and favourable physical environment for learning; it is advisable to check to what extent one can alter the "architecture" of the learning spaces: simple things such as changing the rows of chairs into a circle or little groups of five to six participants.
2. Activities should operate at an optimal level of technical quality, ensuring that there is access and good use of the equipment and technical tools; trainer teams have to be flexible within certain limits though, as it is not always possible to have optimal working conditions for whatever reason(s).
3. The organisers of the training courses, and also the trainers, should be open to new pedagogical and technological tools and their facilities should be at the forefront of training standards and practices.
4. Training courses require appropriate financial and human resources which should be consistently allocated to secure the success of each activity.

In the section on learning preferences (3.2.6), it was emphasised that people learn in different ways, at different speeds, and in relation to different stimuli and the skills that are engaged. As well as reflecting this in the methodological choices of a training course (4.3.2), the physical structuring of sessions and the ways in which material is presented has a significant influence on communication and the facilitation of learning. Hence, the choice of training aids needs some consideration.

This choice is based on different elements:

- number of participants and their background;
- access needs;
- physical environment;
- training approach and strategy;
- subject and content of the session;
- materials and technology available;
- competencies and skills of the trainers.

In considering these elements it is worth remembering that training aids are not in themselves methods of training, but they remain tools which do not replace the trainer. It is useful to employ a variety of aids, but variety (or technology!) is not an end in itself. It may be flash to set up videoconferencing between different floors of the training centre, but it might be easier to have a good old-fashioned plenary. At the same time, some trainers will go a long way not to use technology and then write a presentation on 10 flipchart papers. One should also keep the environmental perspective in mind and evaluate in which case various aids are most fruitful. In fact, aids can reduce our efforts as trainers and help us to achieve more effective results. Relatedly, it is advisable to practise your session to check that the material you are using is really an aid and not a virtuoso showpiece. As section 2.2.4 argued, the way we train can relate to our self-image as a trainer, and aids can be an extension of that.

A few questions and examples for important consideration.

- Is the *training space* adequate so that everyone has the access needed to ensure equal participation? Can all participants properly understand and follow the point of focus? This involves checking the lighting, microphones, screen position, WiFi-access, etc.
- Are your *aids/slides* limited to essential details to avoid distractions? Choose an appropriate layout, with an appropriate lettering size. Space letters adequately using taller letters rather than wide ones. If you choose colours pay attention not to over-combine pale colours.
- Do you use *music* to relax participants or to create a different atmosphere?[113]
- Are you always doing a sound check, testing the *microphone* prior to use?
- Rehearse to find the right distance from the mouth and to avoid feedback. If anyone is hard of hearing, see if their devices co-operate with the volume of your microphone or if you need an additional loop system.
- Do any of your participants have a *personal assistant* or is in need of any other *human aid* in order to participate equally?
- Make sure you think about aspects of inclusion.
- What are you doing in terms of *physical movement and energising*?
- Please also consider matters related to *timing*. It could be that you have hard-of-hearing participants in the group and the interpreters need time to transfer the information to them.

Whether it is a simple game as an energiser, or a creative exercise, make sure that you have adequate amounts of all materials needed for a particular exercise, and that you always keep in mind access needs (refer to Access Requirements Questionnaire, Appendix 3), personal limits, safety and security of every participant in the group.

Reflection moment

- Which are important considerations for you when it comes to training aids?
- What would you add to the suggestions and examples above?
- What are your experiences in this regard?
- What is crucial not to forget or to be aware of, especially when working with mixed-ability groups?

Learning environments

Learning environments are important for group dynamics and have an impact on the learning process. Participants should be physically at ease, be able to hear and see adequately and there should be enough room for the planned activities. The training room should have sufficient natural light, as well as air, and participants and trainers should be informed and aware of the location of fire and emergency exits.

Setting up of your plenary/working space:

Placing the chairs in a circle is informal and contributes to an atmosphere of exchange and even intimacy. Everybody can see each other, and there are no preference seats.

Placing the chairs in a row (theatre style) so that speakers are in front of participants is useful for visual presentation, as long as everybody can see. As opposed to a circle, however, this sets up an obvious power relation.

Placing chairs in a series of small circles is useful when you are creating working groups to carry out small exercises or tasks during the session.

113. For conscious use of music in training contexts, please refer to the Sound of Music training courses from SALTO, more info available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=BwVUumkBh6k&feature=youtu.be, or check out Sound of Music training testimonies: www.youtube.com/watch?v=CFZcLtvn01o&feature=youtu.be, accessed 21 August 2020.

What is the idea of a Learning Agora?[114]

The idea of a Learning Agora is to bring together youth workers, young people and youth work practitioners to talk, share, gossip and exchange non-formal education methodologies, methods, tools, trends and especially learning environments – to exchange on the latest news in the youth training field and provide a space to learn, taste, try out, experience and reflect in different learning environments.

> Agora is a meeting place, where people come together, exchange ideas, develop these ideas further and see what can happen to these ideas. We are open to what we find here and then we want to make it useful for our context – international youth work.[115]

The seminar Youthpass Learning Agora critically explored the challenges and benefits of adequate learning environments.

When it comes to outdoor environments, consider questions such as: "Is going outside always necessary in order to provide a stimulating learning environment? When is the "right" time to go outside? Do the benefits of going outside (always) outweigh the challenges? What makes outdoor environments so attractive to certain participants and rather challenging for most facilitators?

Reflection moment

- What have your experiences been when it comes to outdoor activities and environments in training?

The above-mentioned seminar explored many other questions in terms of learning environments and inclusion when it comes to helping young people who are not usually empowered. It also raised questions about observing if structure limits the imagination for playing/learning, or seeing if the quest for alternative and creative spaces might sometimes overwhelm people and thus backfire. Or perhaps it is not about judging whether an environment is good or bad, but about focusing on how to create the diversity of spaces that we need. Moreover, are we considering how we can use public spaces as learning environments or carry non-formal education into public spaces to also foster its recognition and involve society/local communities in our training activity?

To round off this section on learning environment and the multiple questions and considerations raised, the most fruitful question of all might be:

In what environment do young people learn best?

- In a safe environment, where they are not judged, ranked, or in the spotlight. Where they can speak openly and try new things.
- In a place where cultural differences are not just recognised, but given value and used in the learning process.
- In a place where everybody counts as an individual, where the content and the method are centred on the needs of each and every learner. In order to reach everybody, it is necessary to combine methods to meet the diversity of needs and learning preferences.
- In a place where everybody is able to learn and everybody can contribute to a collective learning process = mutually interactive learning, including the trainer.
- In a place where it is possible to think out of the box, to make new experiences and to learn from these experiences. This may sound like a contradiction to "the safe learning environment", but in fact you simply need to find the right balance between the two concepts: new experiences, which bring you out of the box and a safe learning environment (for example, supported by coaching).

(These are some of the answers from participants of the Youthpass Learning Agora Seminar, La Rochelle, France, 2015.)[116]

114. Bačlija Knoch (2019).
115. ibid., p. 10, quote by Rita Bergstein.
116. ibid., p. 32.

Online learning environments[117]

Online learning environments are trendy and exciting, but they can often lead youth workers and trainers into a stretch zone. Firstly, young people tend to pick up faster in this field and educators working with this particular target group somewhat lag behind in developing their online training delivery competences and methodology. Secondly, the tools and environments change rapidly. What is "in" among young people, or in the youth training field today, might be totally "out" and outdated in two years from now. However, there is increased recognition of the importance of online learning environments when it comes to games and gamification, online learning, MOOCs, blended learning, online tools, social networks, #hackathon, WebQuests and more.

When thinking about the actual setting and format, it is important to mention that it is perhaps even more important to pay attention to it when it comes to online learning. The role and presence of the trainer (at least in the direct interaction with learners) and of the group is not so prominent. This applies to online courses that are asynchronous and/or self-paced, but also to those that are done through live meetings, where the trainer's role is somewhat reduced to holding the space for the learning process and group dynamics. In asynchronous and/or self-paced courses this means that the way the environment is set up needs to be as user-friendly as possible, which in simple terms means that it is easy to access and use and that it is inviting for the learners. Users spending lots of time trying to figure out where they are, how to orientate themselves and how to access content would be like learners in a residential training spending half a day just trying to settle into the seminar room. Therefore, spending a little extra effort to choose an appropriate online learning platform, and to customise and develop it based on the user experience is definitely worth it.

On the other hand, for synchronous, live meetings, activities and courses, the environment needs to be set up so that there are as few technical issues and distractions as possible. At the same time, it should still be inviting, with enough time allocated to get learners familiar with the platform used and making them feel comfortable to join the learning process. For all people involved in the learning process, which includes the team and the learners, it is important that the physical space is properly set up including: (1) minimising other noise and being as quiet as possible; (2) usage of headphones or headset to reduce background noise and audio feedback; (3) removing objects that might distract a person from participating (this is also a task for the participants themselves).[118]

It is important to mention that a learning environment in the case of online learning includes a combination of at least two different environments: an online one, where meetings and activities take place, and a home one, from where a learner (and trainer) connects. This complex environment has its own advantages, as it can cater for a strong and intimate connection, since people are in their familiar environments and can bring in parts of themselves that usually do not present in residential training. They are also able to recharge afterwards in their favourite spots and with their own people. In addition, in this kind of environment, a number of different disabilities can be catered for more easily, since it is the people themselves who arrange most of the needed conditions for participation. On the other hand, a familiar home environment brings additional distractions from home, from work, from friends and family. This all needs to be taken care of when setting up an encouraging and focused learning environment.

Reflection moment

- What online environments are you currently aware of?
- Which ones do you use in non-formal education training and youth work in general?
- What are the benefits and the risks?
- How can we turn popular social networks into complementary non-formal learning spaces?
- What is the relation between physical and online environments?

3.4.8. Documentation and reporting – why, by whom, what for? – and more!

3.4.8.1. Documentation and reporting by the trainer/s

As a trainer it is important to document and plan what you do. Conceptualising the training input is important in terms of being clear what you are doing, why you are doing it and what you are aiming for – or where you and your team are heading to. There is a helpful principle called: "Do what you say! – Say what you do!".

117. For more details, see section 1.1.4: Residential, online and blended training courses.

118. Inspired by the Quality standards in education and training activities of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe, available at https://rm.coe.int/ddcp-yd-etd-2016-202-quality-standards-yd-et-activities/16807c8bb9, accessed 21 August 2020.

What has become a standard in non-formal education training is the trainers' preparation of so-called "session outlines". Once at the prep meeting, and responsibilities for certain programme elements have been shared among the team, each trainer prepares their sessions and another team colleague gives feedback to each and every session outline (in a first step), afterwards. Then, the entire team provides feedback (second step) and looks at each session outline, as well as the overall flow of session outlines (to make sure certain methods do not repeat, to see if the overall aims and objectives are covered, to double-check if all abilities are catered for, etc.).

In Appendix 5 you will find an example of a standard "session outline" form to be compiled by trainers, which consists of the following points[119] for each programme element/session of the training.

1. Title, date, time.
2. Background.
3. Aim(s) and objectives of the session.
4. Methodology and methods.
5. Programme (step-by-step and timing).
6. Outcomes.
7. Evaluation.
8. Materials needed and space required.
9. Further reading.
10. Appendices.

(Points 5 and 7 are to be filled in after the session by the person(s) in charge.)

In many cases, the prepared session outlines are compiled for the entire training course (especially in training for trainers or whenever new training concepts and courses are developed), in order to have a proper step-by-step documentation of what was implemented in the training. Firstly, this is a key quality feature for many institutions and organisations in the European training field. Secondly, the mentioned documentation might be beneficial for future trainer teams of the same course format, or for participants of a training for trainers course. Thirdly, these session outline compilations are shared as a resource or best-practice material within the same organisation and trainers' community or fourthly, they might be published/made available for the entire European non-formal education training field.

Besides writing session outlines, trainers might be asked to document the training by taking photos and/or videos (where part of this duty could be outsourced to participants). As the cherry on top, some trainers show off their talents by taking care of graphic recording.

In online learning, at least part of the documentation is often done by the trainer(s) during the session, by using whiteboards or other similar tools.

Further reporting duties of the trainer

After the training, trainers are mostly requested to produce a report for the institution or the organisation that hired them, focusing on points, such as the following.

- Aims and objectives: To what extent were the aims and objectives achieved?
- Programme (preparation and running): How did the preparation phase go? What was the programme like and which educational approaches were used?
- Quality criteria: To what extent were quality criteria (of the relevant institution or other) applied and present in the training?
- Evaluation process: What were its main results (from the evaluation of participants and the evaluation of the trainer/trainers team?
- Group composition and selection: How was the target group composed? Was the desired profile of participants reached and represented? Was the selection process adequate? Were the participants' (access) needs adequately met?
- Guest speakers: What and how was the contribution of guest speakers or experts?

119. This is one possible example, whereas different variations of the attached form exist and are used in practice in the European non-formal education training field.

- Outcomes and results: Were any resolutions, recommendations, materials or tools produced? How did the activity contribute to the priorities of the funding institution or programme?
- Learning points: What were the main learning points for participants?
- Follow-up: Which measures were taken in relation to the visibility and expected impact of the training? What are the concrete actions and steps in terms of follow-up? Which activities were undertaken for the dissemination and exploitation of results? ("DEOR" in Erasmus+ projects).
- Organisational development: How did the activity contribute to the objectives of the organisation? How did it support its mission and/or strategy and/or (bi-tri-)annual work plan?
- Improvement: Which specific recommendations and suggestions for improvement do you have as a trainer for this activity?
- Facilities and venue (including online learning environments): Was the working environment adequate?
- Support: Was the practical/technical/organisational support satisfactory?

The above points are a mere example and reference or guidance of what might be expected from you as a trainer in terms of reporting after delivering training. This of course varies in length, detail and form from organisation to organisation and institution to institution.

3.4.8.2. Content report of the training (done by organisers and/or participants)

In addition, the organisation/organisers and/or participants (and in rare instances trainers are also involved in this process) will be producing a content report of the training. For this content report the following questions and details fall into place:

Why write a report?

A report can be written for a variety of uses, and used in different ways, so it is important to know the purpose before writing it. Reports can be produced as souvenirs, as contributions to resource development, to live up to the name and keep a report of an organisation's activities for future reference, to have something to upload to the organisation's website and social media, to be filed in an electronic archive, to gather dust, as a grant requirement for donors, and so forth.

By whom?

Equally, reports may be written by a variety of people. The team may be responsible and plan it as part of the activity process, there might be a reporter nominated for each day or module, there may be a reporting (social media) group of participants. Alternatively, with big events or where the emphasis is on producing a publishable resource, an outside rapporteur can be engaged.

For whom and what for?

A report may serve as a resource for the organisation and its members, as well as the course participants, hence it may be valid reference material for all involved stakeholders, the wider public and, mostly, it is also a formal obligation and requirement for funding, visibility and dissemination of results. Ideally, your report should be a source of inspiration and learning for any young person, youth worker, non-formal education trainer, youth organisation and the like.

How?

The educational team of the Council of Europe explains the "how" in the 2009 *Manual for facilitators in non-formal education* (pp.107-8): The content of the report should reflect the issues addressed, results and conclusions reached by participants during the sessions. More than an account of the daily programme, the reports should reflect the most relevant proceedings, the innovative elements and the aspects that can inspire or inform future training or youth activities. The report must document fairly on the activity:

- why it was held;
- who the participants were;
- which issues were discussed in the programme;
- what was learned;
- what were the conclusions, main findings and contributions to the "knowledge" and expertise in the theme(s);

- what were the main outputs and outcomes for the organisers;
- how the training and learning will be followed up.

The report may also reflect the methods and methodology used if relevant to potential multipliers in the organisation or elsewhere. It may also, where relevant, include evaluation material collected from participants. An important guideline is that people from "outside" should easily understand who, what, how and why and that it should even make sense when reading it five years later!

Formats

Reports can have different formats, such as:

- text, published online or printed version;
- video clip, vlog, podcast;
- blog open to external comments or contributions on the topic;
- website;
- multimedia report;
- graphic report.

Other formats are possible, or a combination of the above, provided that it remains a complete report and that it is made public. Please refer to your funding institutions and other stakeholders involved to learn if specific formats are required, so that you plan and work on what is required, alongside what is desired.

By when?

Another pragmatic (and sometimes dramatic) issue is the timing. The report should be completed for circulation within a reasonable period after the event. Efficient circulation goes down especially well with the donors or institutions that gave the grant and many impose deadlines for submission anyway. With a resource report, quick provision to former participants builds on the energy generated by the training and allows them to use it in their organisations and multiplying activities. When resource reports are aimed at a wider public than the participant group, it is worth bearing in mind that vignettes and allusions to specific personalities or incidents may be of great nostalgic value, but for those who were not there it can be, well, irritating. Some reports are written in general form and, with a confidential section included at the discretion of the author, the report can then be circulated as appropriate to relevant target groups with or without the confidential section. A resource report can refer to where more detailed information on the subject can be found, as well as being the link to related previous reports or relevant documents on the same topic.

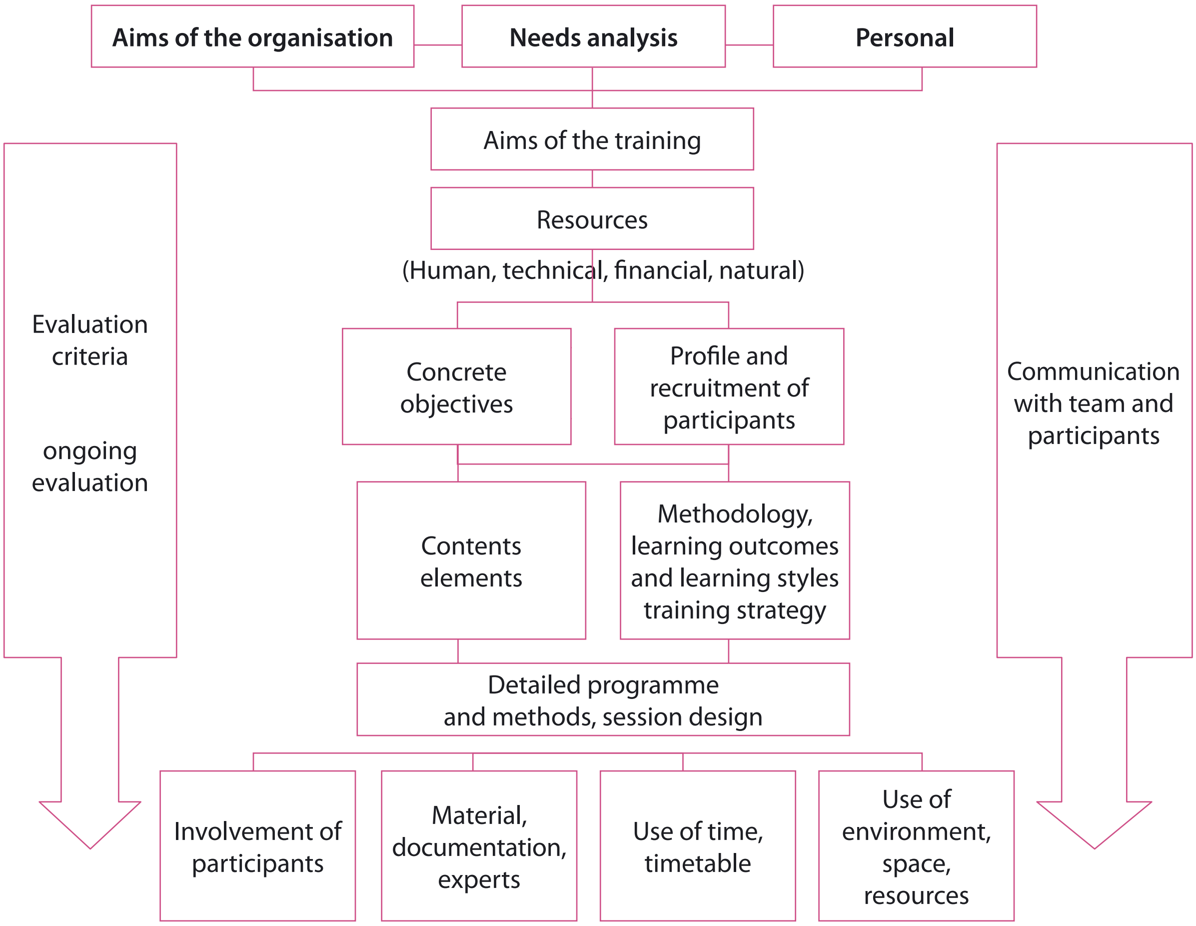
Reflection moment

- What experience have you had with documenting and reporting? What can be improved taking into account the information above?
- How will you organise the preparation of session outlines or the reporting of your next training activity?
- Who is going to work on the content report (participants, team, external rapporteur, office staff)?
- Who will co-ordinate the training report?
- What kind of message should the content report of the training communicate to its audience?
- Who is the target audience of your report?
- Which format/s will you choose?

Appendix 6 provides a sample outline of three kinds of written reports: a brief outcome report, a resource report and an evaluation report. Ultimately, the context, organisation and team must decide where the focus lies and the aspects they would like to highlight in the final text.

3.5. PROGRAMME DESIGN

The previous section dealt with the technical aspects of the preparation process. This section focuses on content elements and the preparation of the educational programme. The planning and preparation of a training programme needs to take into account a variety of elements. A trainer might have a number of subjects and methods in mind, which they would like to include. But will they fit their target group and the specific programme they are planning to run? The scheme below gives an overview of the elements that programme planning needs to consider.



Training courses are primarily non-formal education activities. As such, they should respect and develop the commonly accepted pedagogical principles of non-formal education, notably participant-centredness, action-orientation and value-based nature. The quality standards for education and training activities of the Council of Europe's youth sector include some of the following principles:

- The objectives, programme, methodology and number of participants are coherent.
- The activities take into account the participants' training needs and learning preferences/abilities; the trainers should be able to negotiate these with the participants using a participatory approach.
- The trainers and participants should recognise the value of the activity for transformative learning and education.
- The programme and methods should provide a fair balance of development of knowledge, skills, attitudes and an awareness of the key values underlying the activity.
- The participants must be actively engaged in the learning process.
- The programme and methods should take into account and value participants' experiences and competence.
- The participants should not be subject to formal systems of individualised evaluation.
- The participants should be empowered and encouraged to evaluate and critically reflect on the learning process.
- The participants have the right to receive a certificate of attendance in the activity, which indicates the areas of learning addressed in the activity.

One other thing to look into is the competences that a trainer or a team of trainers needs in order to design a programme. Conveniently, the ETS Competence Model for Trainers includes a competence area "Designing educational programmes". Its competences correspond quite well to the scheme above and incorporate what is needed to enable all the elements to come together, as well as highlight underlying and background processes that need to be taken into consideration:

- developing an educational approach based on the principles and values of non-formal learning;
- transferring knowledge or values related to the activity to learners;
- integrating learners' sociopolitical backgrounds into the educational programme;
- where relevant, integrating ICT, e-learning and other tools and methods into the educational activity;
- designing an evaluation process and impact assessment;
- choosing and designing appropriate methods for collecting, interpreting and disseminating information (data, resources, findings, etc.).

Once again, referring to this competence area should not be a test to check if a trainer has what is needed in order to deal with the programme design. It is rather to provide orientation of what knowledge, skills and attitudes can be an asset when designing the programme and to check who is more confident in this area within the team and can perhaps provide a stronger support when sitting at the drawing board. At the same time, at the individual level it would be helpful to identify strengths and points for improvement when it comes to this important aspect of training development.

3.5.1. Clarifying the context and purpose of the training

Every programme is constructed within a specific context that defines the purpose of the training. The elements determining this context have been outlined in the preceding sections, and need to be defined and clarified by the training team as an initial step, especially if the training team has not been involved in the conceptualisation of the training from the very beginning. Here are some suggestions for team consideration when laying the basis for programme planning.

Needs assessment, personal motivations, and organisational aims/institutional context

These factors indicate the general social and political framework of the training course.

- What training needs have been expressed, and by whom?
- What needs exist for the kind of training being organised?
- Why is the organisation or institution running this training course?
- What are your personal motivations for being the trainers of this course?

Training aims

- What are the general aims of the training?
- Do you, as a training team, have a common understanding of these aims?
- How do you, personally, relate to those aims?

Resources

- What financial and material resources are available to implement this training course?
- What other support is available, in terms of logistical and administrative roles?
- What resources can you count on in the community where the training takes place?

Trainers

- What are your resources as trainers, the level of energy and time you can invest?
- What are your competences, individually and as a team, that you bring to this course?

Learning context/environment

- What would be the most suitable learning context – residential, online or blended – for your course?
- What are your preferences and inhibitions when it comes to the chosen learning context?

Objectives of the training

- What is it that this particular course can and should do?
- What specifically do you want to achieve with this training?
- Which outcomes and results do you expect?

Profile of participants

- If your training course addresses youth workers or youth leaders, what is the specific profile of participants that this course wants to reach?
- What kind and level of experience, background, needs, motivations and interests should the participants have?
- What is the overall level of competences you are expecting among participants?

3.5.2. Creating a programme with opportunities for learning

The next essential task of programme planning is defining the educational approach. How do you want to deal with the contents? Which methodology will be the most useful for participants and best help you to reach the training objectives? How do you like to work?

The methodology and methods chosen should serve the learning opportunities that trainers want to create for participants. One way of thinking of learning opportunities is to look at zones (in terms of "challenge") that participants might enter during different moments of the learning process.

Adapted from Karl Rohnke's comfort, stretching, panic zone.[120]

You have surely encountered some of the cliché slogans: "Life begins at the end of your comfort zone" or "Your comfort zone is not where the magic happens". They somehow imply that if you are hoping for any excitement and growth happening to you, you absolutely need to leave your comfort zone and start doing things that challenge and scare you at every step of the way. Or in other words, comfort zone = bad (for learning). Going out of your comfort zone = good (for learning). The model of "zones of learning" is indeed very helpful to understand the degrees of personal challenge that the course may create for individual participants and the way that those challenges (might) lead to learning. But things are far from being so straightforward and the lines of learning between comfort, stretch and panic zone are far from being so clear. That said, let's see what is hidden behind this model.

120. *T-Kit 4 – Intercultural learning*, p. 43, available at https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/T-kit-4-intercultural-learning, accessed 21 August 2020.

"Comfort" zone is a little bit like the image above. This is your home, the language you speak, your habits, your friends and your value system, the things that you are used to doing. In the comfort zone, you are able to just "be".[121] This does not mean that there is no learning in the comfort zone. You can read a book, have a conversation, watch a video and acquire new information, and new knowledge. In the comfort zone, you are usually not facing things that would challenge your value system, your world views, or make you do something that would trigger your anxiety and discomfort.

If this happens and you start feeling butterflies in your stomach (which is a nicer way to describe discomfort), you might be entering a "stretching" zone. Here, you are faced with new and challenging things and you need to make particular efforts in order to adapt to the environment. For example, when you are travelling out of your country for the first time, or when you engage in a debate with people who hold very different political views from your own, or when you are trying to learn a new language, or when you are facing a high ropes course, or when you are tasked with revising the T-Kit on training essentials. These experiences might be very exciting and even enchanting at times. The stretching zone can create opportunities for acquiring entirely new skills. It can also enable the questioning of values and attitudes, which in turn can pave the road to potential change. But it also brings ambiguity of the unknown and it takes a lot of energy and effort to adapt to. In some cases, this zone is called a learning zone, but this would imply that learning only happens here, which in our experience is not entirely true. In fact, for a lot of this learning and change to happen, you might need to go back to your comfort zone: to your favourite blanket, to your comfort food, to your people, to your cat. And then to think, reflect and digest and put a few more bricks in that road to change.

But, back to the stretching zone: if you go too far into it, you risk entering the "panic" zone. This is when butterflies in your stomach turn into a tornado. You lose the sense of control and cannot focus. Sometimes you just become blocked and any kind of learning becomes difficult. It is when there are just too many new stimuli and experiences abroad, or you feel in danger at the altitude of the high ropes course, or you are simply overwhelmed with trying to rewrite that T-Kit that has influenced generations of trainers in Europe (including yourself). Being in a panic zone for a short while happens to everyone in new, unexpected or dangerous situations. However, remaining in the panic zone for too long puts people in danger and inhibits learning opportunities.[122] The level of challenge simply becomes too high and the only thing you wish to do is to go back to the comfort zone. That said, by being back in the comfort zone, you can still learn from this experience, about yourself and about the world around you, unless the experience was too extreme and too painful. And in the panic zone, you just never know.

Translating this into the context of training, through planning an educational programme that engages participants in experiences that would challenge their stamina, emotions, values and beliefs, trainers are creating opportunities for learning. And while those opportunities are important, it is equally important to offer the safety of the comfort zone in the training, where participants can return if they feel that they have been pushed too far or to simply come back and reflect on their experiences. Creating a programme with opportunities for learning should enable development and practice of self-reflection and self-discovery that will capitalise on those experiences.[123] The purpose of going through new experiences is to bring them back to your comfort zone, which is constantly enlarged, and this is possible if you know your "comfort" to begin with.

Another important thing to keep in mind is that participants will have different comfort zones, but also stretching and panic zones. What is stretching or comfort for one person can be a panic zone for someone else, and vice versa. Therefore, while keeping different learning preferences in mind, trainers also need to take into consideration the diversity of challenges in the group and make sure that no one is sent into a panic zone. Teams need to be able to create conditions for supporting participants during moments of personal challenge and should refrain as much as possible from opening up something that they cannot close!

And now, a word on online learning environments: as a whole, they can be quite a challenge for some participants. Or even some trainers. In fact, more than a challenge. Some people simply shut down when asked to complete an online task or even to use a digital tool in a residential training environment. And the same principle needs to apply here as well. Trainers need to ensure that there is a possibility for comfort created in the online part of the learning as well. They can do this either through strong support from the team or

121. *T-Kit 4 – Intercultural learning*, available at https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/T-kit-4-intercultural-learning, accessed 21 August 2020.

122. ibid.

123. Reference to Kolb's experiential learning cycle, see section 4.4.3.

through facilitated peer support, or through possibilities to adapt the tasks and content to make them more digestible. Whatever it is, one can't just expect that everyone will get over it, because a big potential for learning might be lost.

Reflection moment

- Different levels of experience among participants will make it more difficult to create learning opportunities for the whole group. How do you read the diversity of your group? How far can you go with your group?
- Do you know your own challenges and panic zones? How do you ensure that you do not project your comfort and challenge levels to the group?
- Have you encountered panic in a group you have worked with? What caused it? How did you deal with it? Did your team have the capacity to deal with crisis and panic?
- How do you provide comfort in training situations? How do you involve participants in finding their own comfort?
- How do you stimulate self-reflection and self-discovery through your training programme?

3.5.3. Focusing the programme on the participants

Non-formal education is learner-centred and so the programme needs to be based on learners' experiences, competences, learning needs and expectations. In addition, considerations of content and methodological approaches have to be grounded in a reflection upon their roles and responsibilities in the running of the programme. The following factors provide a basis for working this through.

Participants' needs and expectations: The needs, motivations and expectations of the participants for the training course give important information for measuring the relevance of the training for the people taking part in it. Needs and expectations can be identified before or at the beginning of the training, but allow for the possibility of them changing during the activity (see section 4.4.1). Looking at the participants' needs and expectations also encompasses considering how the experience of the training will relate to their reality. How, or to what extent, can it be ensured that participants can use the training experience in their subsequent work?

Level of competences: If the team is following a competence-based approach, it would be very helpful to understand the level of competences of the participants in areas relevant for the training, both for the team and for the participants. Different kinds of self-assessment[124] or self-reflection on competences can be done as part of the training and then followed throughout the learning process. It will give the team and the learners a clearer starting point, a sense of possible directions and it will enable trainers to assess the impact of their training activity.

Learning needs and responsibility for the learning process: People might only take in what they want to learn and what they feel they need. However, they might have learning needs that they are not immediately aware of. Following learning-to-learn principles, participants setting their own learning objectives within the training framework is an essential step in moulding the training to their needs, as well as in taking responsibility for their own learning process. Learning objectives are also the next logical step after self-assessment of the competences.

Recognition of the participants' prior experiences: It is important to keep in mind that participants come with a training history and range of experiences, as well as a certain level of competence relevant for the training. Depending on the levels of experience present in the group, recognising prior level of competences and using the resources of participants in the course can be an essential element for actively involving them in the training process and facilitating peer education. It is also essential for creating spaces where all participants have the opportunity to share their experiences as well. Participants with relevant knowledge or skills might contribute in specific ways, for instance by giving inputs or running a workshop.

124. For assessment of trainers' competences, see https://appraiser.badgecraft.eu/, accessed 21 August 2020.

Group size and development: When planning a programme, the size of the group provides an immediate framework. For instance, creating an intense experiential learning process for a group of 50 participants might be a very difficult undertaking, since a large group most often diffuses the intensity of the experience. A group also undergoes different phases during a training course, so the adaptation of the content, methods and programme flow to the relevant stages of group development is needed (see section 4.3.2).

Use of the environment, space and resources of the group:[125] How can the team make use of the environment in which the training takes place? Or, asked the other way around, what environment is needed for the programme? How can you use the city, local youth structures, youth organisations and projects, forests or fields around the training site in the programme? And how can you work best with the resources present in the group itself? For instance, if you want to work on cultural perceptions and images with a group of participants, do you run a simulation exercise, work with what happens in the group, or send the group into the streets to observe and report?

Structure and flexibility in the programme preparation: Working with the resources present in the group and involving the participants' needs and expectations demands certain readiness for flexibility in preparation. Sometimes you can only isolate the real learning needs and most valuable contributions during the training course. Discuss within the team the extent to which you can be open and flexible. How much structure do you want to provide? Which elements need to be settled in advance to target the objectives and to feel comfortable with the programme? (See section 4.4).

Importance of sensing and (self)reflection: Making sure that there is enough time and space provided in the programme for participants to reflect on their learning experiences is an invaluable asset in tailoring the training programme to their needs. Solo times, small group reflections (reflection groups?) and whole group reflection moments would provide opportunities for participants to be in the here and now, to understand their needs and possible learning they are going through and to help them understand better where they would like to go. And, so much more. In fact, we can't emphasise enough the importance of (self)reflection! And, if you have a chance to add feedback to this process as well, the process will be that much more beneficial.

Time planning: Time is always limited, so how can you best use what is available without overloading it? How does the programme balance free time, social time and working time? How can you deal with unexpected events during the training course? Section 4.4.4 takes a closer look at time management.

To conclude this section, it is important to mention self-directed learning.

> Self-directed learning is a process in which individuals take the initiative without the help of others in identifying their learning needs, formulating learning goals, identifying resources needed for them to learn, and evaluating their own learning outcomes. For this to happen the learners/participants should be able to identify realistic learning needs for them; to identify learning objectives and pursue them proactively; to plan appropriate resources to support their learning; and finally to self-assess their learning achievements.[126]

Self-directed learning to some degree has started entering non-formal education, and developing your training programme based on self-directed learning principles will ensure a high level of learner-centredness. It does, however, require the competence of facilitators to design the learning environment in such a way that allows for flexibility in following the learner's need to the highest degree possible.

3.5.4. Defining programme content elements

Deciding on content elements is usually the first "real" step of drafting the programme. What subjects should the training course address? Focusing on the content of the training in a team process, where different ideas need to be considered, co-ordinated and structured, can be difficult. Ideas may be lost in the discussion because they are not taken up and properly discussed by other team members. It is therefore helpful to keep track of ideas visually, on a flipchart or a screen for everyone to see.

The process of defining the content of the programme includes several steps:

- listing possible content elements;
- discussing content elements – What do we actually understand by the contents? Do we have a common vision of them?

125. For more information, see section 3.4.7, Training aids and learning environments.

126. Manual for facilitators: A guide for organising and facilitating the educational process of study sessions held at the European Youth Centres in co-operation with youth organisations (forthcoming), available at www.coe.int/youth.

- agreeing on content elements;
- prioritising content elements – Which are the most important elements? What do we want to spend most time on?
- putting the content elements in order; creating a programme flow, which incorporates the consideration of your training strategy;
- creating a day-by-day programme of content units;
- creating session plans for all units.

In the case of an online learning experience, the process of defining content follows the same logic but the difference is that content units can also be divided and are available in different weeks or even months. All, or most of them, can be created and made available in the logical flow at the same time (in the case of self-paced and/or stand-alone courses) and then explored by the learners within a set framework. Content units can also be "released" at agreed time periods (usually longer than one day) depending on the length of the training.

In the case of synchronous training activities, which rely heavily on videoconferencing, the planning is very similar to a day-to-day residential course. However, the participants of the activity might have better access and understanding if the content planned to be presented during the activity is shared with them beforehand. Additionally, participants might also be given the role of producing and sharing content before the activity. In this way, they will be engaged in contributing to the direction in which the activity goes and to the achievement of the learning outcomes. Either way, this pre-phase needs to be planned as part of the overall programme, and the content distributed accordingly.

The manual *Online training of youth workers*[127] provides a number of useful sheets to be used as templates when planning the content and online learning flow. Some of them can be helpful with other phases as well, such as needs assessment, defining the profile of learners and their preferences, and so forth.

It is important to have in mind that in the case of synchronous training activities, it is practically impossible to do a whole day of online live activities. Learners get tired and lose focus much easier than during residential courses. One useful tip is to combine synchronous meetings with individual and/or group tasks to be done in between. But even done like that, the reality is that less content can be covered online than in residential settings.

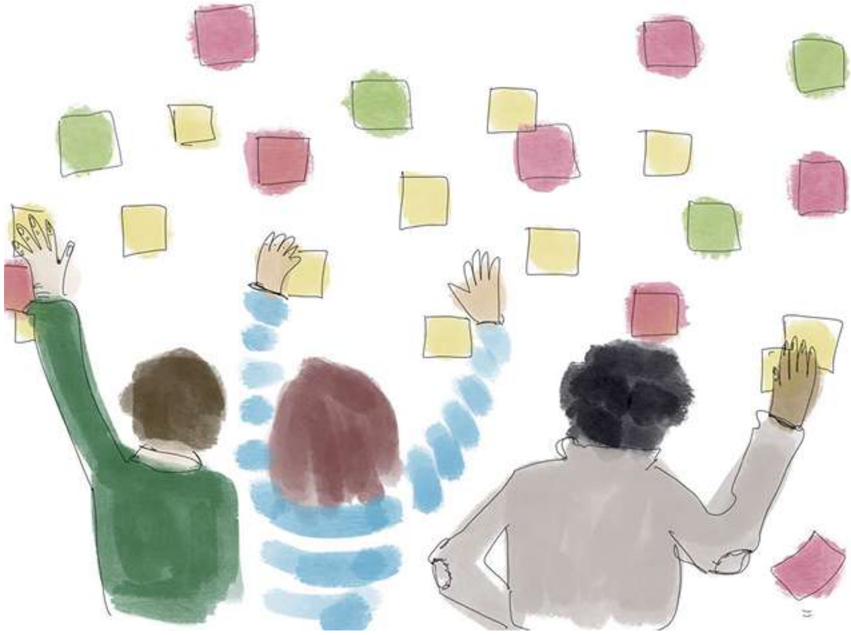
> You can't do everything you're used to online. One of the biggest mistakes we see people doing is trying to utilise every moment online by cramming in lots of content. Racing through things online will cause you to lose more people; and detached people online are harder to track.[128]

When it comes to the blended-learning experience, when setting the flow of the content, the overall learning experience should be seen as a whole. Some parts will be facilitated online and some in the residential context, but they should all be part of the larger programme and fit the common flow. Therefore, when prioritising content elements, it should also be decided which parts of the content can be delivered online. Some of them could be addressed only online and some will be partly addressed online and then picked up during the residential and some will be first addressed during the residential and then followed up online. In any case, planning in which order and flow this should happen is part of the overall planning of the content.[129]

The exercise below is one way of facilitating team discussion and definition of content elements and it is still widespread within the trainers' community. In fact, we have heard from many colleagues that there is no real meeting if sticky notes are not involved (or online whiteboards with notes for that matter)!

127. *Online training of youth workers: a practical manual with tools to design and facilitate online training of youth workers*. Publication in the framework of the Capacity Building Project "European Wide Web of Youth Work" (2018), www.napor.net/sajt/images/Dokumenta/Online-training-of-youth-workers-manual.pdf, accessed 21 August 2020.
128. Rewa and Hunter (2020).
129. Digi Youth Portal: Everything you ever wanted to know about online learning and digital tools in youth work, available at www.digi-youth.com/, accessed 21 August 2020.

From sticky notes to the programme flow



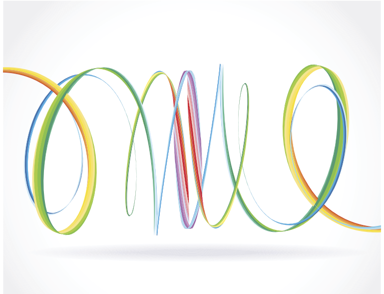
- Each member of the team writes down the content elements they wish to see in the programme, one element per sticky note.
- All sticky notes are put up on the wall for the whole team to see. (In the absence of a wall, any flat surface will do. We have even heard of the team using a world map for this purpose. It might be a rumour, though!)
- Content elements are then explained and clarified, where necessary.
- Similar content elements are clustered together and, when possible, given one title: what is it that makes them a group?
- All sticky notes, except those with the titles, are put aside. The remaining ones (with the titles) will be your programme content elements.
- This is still not the end, since you should now check if you are happy with these elements. Is anything missing? If needed, have a look at the original sticky notes again.
- Next, you arrange the elements into a programme flow. Where applicable, you also split parts of the flow into the online and residential part.
- And finally you arrange the content into a day-to-day (week-to-week or time-period-to-time-period, where applicable) programme.

Note: If you are having your programme planning meeting online, you can use one of the digital tools for a similar process.[130]

Besides lots of colourful sticky notes and a large flat surface, this method also requires a face-to-face presence of the team or a very well-co-ordinated videoconferencing meeting. If that is not possible, for a variety of reasons, there are tools available to create a flow out of the content elements online.[131] And even if you and your team have met and developed the programme together, those tools can support you in the process afterwards, with different kinds of options for collaborative work and cloud storage. Regardless of how you feel about technology and digital tools, they can sometimes come in handy. For example, when saving you from sending a document back and forth via email for days or from having seven online meetings to decide where to place an expert input in your daily programme.

130. Padlet, available at www.padlet.com, accessed 21 August 2020.
131. See, for example, SessionLab, available at www.sessionlab.com, or Trello, available at https://trello.com/en, accessed 21 August 2020.

Designing learning programmes is like a spiral!



You go over the same content from different angles so you get more detail and enhanced agreement among the team.

- You may start with the basic content elements
- Go round the spiral again and see what kinds of methods you might use
- Go round the spiral again identifying responsibilities with the team (or invited "experts")
- Go round the spiral again to ensure there is a common thread running through the programme
- And so on...

3.5.5. Programme elements and programme flow

Some phases are common to almost every programme, regardless of the specificity of context, objectives and content. Every programme needs to work with the resources, dynamics and development of the group, introduce new knowledge and create possibilities for new experiences and applied transfer. These generic programme elements are informed by group dynamics, learning preferences and cycles, and common training strategies. All these elements constitute essential parts of a programme. As visualised in the diagram below, some of them can be quite flexibly arranged throughout the entire programme, others come more logically towards the beginning or end of an activity. Sharing experiences, analysis and reflection and gaining new knowledge, skills and experiences are integral parts of the whole training process. Transfer, evaluation and recognition of learning should also be ever-present, to support and monitor the learning process. The group process is integral to determining the programme flow, as it is likely that the group will be in various stages of cohesion and motivation throughout the activity. Whatever the order, it is important to create a programme flow in which all the component parts build and can be seen to build on each other. If the programme is being facilitated in a blended-learning environment, then some of these elements will be presented more through online learning at the beginning and at the end. It would also mean that some of those lines would stretch longer to the left and to the right of the graph. But essentially, the logic of the elements stays more or less the same.

The welcome, introduction and getting to know each other phase is, let's say, useful at the beginning. Participants are welcomed to the training course, be that online or in the residential setting, and personal, technical and thematic introductions are made. In addition to that, it is important to set the framework in which the course takes place and what happened before/what will happen after the course, when such information is available from the organisers. This period overlaps with a concerted group-building phase, essential in laying the foundations for integration, trust and genuine participation. Group building is also the first step in recognising, valuing and working with the differences and resources present in the group. That said, group building continues through the learning process and it is a mistake to assume that once the group has been built through a couple of team-building exercises, the work there is done.[132] Sharing experiences compounds these aims by giving participants opportunities to share their backgrounds and realise the scope of the resources present in a multicultural group. What are their former experiences with intercultural learning, youth work or project development? What is the situation of young people and youth work in their countries or communities? How does their organisation work? How does this relate to the training course? What are participants' experiences with the key policy themes addressed by the training course? While sharing experiences should be an ongoing characteristic, focusing on it at this stage reflects the principle of working from the particular to the general, while also providing a space for identity negotiations within this temporary collective.

132. Check out section: 4.1, Group life and the training process.

Programme flow

Welcome, introduction, getting to know each other

Group building

Sharing experiences

Analysis and reflection

New knowledge, information, experience, creation

Transfer

Action, planning, follow-up

Conclusions and closure

Evaluation

Beginning — Duration of the training programme (time) — End

Going through new experiences and developing knowledge, skills and attitudes is the essence of training. The body of the training is built on specific content elements, methods and exercises aimed at involving participants in meaningful learning experiences. A general emphasis on analysis and reflection, as well as focusing through debriefing and specific programme components, is essential in driving the learning process. It helps participants to apply political and social contexts to their training knowledge, and to become more conscious and reflexive about their personal learning process. This is necessary if a training event is to be relevant to the participants' life and work situations. Transfer involves fitting the experience of the training to their realities, and adapting the newly acquired ideas and competences to their own work. The transfer phase is not limited to the physical end of the activity, as online learning creates increased possibilities for participants to pose questions and reflect with the team and together for a certain period after the training. A regular aim of training is to facilitate, as far as is practically feasible, action planning, and follow-up. How can participants be encouraged to follow up the training concretely? What action should they take? Are they expected to implement actual projects? How do they incorporate what they have learned in their organisation or project group? How can the organisers provide support for the participants to implement their follow-up initiatives or projects? Addressing the question of follow-up also mentally prepares the participants for going home.

The institutional and educational support of the organisers (institutions, youth organisations, movements, other partners and programmes) should create synergies for the advancement of co-operation with the participants while they learn and reflect on their work. Besides competence building, training activities have a wider role to contribute to processes, strategies and expected results set up in a democratic society by different stakeholders at different levels. Their full impact can only be harnessed when the results give an input to or benefit the work of the institutions, organisations and partners beyond and after the activity. A consistent and realistic follow-up plan is also necessary to ensure that these activities have a multiplying effect and that their results are consolidated.

As well as striving for results beyond their own lifetime, training activities need to consider their conclusions and the effects of closure. Are there final conclusions to be made, a final report or recommendations to be drafted, final decisions to be taken by the group? Closing the programme also means closing the circle of the training. It can include recalling the training process, its main learning points and experiences. And it certainly needs to include a celebration moment(s) to acknowledge and celebrate what is often a very intense experience. Allied to this, evaluation helps the trainers assess the impact of the training course, and the participants to focus on what they have learned. As such, it constitutes an element of the learning process itself (adapted from Ohana 2000: 45-48). Proper evaluation is ongoing, with a final concentration at the end of the course.

Together with evaluation, a process of recognition of learning[133] runs through the programme. Although "recognition" implies a short-term act, the process that leads to it needs to start from the very beginning of the programme. Youthpass[134] is one example of such a process. Youthpass is a European recognition tool for

133. Please also refer to section 1.1.2, subsection on Recognition of non-formal education and learning.
134. Youthpass, available at www.youthpass.eu/en/, accessed 21 August 2020.

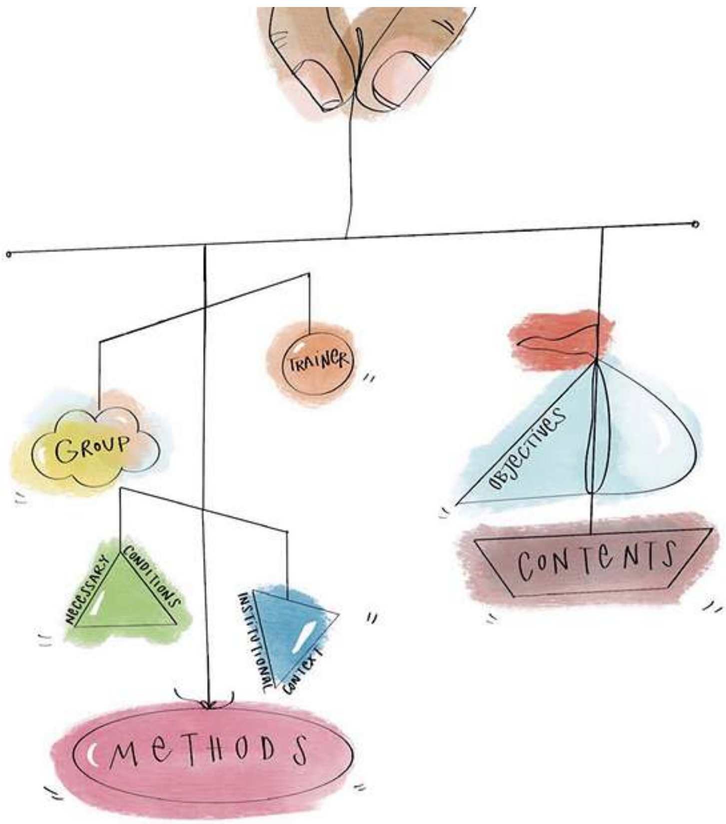
non-formal and informal learning experiences in youth work, available to the participants of the projects granted through Erasmus+ and Youth in Action programmes. The Youthpass certificate allows the participants to describe their learning experiences and learning achievements and it:

- encourages learners to reflect on their learning through the process of a youth exchange;
- guides them to learn the language of competences when translating their learning for the Youthpass;
- empowers them to be in charge of their own learning, since Youthpass is based on self-assessment and not on the external assessment.

Another example consists of digital badges,[135] also built on an ongoing process of reflection and recognition.

A training process which is relevant to multicultural groups should include different levels of learning and work with the classic elements of head, heart, hands and health. When creating your programme flow, reflect upon how you, as a trainer and in your team, see learning happening. For instance, what relation exists between experience and theory? What place should emotional learning have? Do you give enough space for reflection?

3.5.6. Session design



Adapted from Mewaldt and Gailius (1997: 25).

Once the overall programme content and flow are defined, detailed planning can begin. A session is a time slot in the programme. In the residential context, the usual template includes four to five sessions per day – two in the morning, two in the afternoon, and possibly another in the evening. However, you could also have two session blocks in a day or even one that covers a whole-day experience. This will all depend on the elements in the diagram above. Preparing a session involves concentrated planning with an eye on the whole process. How does this session fit in with the ones before and after? What do we need in this session to maintain a balance of methods and learning points? Every session should be prepared like a miniature programme, with clear objectives, content and methodology, and an awareness of trainer competencies, the group, environment and institutional context. As shown in the illustration above, the objectives and content of each session need to be balanced against all the other factors determining the specific context of the training session.

135. Badgecraft: Digital recognition of skills and achievements, available at www.badgecraft.eu/, accessed 21 August 2020.

Things to consider when designing a session within a larger training framework

Institutional context: What outside requirements exist? Are there any expectations from the organisation or institution responsible for the training? Are there any legal restrictions?

Objectives: What are the specific objectives you want to achieve with this training session? What learning outcomes would you like to see?

Contents: What is the essence of the subject you are working on? Can you reasonably connect subjects and objectives? What should the participants experience during this session? How does this subject fit into the process and overall content of the training course?

Trainers: What are your experiences as trainers in working on this subject? When working with other groups, what was positive, and what would you like to avoid? Which methods do you value as trainers and feel competent in using?

Group: What is the present situation of the group? What needs, interests and abilities have participants expressed? What prior experience and level of competence do the participants have in this subject and approach? How is the interaction within the group and between the group and the team at present?

Conditions: What kind of learning environment would you like to have for this session? What are the working conditions? What limitations do the environment and space present? What materials do you have, what do you need? How much time do you have?

Methods: Which methods are suitable in this context? Which methods do you know? What is the accessibility and adaptability of these methods? What have you used already, or are planning to use later during this training course? What is the attention span of the participants?

Adapted from Mewaldt and Gailius (1997: 25).

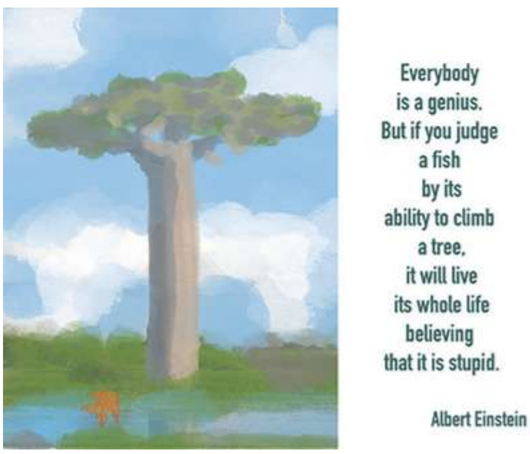
One important thing to consider when planning your session is the attention span of the participants. There are inevitably fluctuations in attention, which will be impacted by environmental and group factors. Keeping that in mind will help you see what methods you need to use to keep the group involved. There are some figures out there that suggest people's attention spans with more precision and there are also theories that disprove them. Essentially, you would want to make sure that you involve different kinds of stimuli (without turning a training room or an online platform into a circus) to keep participants interested and engaged.

Finally, it is great if you can plan as many of the sessions as possible in advance, because this will provide you with an element of certainty and hopefully prevent long team meetings into silly hours of the night. Nonetheless, many of the elements will only crystallise during the training itself, so be prepared to be flexible and to rethink the session based on the reality of the group, the process and context.

3.6. EVALUATION

Evaluation is creation: hear it, you creators! Evaluating is itself the most valuable treasure of all that we value. It is only through evaluation that value exists: and without evaluation the nut of existence would be hollow. Hear it, you creators!
Friedrich Nietzsche

Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid.
Albert Einstein



3.6.1. What does it mean to evaluate?

One of the commonest and trendiest words in youth work (along with reflecting and sharing) is "evaluation". It is so in vogue that it might be time to evaluate if we have already forgotten its original meaning. A quick look in the dictionary reveals that evaluation means "to determine or fix the value of something" and "to determine the significance, worth or condition of – usually by careful appraisal and study."[136] Okay, one might say, that is the dictionary, and as somebody once pointed out, if you go in looking for a true meaning you will never come back out. Nevertheless, how can we connect the concept of evaluation and our own training activity? What should one look for when asked to evaluate a training course? How can a definition of this kind be translated into the applied world of youth training at a European level?

Evaluation in the context of training usually has several basic meanings. Firstly, it means assessing whether the training has reached its original intentions. Secondly, whether or not the training was justified and if it was, similar or extra effort should be invested in it. Thirdly, it represents the first step on the journey of improving the training activity itself and possible future activities. It means looking back at the activity and assessing its quality, as well as identifying the factors for improvement.

T-Kit 10 focuses entirely on educational evaluation in youth work.[137] For an intense learning experience and foray into the topic, please refer to that T-Kit, which focuses on all the "ingredients" of educational evaluation, on practising educational evaluation and educational evaluation in practice. Moreover, it provides you with a range of practical evaluation tools. In this T-Kit on training essentials we will refer to the essentials when it comes to evaluation in training and make frequent reference to T-Kit 10 for an in-depth exploration of standards, models and the like.

3.6.2. Evaluation in the context of organising a European youth training course

One of the challenges of European youth work training in general, and for the organisations involved in particular, is to look very critically at the strengths of non-formal education, and to ascertain what alternative systems can be developed for the evaluation and assessment of learning outcomes. The approach implies that the tools of assessment (and evaluation) have to be developed with three distinct aspects in mind: content of the training programmes, personal development of training participants and evaluation of the educational process as such. Crucially, this will only work if participants are involved in their assessment. Hence, self-assessment has become key. Participants should be encouraged to reflect, describe, analyse and communicate what they experience and learn during the training activities in which they participate. Given the nature of non-formal education training and the values it embodies, it is reasonable to suggest that assessment involves a certain degree of tolerating ambiguity. One should be prepared to cope with the fact that there will not be definite answers when faced with the challenge of even defining evaluation in the context of youth training activities.

The only definite statement we can make is that the approach and methods used in the profit sector are unsuitable for direct use in the assessment and evaluation of youth activities. Measurable financial or business objectives are replaced in the youth sector with goals and objectives that often possess a degree of intangibility, and as such can be difficult to evaluate and, if necessary, measure. In relation to this, the fact that the working methods and approaches of non-formal education are often better researched and described than the learning elements and outcomes means that defining the aims, criteria and mechanisms of evaluation in youth training activities becomes a challenging task.

3.6.3. Why is it necessary to evaluate?

Nietzsche replied: to give value and become better at creating. Einstein said that everybody is a genius but you do not want the fish to believe that it is stupid for its whole life, only because it cannot climb a tree.

The authors of T-Kit 10 on evaluation state that evaluating is necessary in order to:

- learn;
- motivate;
- participate;
- change and improve.

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136. Webster's English Dictionary.

137. *T-Kit 10 – Educational evaluation in youth work*, available at https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/T-kit-10-educational-evaluation-in-youth-work, accessed 21 August 2020.

What does that mean in detail?

In this case "to learn" refers to the learning of all actors involved in a training course.

"Motivation" relates to the fact that one needs to recognise the achievements, as well as the shortcomings and conquered challenges in a training project, which ideally foster motivation within the project and its actors. Having said that, the motivation factor often goes hand in hand with the (evaluation) attitude applied.

"Participation" counts on the fact that all actors involved in a training project actively participate in its evaluation. The factors "change" and "improvement" relate, on the one hand, to operational issues (tools, formats, methods, places, targets), and on the other, to a change of attitudes, values and ways of understanding on a personal level. Hence, this relates to internal and external changes that might be required of an individual or as a group.

Or, in more practical/structured terms: trainers', facilitators' and organisations' evaluation is a powerful tool that allows the organisers of a training activity:

a) To look back on the activity and identify the strengths and weaknesses of the programme, to identify the benefits to the participants, to assess the educational and methodological approach, and to determine in general whether the course was appropriate and justified the efforts invested and money spent. During an activity, evaluation allows us to adapt the programme if necessary, afterwards, the emphasis being on the extent to which the stated objectives were achieved.

b) To look forward to future activities and use the results of the evaluation to enhance planning for future training activities. This involves analysing the likely impact on future projects, on the individual growth of the participants, on the organisations, their immediate environments and possible long-term changes.[138] In basic terms, it allows organisers to identify mistakes and areas where improvement and innovation are needed.

c) To give the participants a constant opportunity to comment, adapt and control their learning process.

As the quality standards in education and training activities of the Council of Europe Youth Department point out, an adequate evaluation of the activities is an indispensable element of non-formal educational processes.[139]

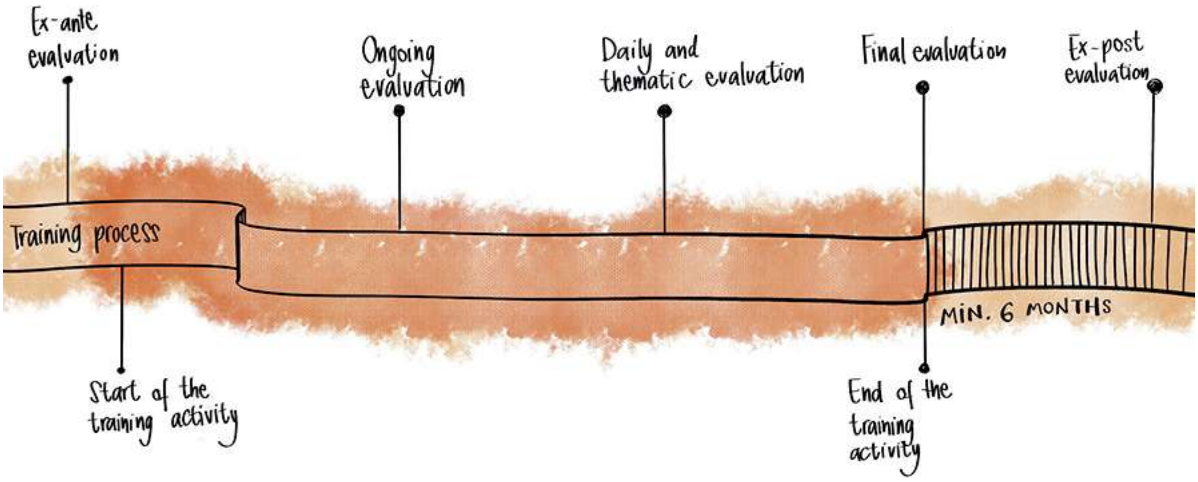
3.6.4. When to evaluate?

The most common mistake regarding evaluation is the belief that it comes at the end of a training activity. The timeline below shows that evaluation runs through the entire training project. Meaningful evaluation takes place during every stage. It shadows every development of the training activity similar to a project cycle – in this sense a training activity can be perceived as a project. See the T-Kit 3 – *Project management*[140] for an in-depth discussion of project evaluation.

There are four key points where evaluation of training activities should be implemented:

1. ***Ex ante* evaluation**: This is evaluation carried out after identifying the training needs and designing a training programme for the activity. At this stage the assumptions and needs on which the programme is based and the programme design itself should be evaluated and if necessary adapted or fine-tuned (examples: needs assessment (section 3.1), programme design assessment (section 3.5), etc.).
2. **Ongoing evaluation**: This evaluation is done during the training activity. The programme is reviewed on a daily basis to see if it answers the needs and succeeds in reaching the defined objectives (examples include daily evaluation groups, mid-term evaluation, oral and written feedback from participants, etc.).
3. **Terminal (final) evaluation**: This is implemented at the very end of the training activity. The main focus is the reactions of participants, their appraisal of the learning outcomes, evaluating attainment of the goals and objectives, and so forth (examples include evaluation questionnaires, presentations by participants, oral evaluation, visual evaluation, planning team evaluation).
4. ***Ex post* evaluation**: This evaluation is also known as impact evaluation. It is performed at least six months after the activity and mainly focuses on the perceived personal development of the participants. The main goal is to check the kinds of impact the training activity has had on the participants and how that impact is reflected in both personal terms and its registration in their organisations as well (examples include in-depth research, evaluation questionnaire, assessment of entire organisations, etc.).

138. *T-Kit 3 – Project Management*, p.87, available at https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/t-kit-3-project-management, accessed 21 August 2020.
139. Quality standards in education and training activities of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe, available at https://rm.coe.int/ddcp-yd-etd-2016-202-quality-standards-yd-et-activities/16807c8bb9, accessed 21 August 2020.
140. *T-Kit 3 – Project management*, available at https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/t-kit-3-project-management, accessed 21 August 2020.



3.6.5. What to evaluate?

For every trainer at a course, evaluation is the conflictual encounter of self-perception, the perception of others and what actually happened – verified by objective indicators.

A lot of factors influence the success of a training activity: the group dynamics, degree of intercultural learning, conflicts in the group, the way in which the topic is explored, and many more. Each of them has a certain impact on the final outcome of the training activity. This implies that the crucial question in every evaluation strategy is: what to evaluate? The answer depends on the type of training activity, the organisation(s) and the purposes of the evaluation. The information collected during evaluation can usually be grouped into different categories or levels. The analysis can be done according to several different models. Similar to other elements of training, there is no one dominant approach to evaluation. The following table describes four different evaluation models.[141]

Model	Training evaluation criteria	Further explanation and comments
Kirkpatrick model	*Four levels:* 1. Reaction – were the participants satisfied with the activity? 2. Learning – what did the participants learn from the activity? 3. Behaviour – did the participants change their behaviour based on what they learned? 4. Results – did the changes in behaviour positively affect their organisation?	
CIPP model	*Four levels:* 1. Context evaluation – are the chosen goals the right ones for this activity? 2. Input evaluation – is the programme well planned? Are there enough resources to implement the activity? 3. Process evaluation – how was the course flow? The participants' feedback? 4. Products (outcome) evaluation – were the objectives reached?	
Brinkerhoff model	*Six levels:* 1. Goal setting – what is the need? Are these the real needs? 2. Programme design – what is required to meet these needs? Is this design going to meet the needs? 3. Programme implementation – how do we evaluate the programme in practice? 4. Immediate outcomes – did the participants learn? What did they learn? 5. Intermediate or usage outcomes – are the participants implementing their learning? 6. Impacts and worth – did it make it a worthwhile difference to the participants' organisations and their personal development?	

141. Adapted from DeSimone and Harris (1998).

Model	Training evaluation criteria	Further explanation and comments
Systems approach (Bushnell)	*Four levels:* 1. Input – what goes into the training effort? (trainee qualifications, trainer's ability, resources, etc). 2. Process – what are the planning, design, development and implementation phases of the activity? 3. Output – what are the participants' reactions, knowledge, skills gained, behaviour reflected on, attitudes changed? 4. Outcomes – what are the effects on the participants' organisations?	

It is noticeable that these four models have many common features, but also some different emphases. Their use depends on the context, evaluation needs and "depth" of evaluation that the training requires. It would be possible to provide an extensive list of similar evaluation models, but at this point it is more important to illustrate a detailed implementation. The Kirkpatrick evaluation model is a straightforward yet highly effective model that is widely used in the trainers' community. The following section expands on the basic structure given above.

3.6.6. An evaluation model in practice

The Kirkpatrick model suggests four different points of focus: the reaction of participants, learning, behaviour after training and the results achieved as a result of the changed behaviour. In comparison with other models it has one clear flaw – not evaluating the actual training process. That said, if evaluators are aware of this weakness and consider the process separately, it provides a strong framework for approaching a youth activity.

Level 1. *Reaction* – Were participants satisfied with the activity? Did they like it?

Level one measures feelings, energy, enthusiasm, interest, attitude and support. However, what is reflected at this level is words, not deeds (usually in evaluation forms or oral evaluation). As with any exercise in interpersonal feedback there is a possibility of dissonance between what people say and what they eventually do.

The daily evaluation groups, mid-term evaluation and final evaluation forms are the most common methods used for evaluation on this level. Some examples of final evaluation forms and a design for daily evaluation groups are presented in Appendix 7.

Level 2. *Learning* – What did the participants learn from the activity?

Assessing learning in non-formal education and in youth training is a rather complicated task. On these training courses the knowledge and skills transferred are very much interrelated with the changes in awareness, attitudes and reflection of the participants. For formal training courses, tests and various certified forms are used. In non-formal youth training based on voluntary participation this can have counterproductive effects.

In non-formal contexts the evaluation of participants (whether they have learned a certain theoretical concept or a certain skill) can be implemented by giving opportunities to the participants to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. It might be in workshops run by them, role-play and simulation, accompanied by reflection and feedback.

Level 3. *Behaviour* – Did the participants change their behaviour based on what they learned?

Levels 3 and 4 focus the evaluation on the participants' reality. It is not easy to analyse behavioural change in participants. In youth work especially, where short training courses are an everyday reality and funding organisations are not eager to finance *ex post* evaluation, this situation is heightened. During many youth training activities, the focus is mainly cast on self-realisation and self-knowledge, and their relevance in the context of

European youth work. This is very hard to evaluate. How can we tell whether somebody has become a trainer after participating in a training of trainers' course? Is it even a question we can ask? There is a continuous need to track the participants' development and achievements. The only reasonable thing that can be done is *ex post* evaluation, where after longer periods of time the trainer or organisers of the training contact the participant and co-assess developments in the meantime. Usually this is done by an online questionnaire, due to restrictions of finance and time. Without these restrictions, direct observation or in-depth interviews with the participant would generate more useful data.

Level 4. *Results* – Did the changes in behaviour positively affect their organisation?

This level of evaluation focuses on the participants' organisation and the benefits of trained participants to them. Did the participants implement the knowledge gained during the training activity? Did they make an impact on the overall work of the organisation or conditions of their target group?

The main disadvantage at this level is the near impossibility of singling out the long-term impact of the specific training activity as opposed to other learning experiences and stimuli. Participants follow their own path and in the process of their development learn new things which consolidate, refine and challenge what has gone before. It is also important to bear in mind that an impact on an organisation cannot be accomplished by a lone individual, but by people collectively involved in the whole organisation. In this context it is problematic to try and indicate the exact impact of individual participation.

Note: long-term training gives an opportunity to evaluate between sessions which can include evaluation on levels 3 and 4.

Final comment

Levels 1 and 2 can be found in the evaluation designs for almost every training activity today. Levels 3 and 4 are clearly more complicated and consume time, effort and money, but are ultimately crucial in assessing whether a training course has really made an impact or not. Therefore, with the environment and limitations of youth work training in mind, evaluations on level 1 and 2 should be executed as a normal standard. Partial coverage of evaluation on level 3 is achievable, in the form of a questionnaire (including competence assessment, further mentoring, assessing the continuous self-directed learning) distributed sometime after the activity for example.

It is important to be aware of the existence of evaluations on levels 3 and 4 and whenever possible to implement them. Available results can indicate huge justification of the training programme and inform a needs assessment for future training activities.

Moreover, researchers and/or the integration of research methods in the evaluation of training programmes are increasingly used in the youth training field.

Two tips for future evaluators

1. Be aware that in youth training results are not always measurable, at least not straightforwardly so. This does not mean that they do not exist. They exist and the goal of the evaluation should shift towards making them more visible.
2. An ultimate evaluation design does not exist. Every evaluation has its limits. In youth training the two most important limits that should be taken into consideration are a) that participants are not only a source for evaluation and b) the limits of the training activity itself – they are very often too short to produce in-depth results.

Reflection moment

- Think about your last training activity. What types of evaluation did you do? In your opinion, can some of the evaluation models presented above be helpful?
- Do you find an evaluation worthwhile, as suggested above?
- Can you think about other approaches to evaluation that you have used and that are not mentioned in this section? What is typical for them?

3.6.7. Daily and ongoing evaluation

- One method is to ask participants to meet in small groups for 20 minutes or so, and hand out some key questions about the day. The questions should be straightforward and limited to three or four, for example:
  - What have I learned today?
  - What have I not understood?
  - What would I have done differently? Why? How?
- A group composed of one representative from each evaluation group meets with the preparatory team. Together they decide whether to make changes, and to consider the kinds of changes that could be taken the following day to improve the programme. Actions could be very practical or relate to working methods and processes.
- The other participants can be made aware of the discussion and its results by a morning feedback session on the evaluation and consequent changes to the programme. If the evaluation group (in many training sessions this is referred to as reflection group) representative who works with the planning team rotates daily, then every participant has the opportunity to be involved in the programme to some extent.
- A variation involves the team members visiting the evaluation groups after they have answered the questions. Once they have collected the comments and queries, the team can consider eventual changes to the programme. This second option is less participative for participants but possibly less demanding for the team.

Apart from the suggestion and questions for daily evaluation above, there are, of course, many creative methods to use for the same purpose in your daily reflection group. The aim of a daily reflection group is to exchange experiences, feelings and personal learning with fellow participants, give feedback about the day, let off steam and come up with suggestions and ideas to improve the programme and the groups' learning. If you aim at having evaluation groups, make sure you clearly define their content and purpose among the trainers' team and among participants. A reflection group and an evaluation group are not necessarily the same, but different in purpose. In T-Kit 10 on educational evaluation in youth work you can find an in-depth description of possible methods (p. 68) for reflection/evaluation groups, such as: the Three Word Review, the Telegram, the Living Dartboard, the River, Boats on the Sea, Train to the Future, Puppets in a Tree, the Thermometer, the Speedometer, Applause, Last Round.

Clearly, evaluation is less valuable if it is slotted in between packing and a farewell party. Daily evaluation facilitates useful two-way communication. Regular evaluation groups, facilitated or working alone, as in the exercise above, are popular as they allow groups to develop understanding and criteria for their evaluations. In some training courses these groups also function as self-evaluation groups, tracking the progress of individuals and providing a space for reflection and transfer. If this is the case, it is important to delineate the functions of the group, and keep them separate. Evaluation groups should not be just aimless talking shops, or worse, consumer relations exercises. They need clear frameworks and a realisation that evaluation which comes from the group must also be reconciled with central training objectives. In shorter activities, a single mid-term evaluation could substitute daily feedback.

For more suggestions and inspiration on evaluation, please refer to T-Kit 10 on educational evaluation in youth Work[142] where you can learn more about:

- educational evaluation (as a total experience) and quality in youth work;
- the broader framework (including assessment, certification, certificates or diplomas, accreditation, feedback);
- typologies of evaluation (personal/interpersonal/group, formative/summative, quantitative/qualitative);
- educational methods (personal, interpersonal and group interactive methods);
- evaluation criteria;
- evaluation reports;
- evaluation standards;
- evaluation practices (including evaluation in online learning courses).

142. *T-Kit 10 – Educational evaluation in youth work*, available at https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/T-kit-10-educational-evaluation-in-youth-work, accessed 21 August 2020.

Furthermore, take a look at the SALTO checklist[143] for developing your own evaluation plan.

The youth partnership *Handbook on quality and learning mobility*[144] provides you with the following useful links on evaluation:

- impact and evaluation;[145]
- monitoring and participative evaluation;[146]
- participatory evaluation.[147]

If you need inspiration for creating a "good" final training evaluation questionnaire, please refer to *T-Kit 10 – Educational evaluation in youth work* (pp. 96-101).[148]

143. Evaluation – The SALTO-YOUTH way, available at www.salto-youth.net/tools/evaluation/thesaltoway/, accessed 21 August 2020.
144. *Handbook on quality in learning mobility*, youth partnership publication, available at pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/42128013/47261953/Handbook+LM/3a5c103c-0367-4eba-1aca-ee544826f557, accessed 6 October 2020.
145. Erasmus+: Impact and evaluation, available at www.erasmusplus.org.uk/impact-and-evaluation, accessed 21 August 2020.
146. Institute of Development Studies, Monitoring and evaluation resources, available at www.participatorymethods.org/resources/themes/monitoring-and-evaluation-37, accessed 21 August 2020.
147. Better Evaluation, available at www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/participatory_evaluation, accessed 20 May 2020.
148. *T-Kit 10 – Educational evaluation in youth work*, available at https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/T-kit-10-educational-evaluation-in-youth-work, accessed 21 August 2020.

Chapter 4

Training in action

4.1. GROUP LIFE AND THE TRAINING PROCESS

4.1.1. Group life in training

In non-formal education, the group is one of the key sources for learning. Online or in residential settings, it creates the feeling of a learning community and cumulative energy of a shared learning experience. In addition, it widens the pool of competences, experience and diverse realities.

From an educational point of view, people being trained together in a residential setting, while very often sharing the same accommodation, encourages them to live a unique experience which can support their learning in many ways.

The advantages include:

- learning together and sharing experiences;
- learning from each other. In peer-group education people share their experiences and as positive models can also shape the behaviour and attitudes of their peers;
- a protected learning context in an out-of-the-ordinary reality;
- developing communication in an organisation when people from one organisation are training together;
- encountering new people and creating new networks.

This form of residential existence is beneficial for the training process, since it not only binds participants together during the programme sessions, but also enables them to benefit from the group interactions in the informal moments. For this to happen, it is important to ensure that, if possible, all the participants are staying overnight at the same place to enable everybody to participate in the same way. A common challenge for participants at an international event in their home city or town is removing themselves from their usual routines and avoiding personal or professional distractions. That said, even if physically present at the same place, it does not mean that all participants would be fully in the group with their mind and soul at all times. Participants are often busy people and they carry with them their professional and personal obligations. On the other hand, more and more of us seek moments of solo time (see section 4.1.4) to reconnect with ourselves, to reflect and recharge. Nevertheless, being in the training and with others with a here-and-now attitude is something that can be encouraged through the training process and then left up to participants to take on as their own responsibility.

In terms of optimum participation, it is also important to use a range of methods suited to working with different group sizes. As a general rule, the bigger the group, the fewer opportunities for everyone to speak. Not just in terms of time as a resource divided by the number of participants, but also because not everyone feels comfortable sharing in a larger group. At the same time, sharing and discussing in plenary gives a chance to capture the variety of voices and perspectives present – even if sharing key insights or feelings with one short sentence. The box below gives a general overview of this point. As we shall see, however, no group is static and from the beginning of its existence it is developing and in permanent flow. As with all typologies, the ones offered here can only be verified by the reality of the group you are working with.

Group size and participation

Size	Communication in the group	Group structure/methods
3-6 people:	Everyone has a chance to speak and everyone usually does	Buzz groups and working groups
7-10 people:	Almost everyone speaks Quieter people say less One or two may not speak at all	Working groups, small thematic workshops
11-18 people:	5 or 6 people speak a lot, 3 or 4 others join in occasionally	Workshop, plenary session
19-30 people:	3 or 4 people potentially dominate	Plenary session (presentations of working groups, thematic inputs, videos), debriefing, reflection and evaluation
30+ people:	Little participation possible	Not common for training activities (the bigger the group, the shorter the plenary meetings)

Adapted from Rogers (1989).

Groups in online learning environments

In the past decades, online education has evolved a lot and this can be felt in non-formal education settings as well. Online parts of the courses are not an occasional wonder anymore and pure online courses are slowly gaining momentum. While we have moved from considering these experiences "virtual", as in "something that is not part of our reality", online environments can still not provide the same feeling of the group as residential settings can. And that is okay. They do not have to, as the group still plays a big role online, just perhaps in a different format.

Even in a very large massive open online course, which gathers several thousands of people together, there can be a feeling of group and community learning. People are still utilising the group online to share and exchange experiences and to learn from each other. When such huge numbers of people are present, it is very likely that there will be someone from each corner of the world, which makes people even more curious about each other's realities. And in some cases, this also leads to forming partnerships and planning exciting endeavours together. Of course, not everyone will be joining the course for the curiosity of other realities or for meeting partners. And that is okay too. Not everyone does that in residential training settings either. It is perhaps easier to spot when people are not joining conversations in group forums online than when someone is not interacting with other participants during the coffee breaks or NGO markets. However, it is worth saying that the group might not be the main source of learning in these massive and often self-paced courses and you can't expect a lot of small or large group interaction, but rather a collection of individual learning pathways. Still, a feeling of a community of learners is present, for those who seek it.

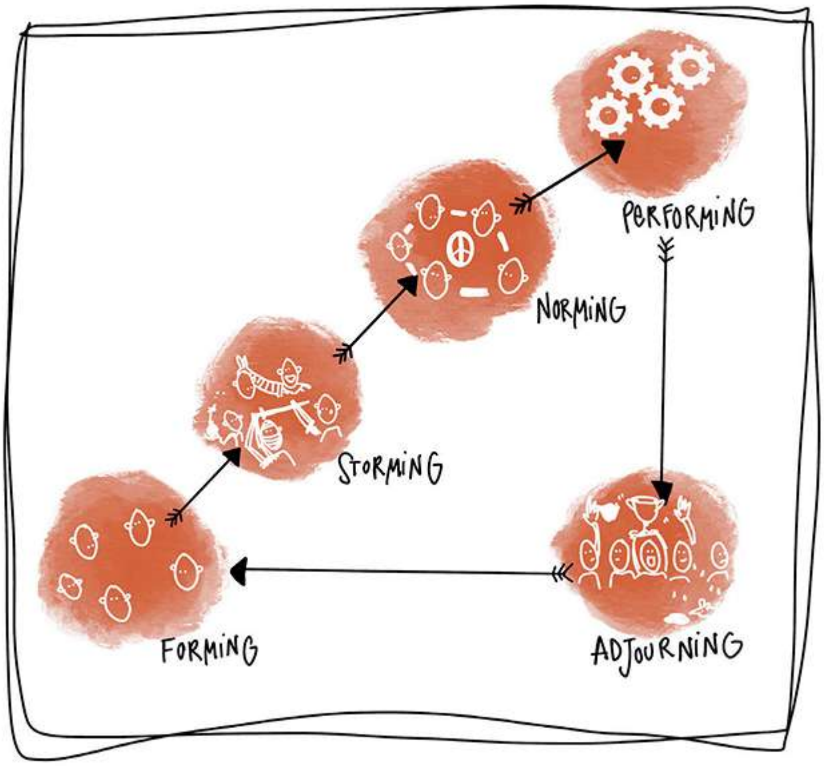
In online courses that are smaller in numbers, which are facilitated and/or part of a blended-learning experience, the reality is once again different. Not only the importance of the overall group is higher, but trainers can also use possibilities to create small group tasks or discussions and provide spaces for interaction and sharing of realities, knowledge and experience. For this to happen, it is important to have participants engaged and present as much as possible, because this will keep them engaged with the content as well. In synchronous online learning experiences, due to the often fairly limited time of online meetings, it is tempting to just go straight to "business" and directly engage with the content. However, in order for people to feel comfortable and trustful in an environment that seems lacking in intimacy, attention needs to be paid to allowing individuals to connect and form a group. It is the group that will help carry the learning process online and support its individuals in engaging with the content in a more daring and meaningful way. Small groups play a significant role, as they provide space for learners to engage with each other, to share and to open up. There are quite a few learners who would not express themselves in the online plenary, but would happily engage with peers in breakout rooms. On online videoconferencing platforms, however, those small groups are often out of reach. Therefore, it is advisable to have more facilitators in the team, so they can join the groups and support them in their process; at least, at the beginning or when dealing with more sensitive content.

In addition, when it comes to blended learning, if designed and facilitated well, online elements can play a very important role when it comes to building and keeping the group together through an extended learning as well as transformation process.

4.1.2. Stages of group development

As a basic starting point, each training group is different. Every group is constituted by different individuals, coming from perhaps many different organisations and a range of cultural, social and educational backgrounds. People arrive with their professional and personal expectations, with their values and prejudices, their hidden agendas and their personal luggage which may be packed with more or less important things that keep them connected to their everyday world. All or any of these aspects can have a big influence on the group, the training process and the dynamics and evolution of group life. As every group is different, it results in as many group dynamics as there are groups.

That said, models based on the observation of groups argue that there are typical stages of group development which are likely to be passed through. Below is one of those models, developed by Bruce W. Tuckman (1965). Even though is presented in a very linear way, depending on the group, the length of some stages will vary and sometimes even the order.



Adapted from Tuckman (1965).

Briefly, when the group meets they first enter the stage of "forming" when there is an initial excitement and the first bonds are being formed. At the same time, the participants are often being polite and are not engaging with each other on a deeper level. This is the stage when icebreakers and group-building tasks and activities can be very helpful, to crack the facades a little and give participants incentives for interaction.

Once they start getting more acquainted with each other, participants will naturally start to gravitate to some people rather than others. This might mean that the alliances will start to form. And together with starting to feel a bit more comfortable in the group and/or not able to keep the polite facade anymore, participants will start to test each other's boundaries. This in turn can create tensions, disagreements and clashes. In other words, there are "storms" all around (see section 4.2, Dealing with conflicts).

In the next phase, participants slowly learn to interact with each other, establish some ground rules, learn how to approach disagreements and clashes constructively and hopefully find their position and their role.

This does not mean that everyone is completely comfortable in the group, but the community feeling starts to emerge and the "norming" starts.

With the relationships and roles somewhat defined, the group might reach the "performing" stage, when they have a common vision and a common goal. This will very much depend on the length of the learning process and type of training activity. In any case, participants are more likely to start approaching each other assertively and are at the height of their performance.

Finally, the time comes to say goodbye and in order for the group to separate in a healthy way and continue to follow their own paths, "adjourning" is very important to let go of the group and make closure.

This is Tuckman's model in a nutshell, and its stages can be very helpful in deciphering what is happening in the group, as well as in deciding what method or intervention to apply to support it in functioning more constructively. Of course, reality is hardly ever like a model. Very often a group does not follow the stages in such a linear way. The beginning and the end, forming and adjourning, are or should be there, but the rest of the stages might go one after another, or there might be some back and forth, or some stages might even be skipped. Essentially, trainers as a team should be aware of different stages and support the group in functioning as constructively as possible in order to support individual and group learning. Some of the usual case scenarios that can be encountered are as follows:[149]

- "We did our two sessions of group building. It all went well! It's all smooth sailing from now on." Well, not necessarily. Group building does not only happen at the beginning and we strongly recommend that the team keeps following and working on the group dynamics throughout the training in order to support the group process.
- "Our group is getting along so well! I think this storming business is fake news!" That is great! However, keep in mind that:
  - Storming might be happening, but trainers are just not aware of it (it can happen in smaller groups too).
  - Storming might still come and if it does towards the end of a training session, it can really mess up the whole process.
  - Storming allows the group to work through the tensions and stop being polite and superficial. So trainers might want to see if they can support it to happen.
- "Help! Our group is stuck at the storming level. No one seems to be talking to anyone else and some of them were even insulting each other!" If that happens, some of the things that trainers can do are:
  - First calm down and take some deep breaths. And remember: this is a normal and expected phase.
  - Start by bringing the group together and discuss what is going on. Often when participants understand the process, they also feel more comfortable about it.
  - Help them address the issues, explain their feelings and find solutions in order to move on.
  - Support them in setting up some common rules and dividing roles.
- "We are almost at the end of the training and the group does not seem connected at all! What can we do about it?"
  - One thing that could have been done is to notice it sooner and introduce activities that are likely to bring the group together.
  - But even then, there is no guarantee that it will actually happen. Some groups simply do not click or are too stuck in the storming phase and can't seem to find a way out.
  - Luckily, it does not happen that often. So, next time it will be better for sure!
- "Our group is working so well together! Our street campaign is coming along smoothly and everyone is just so happy about it!" Fantastic! Congratulations! When it happens, it is pure magic. Almost like the aurora borealis. Almost… :)
- "Our training is coming to an end. Participants are so sad to be leaving tomorrow. We just can't do additional activities – that would make them even more miserable!" We know it is tough, but trainers should still try to do it. Adjourning activities might make participants more emotional in the moment, but would help them move on in a healthier and happier way. Courage!

Now this all might imply that you, as a team and individual trainers, are the only ones responsible for the group dynamics. In fact, this is not and should not be true. Only by sharing this responsibility with the participants

149. Borrowed from *Cherry on the cake,* SALTO-YOUTH publication, available at www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-3198/Cherry%20on%20the%20cake%20%20publication.pdf, accessed 6 October 2020.

is there a chance of creating a group as a source of learning and support. It is important to provide spaces for participants to learn about themselves from others and to support them in their learning through (self) reflection and feedback. Self-awareness at individual level is essential in order to create self-awareness in the group (see section 3.5.3, Focusing the programme on the participants).

4.1.3. Theme-centred interaction (TCI)

As part of the discussion on training strategies (section 3.3.1) we considered the Swiss psychologist Ruth Cohn's theory of group and learning processes, theme-centred interaction (TCI) (1981), which is very nicely elaborated in the *Coyote* article "TCI or theme-centred interaction: a model for interaction in groups".[150]

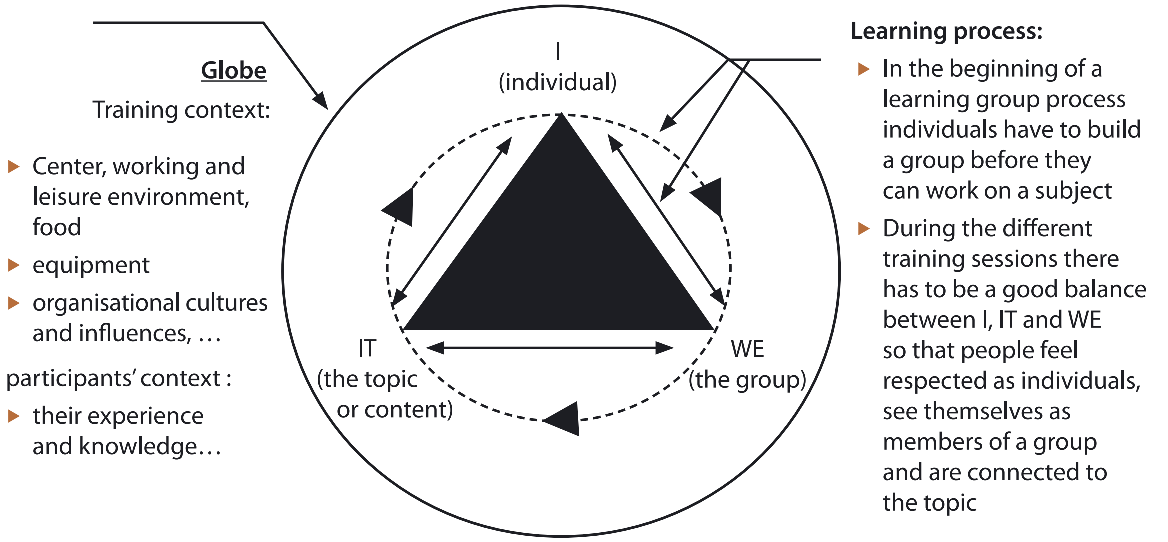
Each learning situation can be seen as determined by four factors:

- I (individual): motivations, interests, personal histories and levels of involvement of the individual participants, as well as the infamous luggage they may bring with them.
- WE (group): the relationships, dynamics and types of co-operation within the group.
- IT (topic): the subjects and content of the training.
- Globe: the training and organisational environment (also partly represented by the participants).

A crucial goal for the trainer and team is to enable conditions for harmony and balance between the individual, the group, the topics explored and the environment in which all of this takes place, while recognising that this balance is dynamic. There is a continuous flow and counter flow from the individual needs to the group needs to the topic to the individual, and onwards.

The theme-centred interaction model

The interdependence of the individual participants, the training group, the training subject(s) and the training environment



Adapted from Cohn (1981).

Disturbances result from disjunctions in these relationships. For example, if a participant is not well integrated into the group or there are a couple of participants that keep disturbing the process for the others, then very often trainers tend to focus on dealing with this, and the rest of the group, or even the focus of the training, might suffer because of it. Or, if the group is only concerned about dealing with itself for a long time, then there is no focus or a clear task to keep things moving. Treating these relationships as dynamic means realising that priorities can be different at different stages of growth. An obvious example is the need to allow time and space for a group to form before the training subjects can be introduced in depth. Or, at the beginning of the learning process, methods should be chosen (often based on smaller group work) which allow individuals to slowly integrate into the group. "Balance" is a notion that takes on meaning in relation to each individual group. Trainers need to maintain balance by focusing on the neglected aspects of the group and learning

150. Wicke (2003).

process at any one time, while realising that not everything imported into the training environment can or should be dealt with.

In relation to this, Cohn provides a set of postulates and rules aimed at improving group interaction and communication which place the emphasis on personal responsibility in interrelations with and contributions to the group.

Postulates

- **Be your own chairperson**. You are responsible for yourself and your actions in the group. Be aware of your expectations and what you could suggest. Clarify your motivations and do not expect that others will do it for you. Be aware of your own feelings, thoughts and actions.
- **Disturbances take precedence.** "If you ignore or try to oppress your own disturbances (sleepiness, boredom, hunger, irritation, disagreement) – as a trainer or as a participant – they will break through somewhere else. It is inefficient for the group, for the topic and for you. Take your own responsibility."[151] The last part of taking responsibility is very important, because although disturbances should certainly be dealt with, that does not mean the trainers' team can deal with anything at any time, or indeed that they should. The team must also set their priorities, time management and limits. Otherwise the training becomes all about the process and, if nothing else, the aim and content of the training risk being sacrificed for it. Note the possibility of a cultural and individual dimension to this postulate: if participants or trainers value harmony or do not wish to lose face, this could make it more difficult for them to express themselves.

Through experience of trainer practitioners using TCI in their activities, some additional advice for communication has been developed based on the postulates. There are no rules or laws to be abided by, but rather recommendations to be experimented with.

- Speak only for yourself and not for others or for the group. Do not hide behind "the group wants to…" or "I have heard people complaining about…". Take responsibility for yourself and others might follow.
- Your questions should include the reasons why you are asking them; it helps to avoid an interview replacing group dialogue.
- Side talks take precedence. Disturbances are not just distractions, they would not happen if they were not important.
- Only one person at a time. No one can listen to more than one person at the same time. Every person has the right to speak and be heard.
- Be conscious about your thoughts and feelings and select those which are important to be shared. Being reflective allows you to find your way between undifferentiated openness and fearful conformity.
- Be attentive to your own body signals (body language) and those of others in the group and the messages they are sending.
- Speak about your personal reactions and be careful with interpretations.

Anyone who has taken part in a group exercise will be familiar with a lot of names: "group contracts", "the code of conduct", "group rules", so has surely encountered some of the above advice. For some trainers such advice makes perfect sense, but others recoil from the idea of introducing a series of rules to participatory education. Rules of this kind are seldom attempts to implement new procedures, but rather to set clear guidelines for common life and conduct within a shared learning process. Some of the common guidelines include: confidentiality or "what happens here, stays here"; trying to be in the "here and now"; putting mobile phones on silent/vibrant mode, putting your name on your glass/cup to avoid unnecessary waste. There are different ways and even methods to arrive at these guidelines, but it is important that they are agreed on within the group and not just imposed on the participants. A very simple question to stimulate participants creating the guidelines themselves is: "what will help us work and live together?" Whichever way you choose to establish those or other guidelines that you and the group find important, some common framework of community interaction can be helpful to support the group in becoming one. If nothing else, they might reduce ambiguity in interacting with each other, which is often quite helpful.

151. ibid.

Reflection moment

- How do you find a balance between the individual, the group, the topics explored and the environment in your training activities?
- Do you have a tendency to give priority to one over the others?
- How do you usually deal with disturbances?
- How do you ensure shared responsibility in dealing with disturbances in the group?
- How do you, as a trainer, feel about the "rules"?
- How do you ensure that some basic rules or guidelines are shared and respected in the group?

4.1.4. Individual time in the group

A colleague trainer once said "non-formal education is built around loud extroverts". We do not want to enter labelling of introverts, extroverts and in-betweens, but there is certainly at least some truth in these words. The group is considered to be the main source of learning and a great majority of activities are built around interaction and sharing. Almost every activity is processed by talking in plenary at the end and for those who do not feel like sharing in a big group, some small group work is organised. This again involves sharing and most of the time talking. And then there are evenings and all those informal moments when participants are somehow expected to engage and share, as well as, once again, talk. On top of that, very often participants share rooms in order to be completely immersed in the intercultural learning experiences, which means that the only solo time they get is (hopefully) when they are in the toilet or when they are sleeping.

Let's face it: groups can drain quite a lot of one's energy. For many people, there is a need for some solo time to fully connect with themselves or to recharge their batteries. There is also a need for some calm and quiet time, in order to reflect and to try to make sense of all those experiences and stimuli. And when trainers design a programme of activities, they should take that into consideration as much as possible. It is important to both integrate solo moments into the sessions, and leave enough time outside the sessions for people to breathe, rest, zone out and recharge. Furthermore, trainers could also consider leaving options for people who do not want to talk after each of the activities to find alternative ways to share their thoughts and feelings. Because, besides using the group as a source of learning, non-formal education should also care for diverse needs and preferences. At times, to stay quiet and reflective on your own should be a valid option as well.

4.1.5. Managing the training process

Staying connected to the group, the learning process and personal experience is crucial, though it is often difficult to step back in certain situations. Trainers cannot be everywhere, but keeping the pulse on the processes that are happening is essential in order to respond to the needs, dynamics and potential disturbances. Participants' feedback, either at individual or group level (from regular reflection groups, for example), is invaluable and the following reflection points are intended as an aid to complete the picture of the ongoing processes during training.

General reflection

- What is developing in the group? Which of these processes should I leave alone, support or slow down?
- What or who struck me as needing additional attention during the next session?
- In relation to course objectives and team planning, what changes are necessary to the topic and the methodology?

Reflection after the session

- What is my most intense feeling after this session? How has it developed? What could that mean?
- Which thought occupies me most after this session? What is the connection to the subject and the process? Does it include a new subject?
- Which interactions during the discussion(s) were special?
- Which thoughts and problems appeared and disappeared without being completely developed?
- What connection is suggested to the next subject or linking introduction?

Reflection on the programme

It may happen that there is a gap between the logic and flow of the prepared programme and the actual needs of the participants in context. Every programme element can be modified, so find out what the group needs as a next step for example:

- a calm or a meditative element;
- movement vs action;
- focus on experiential methods;
- interaction and contact through a game or an exercise;
- time to review the work to date, not the introduction of a new subject;
- activities which connect theory to practice;
- a change to another element of the topic, or a new subject;
- a reflection, sharing or debriefing session.

Reflection on me and the participants

- Who attracted my special attention? What consideration should I give to this?
- Who could make contact with me easily, for whom did it seem more difficult?
- What different relationships do I have with the participants and how is this visible for me?
- What open or hidden messages have I received and how should I interpret them?

In-depth focus on the group (for team meetings)

- Which stage of group development are we in now?
- Which participants will be "easy" or a challenge for the team/group?
- Who looks as if they are having difficulties at the moment?
- Which participants have been "invisible"?
- What roles have been taken up and allotted? How comfortable do people seem with them?
- What biases and prejudices have I already formed?
- How closely do my/our hypotheses about problems in the group correspond to reality?

To get an instant personal "sociogram" of your relationship with the group, the following exercise may be useful

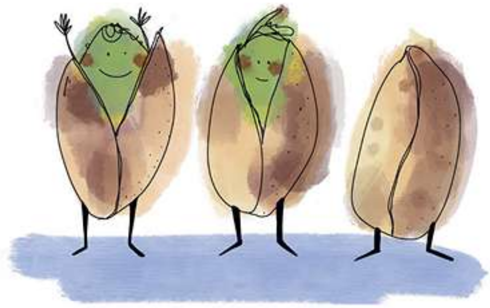
Put your name in the centre of a sheet and the names of the participants around yours. Draw a line from your name to the name of every participant you have had contact with. Use different distances to express the level of connection you have with the different people. Use + and – symbols to express the kind of relationship you have.

Debriefing questions

- Which names did you forget at first? Why?
- Whom did you write down first, those "far away" or those "nearby"?
- What will you do with your graph? Will you introduce your findings/suppositions to the group and to your team? How?
- If you have completed this in several contexts, do any patterns emerge?
- What can you learn through this exercise about your behaviour and your ways of interacting? How can you change it?

And following this exercise, here is an enlightening theory for you, informally known as "pistachio theory" (thanks to Graeme Tiffany and Mark E. Taylor).

In a nutshell (no pun intended), most of us might be approaching participants in a similar way as we do our pistachios – choosing the open ones first, investing some effort into cracking those half open ones, but tossing the closed ones aside.



With this in mind, it is worth reflecting on the following questions when assessing your relationship with participants during a particular training course, or perhaps even in your work as a trainer.

- For you, who are the open ones? And why do you think this is so?
- For you, who are the closed ones?
- Are you ready to open some closed ones?
- Are you ready to be opened up yourself?

4.1.6. Expressing yourself in the group

As we have already tackled in previous chapters, communication is an essential element of non-formal learning, whether online (and mostly in written form) or in residential training contexts. Those who are more able or feel more comfortable expressing themselves are the ones who can gain a certain power in the group. Either by being more confident in online communication, or competent in using online learning platforms and tools, or by being able to communicate verbally and eloquently in expressing their thoughts and feelings. Participants with impaired speech, hearing or sight will be at a disadvantage in a learning process that relies solely or mainly on verbal and/or written communication.

At the same time, working in a multicultural training environment often means that many participants have to use a foreign language, or sign language, or need to have the help of interpreters. English is the most commonly used medium and, unsurprisingly, this frequently results in native speakers and fluent second-language speakers gaining a certain power in the group. They are more visible and involved than other participants because they can express themselves in more differentiated ways. This verbal power allows them to take positions in the group that others cannot inhabit. Sometimes there is also an element of power and position when, for example, translating or speaking for participants who do not speak the language at all (it still happens, even if calls for participants always demand competency in the working language/s).

That said, it is an absolute imperative to ensure access for everyone, so that participants can express themselves and are able to participate in the learning process. When making methodological decisions to ensure this, the following guiding questions might help you in the process.

- Are you are using one common language?
  - Is everyone able to follow it?
  - Is everyone able to express themselves in writing?
  - Is everyone able to express themselves verbally?
- Is there a need for translation and/or interpretation in sign language?
  - Can participants in the group support in translating? Will that have an impact on their participation in the learning process?
  - Can you afford professional translation? How will that impact the learning environment?
  - How will you adjust your activities with participants wearing headsets?
  - Is there a need for sign language interpretation?
  - Is there a need for a Palantypist (text-to-speech support)?
- Is there a need for some additional equipment? (e.g. have you considered loops for hearing devices?)
- If you are using written material, is everyone able to read it?
  - Is there a need for material in Braille?
  - Are there any other adjustments needed in order for everyone to be able to read the written material?

- Have you considered alternative ways of expression, besides the verbal (e.g. drawing, body expressions, etc.)?
- In the online learning environment, are all of your participants able to follow and contribute to the content online?
  - Does everyone have minimum digital competences to use the chosen platform?
  - Is everyone able to express themselves in written form?
  - Do you need to make adjustments to your content and/or tasks?

Before making any of these decisions, it is important for the trainers to ask themselves: have we checked with the participants what would enable them to express themselves more freely and fluently? People know best what can support their participation and learning if they are able to express their needs, instead of trainers offering solutions that they think could work (and sometimes actually fail); consulting them is certainly going to result in a positive outcome.

Accessibility and expression online are another big topic. Online learning opportunities might be more inclusive for learners who have difficulty leaving home and because they can provide for different media formats of the same content. However, it is important to ensure that every person in the group has the same access and opportunities to engage and express themselves.

The *Leading groups online* guide[152] includes some important considerations in this regard.

- Become familiar with the accessibility features of the software you are using and share that information with your group.
- If at all possible, try to find out the needs of members of the group ahead of time. Someone who is deaf may have an interpreter, may be able to effectively read lips, or neither. Each situation requires different levels of adaptation.
- Give people choice about the ways they share information. For example, in a live session, give people the option to share out loud or in the chat box. Then make sure to read everything from the chat aloud. When recording videos use closed captioning or offer a transcript.
- Support people's choices about how and where they connect. For example, some people may be more able to be present and engaged if they can connect from bed or with their camera off.
- When creating visuals, check that they are accessible and give people direct access to them (not just showing them on screen-share). Use captions on images – and if there aren't captions, make sure the images are verbally described.

4.2. DEALING WITH CONFLICTS

The Italian writer Umberto Eco once remarked that crises themselves are not a problem; it is the way that we react to them that counts. In a way, this is also true of conflicts, and particularly so in a training situation. People from diverse backgrounds and experiences come together to share a committed and often intense period of learning. It would be remarkable if this dynamic did not produce "conflict" of one form or another. Indeed, peer education often thrives on creativity and invention which result from differences, oppositions and clashes. Yet, as a trainer, how does one distinguish between the creative and the destructive? When and how do trainers intervene? What roles are open to them? The aim of this brief section is to offer a basic insight into the world of conflict, suggest ways of analysing conflict situations and deciding how to approach them.

This section is not about training focusing on conflict transformation or aimed at transforming conflict, which some of the trainers reading this are doing as part of their work. However, *T-Kit 12 – Youth transforming conflict*,[153] which served as the key resource for this section, is also an amazing reference for developing training practice in the field of conflict transformation.

152. Rewa and Hunter (2020).

153. *T-Kit 12 – Youth transforming conflict*, available at https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/T-kit-12-youth-transforming-conflict, accessed 21 August 2020.

4.2.1. What is a conflict?

We could start with a fundamental question: when is a conflict a conflict? Defining human situations is always tricky, and especially in this context. The basic definition used in T-Kit 12 states: "Conflict is derived from the Latin word *conflictus*, which means collision or clash. This term is understood as a disagreement between two or more parties through which the parties involved perceive a threat to their needs, interests or concerns."

Analysing and dealing with conflict means taking many factors surrounding the conflict into account. You may find it useful to take the TCI model (see section 4.1.3) and look at where potential reasons for the actual conflict might be found.

There is no general agreement on how to treat conflict. Some view it as the most destructive force on earth, to be avoided by any means possible. On the other hand, some see it as an essential element of development and growth for individuals and societies. The recent general trend has been to consider conflict as a natural characteristic of human social systems. That said, it is important to make a distinction between conflict and destructive consequences that might occur when handling it, such as destroyed relationships, violence or war. These negative results of dealing with conflicts are also to be blamed for our fear and avoidance of conflicts. Here we resort to another definition of conflict by Johan Galtung: "Conflict is a dynamic process in which structure, attitudes and behaviours are constantly changing and influencing one another." We could easily replace conflict by learning in this definition, which might imply that conflicts and learning go hand in hand, or at least acknowledge that conflicts are quite a usual occurrence in training settings.

And speaking of training settings, trainers are not expected to be masterful conflict transformation specialists, even if many of them might have made attempts at that at one point in their training career or another. But trainers need to be able to recognise conflicts, understand their impact on the group and the learning process and, furthermore, decide how to move forward with them. This demands careful analysis, beginning with looking at the type of conflict which is unfolding, as well as the motivations for involvement.

Reflection moment

- How would you define conflict?
- When you hear the word "conflict", which associations and images come to mind? What connotations do these words have? Are they positive, neutral or negative?
- When does a conflict raise an alarm for you? What do you think about debating the similarities and differences within your team?
- How do you usually approach conflicts (in your personal and professional life)?
- How does your view of conflict translate into the training room? Are you able to work with the conflict or are your views and gut feelings getting in the way? Is there inner readiness for tackling conflict?

4.2.2. Types of conflict

There are a number of different classifications of conflict and more information about them can be found on page 57 onwards in T-Kit 12. One of the most common ones, and also perhaps the most relevant for training settings, is the one that, as a basis for classification, uses different kinds of conflict parties (actors involved in a conflict). According to this classification, the conflict types are: intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, intra-societal and international/global.

Intrapersonal conflicts occur within an individual as a result of frustration they feel with themselves over their personal goals, targets, plans, accomplishments, or as a result of competing values and questions of conscience. They can be very serious when stemming from fundamental internal value clashes (what is good and what is bad in a certain situation, for example), but they can also be a sign that a person is experiencing some sort of personal growth. An individual's inner struggle shows that a process of reflection is taking place, which in a training context is often a good sign, albeit not necessarily easily facilitated. Some scholars believe that all conflicts start from an intrapersonal or inner conflict, when internal frustration externalises itself.

Interpersonal conflicts take place between two individuals, which recur on a regular basis during their relationship. This creates situations in which one or both individuals are experiencing discomfort in relating to each other, usually because of their different or incompatible needs, goals or styles. Examples in a training context include regular clashes between two trainers, between a trainer and a "difficult" participant, or the impossibility of two particular participants being in the same team or working on the same task together. Interpersonal conflicts can also occur between members of two or more cultural, political or religious groups.

Intergroup conflicts take place between various formal and non-formal groups. For example, between the team of trainers and the group of participants, or between participants from two different organisations, or between a group from formal and a group from non-formal education, or between members of different youth sub-cultural groups. In the case of the last one, interactions between its members can lead to hatred and violence, since at the basis of the clash are perceived ideological differences.

Intra-societal conflicts or social conflicts most often refer to conflicts of a larger scale that have a strong public resonance. For example, these include confrontations between the ruling political elite and the opposition or between the government and NGOs on issues of social importance. They are similar to intergroup conflicts, but there are more systemic and structural elements that feed their existence and their effects also spill out and involve the wider society.

International/global conflicts include conflicts between nation states, global and regional competition over natural resources, conflicts in various international organisations over political issues, armed interventions involving significant loss of life, ethnic or religious conflicts, wars for self-determination and/or the creation of new nation states. These conflicts have a significance that goes beyond the individuals concerned; however, individuals often bring them into the training setting.

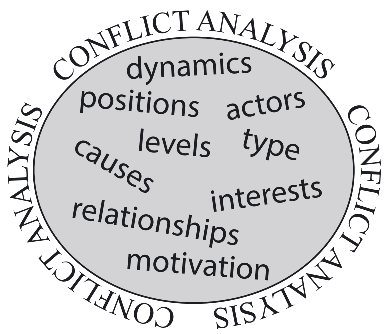
In a wide variety of international training with political and social themes, these different levels of conflict may be present simultaneously, and different manifestations may emerge as the situation intensifies or changes. Therefore, it is important for a trainer to try to distinguish between the different levels in order to understand the starting point for the intervention.

Reflection moment

- Think about a typical conflict you have encountered in your training contexts.
- Can you classify it using the different types listed above?
- What impacts did this kind of conflict have on the participants you worked with?
- What impact does this have on the work you do?
- How do you deal with its consequences for your work?

4.2.3. Conflict analysis

A wise person once said "conflicts are never (about) what they initially seem". And from our experience in life and therefore also in training contexts, there is considerable truth in those words. To deal with conflicts constructively and effectively, we first need to find out what they are all about or rather we need to analyse and understand them. Conflict analysis is the most important and necessary step that has to be taken before any conflict intervention can be carried out, and it enables the identification of elements shown in the figure below.[154]

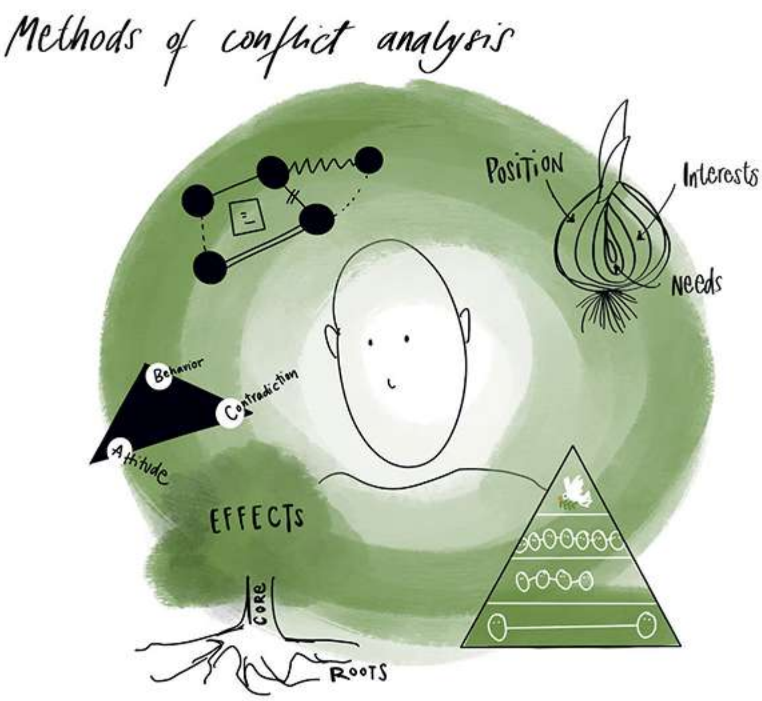


There is no "correct" method for conflict analysis. Its use will depend on the concrete situation, and existing methods are most often adapted or even combined. The following table from T-Kit 12 summarises some methods which are commonly used in the youth work field and which are also applicable for the training context.

154. ibid.

Conflict analysis method	Brief description
Conflict mapping	This is a visual method to show the relationships between conflict parties. It provides the opportunity to identify real and potential allies and opponents.
ABC triangle	Provides for the identification of three basic components in conflicts: attitudes, behaviour and contradiction.
PIN model of conflict resolution (see section 2.2.5)	This is a visual method using the metaphor of the onion for identifying the positions of conflict parties, and for discovering the interests and needs that are underlying those positions.
Tree of conflict	This is a visual method that links a conflict to a tree. The trunk of a tree represents the main problem, the roots – its main or deeply laid causes, and the leaves – its consequences.
Pyramid of conflict	Using the image of a pyramid, this method is used to identify people or groups who have an interest in the conflict and its eventual perpetuation.

Below you will find a graphic collage of all the conflict analysis methods described above.

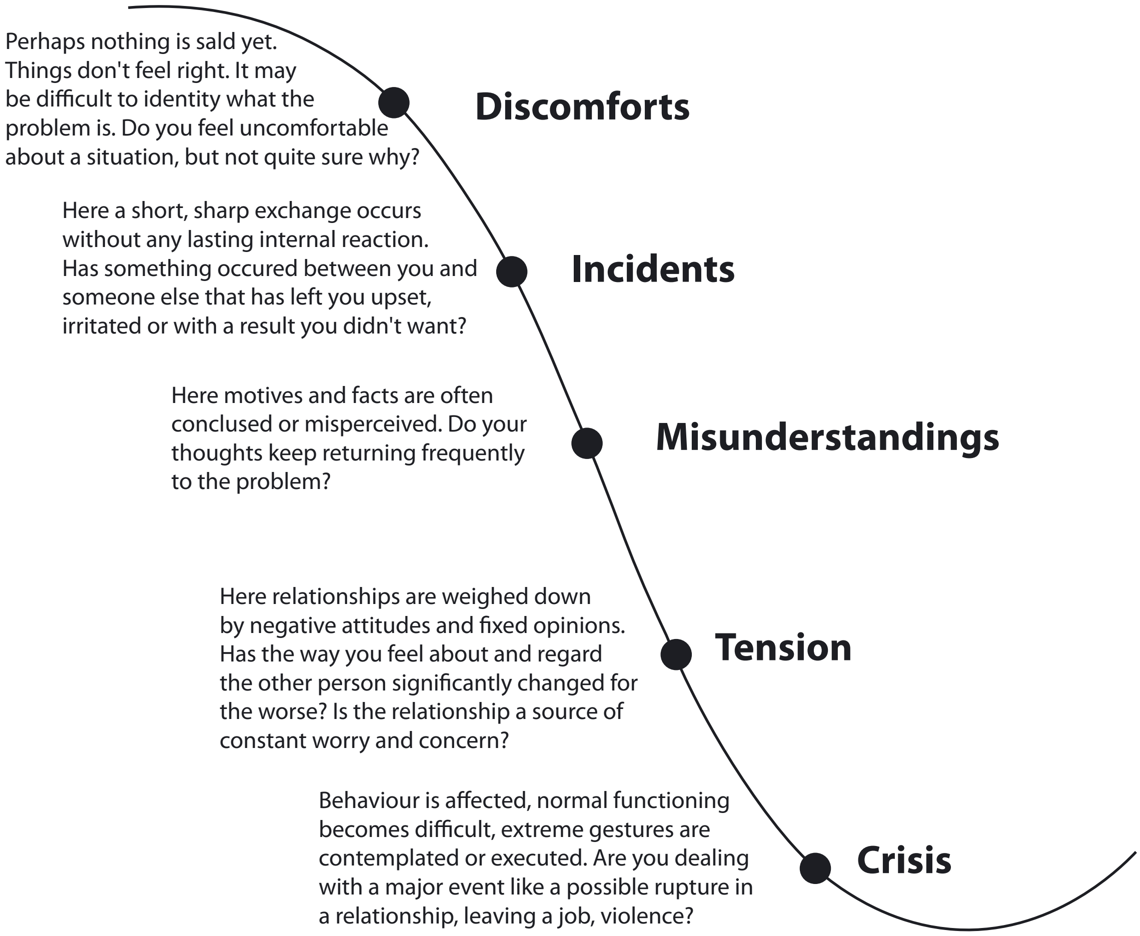


4.2.4. Conflict escalation

Before looking at the ways out of conflict, there is one more thing that is worth considering when thinking about our role as a trainer. It helps to point out and raise awareness that each conflict has a history, that it has developed from somewhere and that there are almost always signs of its existence before it escalates to the point of no return. This may not always be the case, but within the dynamics of training it is quite possible that highly charged incidents act as a release for tensions which have been building up in a number of ways, over time. The longer these factors go unnoticed, the more difficult they become to solve. In the same way, if the conflict itself remains unaddressed, then the danger is that positions become more entrenched, opposing stereotypes become hardened, and meaningful communication becomes difficult. This is complicated due to the ambiguity of communication in a multicultural environment, where both the group and individuals are negotiating the forms and values of communication.

Moreover, this model is useful in pointing out when the conflict could be addressed and dealt with in order to avoid escalation. It is not about preventing conflict, since it is already there and telling us something very important, but about preventing violent and possibly damaging outcomes.

Levels of Conflict



"Levels of Conflict" by The Conflict Resolution Network, Australia.

4.2.5. Co-operation in conflict situations

In this T-Kit we are operating with the term "conflict transformation" (and not only because we are building on the T-Kit with the same name). We are conscious that there are different approaches to dealing with conflicts and that they all have their merits. We are also aware that conflict transformation is linked to long-term processes, which training activities are usually not. Nonetheless, conflict transformation comes with a philosophy, a set of principles and constructive tools that can still be applied in training contexts.

As defined in T-Kit 12:

> Conflict transformation is the process by which conflicts are transformed into peaceful outcomes. This process engages with the relationships, interests, discourses and, if necessary, the very constitution of society that supports the continuation of violent conflict. This approach aims at shifting how individuals and communities perceive and deal with their differences, away from adversarial (win-lose) approaches towards collaborative (win-win) problem solving.[155]

In the book *Everyone can win*, Helena Cornelius and Shoshanna Faire (2007) list five different approaches to dealing with conflicts. The first four – competition, avoidance, submission and compromise – are most commonly present in our everyday conflict behaviour. They will also come more naturally to participants when facing a conflict and to the trainers when trying to intervene. The fifth approach, co-operation, attempts to

155. ibid., p. 272.

take our thinking out of the box and suggests that everyone can fulfil all their needs without compromising. For this to happen, everyone needs to commit to finding a solution and through this process relationships are being transformed. Co-operation is not a quick fix and it usually takes more time than the four approaches. Nonetheless, if not all the issues, of all parties, are taken into consideration, the conflict remains under the surface, only to resurface at some other point.

In a training situation, the challenge for the trainers consists in creating conditions where all parties involved in the conflict are willing and open enough to work on it for everyone's benefit. That will not always be possible and the four other approaches might be necessary in some cases. Nonetheless, "win-win" is a mindset more than anything else and it also comes with a set of competences that can and should be practised throughout our lifetime. And what is a training activity, if not one more step in that direction?

As mentioned at the beginning of this subchapter, there are a number of approaches and tools that are used in order to transform conflicts. We will not elaborate on all of them here, since they are thoroughly explained in T-Kit 12. What we will still mention here is the aspect of communication, since we find it is of extreme relevance for the work of a trainer.

Reflection moment

- How do you feel about the "win-win" approach? Do you practise it in your life?
- Do you think it can work in training contexts? If so, in which kinds of situations?
- How can a "win-win" attitude be developed as part of the learning process?

4.2.6. Communicating meaningfully

As soon as communication is hindered or stopped, the conflict will start to escalate. Therefore, it is important not only to keep the communication going, but also to find ways in which communication can contribute to conflicts being constructively transformed rather than further escalated. In the ETS Competence Model, there is a competence area that deals with communicating meaningfully with others. And although communication should be one of our main assets and naturally expected from all trainers, the meaningful aspects of it do take some investment to master.

This competence area encompasses five competences:

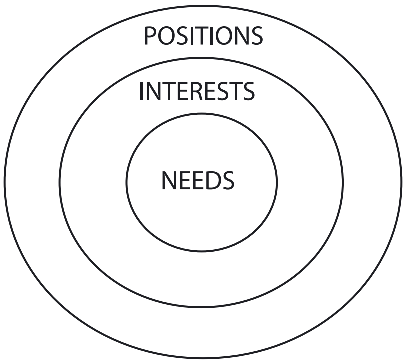
- an ability to listen actively;
- an ability to be empathetic;
- an ability to clearly express thoughts and emotions;
- an awareness of identity-related issues;
- being diversity aware.

Communicating meaningfully refers to overall communication in a training context and not only in a potential conflict situation. Nevertheless, there are two particular aspects of communication that are very useful when dealing with conflicts: non-violent communication (NVC) and active listening.

Non-violent communication (NVC) proposes that we try to communicate without attacking, criticising, judging, punishing or labelling other people and this way it also becomes more constructive when dealing with conflicts. NVC is not about avoiding, accommodating or redrawing, but about having an assertive stand that focuses on personal needs, avoiding making the situation worse. It means separating the problem from the person, and being hard on the issue but soft on the person. Just as with learning a new language, learning to communicate non-violently also takes time. Below you will find the four steps on non-violent communication, by Marshall Rosenberg (more in T-Kit 12, p. 137):

- **Observation without evaluation.** You describe the action or situation that is, according to you, causing a problem or a clash. You do it from your perspective and without judgment and blame.
- **Speaking about feelings.** You identify and express how your observation is making you feel. Instead of judging, criticising, or blaming yourself or the other person in your mind, try to identify what you or the other person is feeling at any given moment.
- **Connecting feelings to needs.** You try to understand and describe why you had the feeling you just expressed. This means connecting to the hidden need behind the feelings, at the same time, separating positions and interests from needs. The positions are the standpoints, what the parties say they want.

The interests are what they really want. The needs are what they need to achieve in order to feel secure and fulfilled. See the PIN model of conflict resolution below.



- **Making requests not demands.** You express your preferred outcome with no demands, by first identifying what you would like to happen in order to help you get out of the conflict and what you would like the others to do. It is helpful to provide as many options as possible, leaving the choice of solution open to the other person.

For trainers, non-violent communication is helpful to understand in order to apply when needed in any (training) context. Specifically, it can support others in discovering how they really feel and what they really need, in order to be able to constructively transform a conflict situation. This process is the backbone of mediation, which might be helpful for a trainer to know the next time they find themselves helping participants or colleagues trying to address a disagreement.

Active listening is another essential competence of a trainer. Not just at times of conflict, but it is of particular importance when diffusing tensions or developing an understanding of a complex situation.

> Active listening is a structured way of listening and responding to others, which focuses the attention on the speaker, postponing the judgment of the listener so that they can pay full attention to what the speaker is saying.[156]

Active listening is about really hearing each other and trying to help each other understand the underlying feelings and needs that might be difficult to express in times of tensions or clashes. This implies asking questions, without putting others on the spot, but rather trying to support them in expressing their thoughts and feelings.

Dilemma: Neutrality

T-Kit 12 includes dilemmas, which are key debates around contemporary issues related to conflict. One of them is the topic of neutrality. We singled it out here, because we find it very relevant for the work of trainers in general and perhaps even more so in conflict situations. Are trainers supposed to be neutral regardless of what kind of situation emerges in training? How should trainers approach conflicts in the group of participants and which position should they take? Are trainers allowed to have positions on political or social issues that lie behind certain conflicts? Is the answer to this dilemma perhaps found in the values of youth work and non-formal education? Can multi-partiality perhaps make a more meaningful approach in an educational context?

Reflection moment

- To what extent do you feel that you communicate meaningfully in your work as a trainer?
- Do you practise non-violent communication and active listening in your work?
- Have you tried using non-violent communication to deal with conflicts that you or someone else in your training context has been involved in?
- In your experience, how easy is it to understand needs that lie under the positions expressed? What are some of your experiences in trying to understand the needs?
- How do you feel about neutrality regarding the attitude and behaviour of trainers?

156. *T-Kit 12 – Youth transforming conflict*, available at https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/T-kit-12-youth-transforming-conflict, accessed 21 August 2020.

If you would like to discover more conflict transformation resources and related concepts, please refer to:

- T-Kit 12 – Youth transforming conflict[157]
- Berghof handbook for conflict transformation[158]
- Working with conflict: skills and strategies for action[159]
- Working through conflict: strategies for relationships, groups, and organizations[160]
- Non-violent communication[161]
- Beyond Intractability: essays[162]
- Restorative justice[163]
- Games for actors and non-actors (using theatre for conflict analysis)[164]

4.3. THE ROLES, THE GROUP, THE TEAM AND THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES

4.3.1. Possible roles

The classic team-building and group-dynamics literature often presents various typologies of group roles: the clown, the aggressive one, the talkative one, the know-it-all and so on. These approaches may sometimes be helpful, but clearly run the risk of stereotyping people by labelling complex behaviour. This is heightened by the context of intercultural work, where we must be aware of the criteria we use in interpreting behaviour we only have limited exposure to.

In our experience, more useful are approaches which focus on the different roles a group needs in order to perform well enough to achieve its goal in online/blended-learning settings and in residential training. In section 2.2.4, we briefly touched upon the roles in a team of trainers and here we would like to explore one approach that can be useful for looking at roles in trainers' teams and in groups of participants – Meredith Belbin's nine team roles.

Creating more balanced teams

Belbin suggests that, by understanding their role within a particular team, an individual can develop their strengths and manage their weaknesses as a team member, and as a result improve how they contribute to the team. At the same time, by having an overview of the different roles that can exist in a team, a person can also adjust their role to what is needed in a given moment or in a particular team. Team leaders and team development practitioners often use the Belbin model in order to create more balanced teams.

Teams can become unbalanced if all team members have similar styles of behaviour or team roles. If team members have similar weaknesses, the team as a whole may tend to have that weakness. If team members are equipped with similar teamwork strengths, they may tend to compete (rather than co-operate) for the team tasks and responsibilities that best suit their natural styles. Knowing this, it helps to make sure that necessary team roles are covered, and that potential behavioural tensions or weaknesses among the team members are addressed. At the same time, the approach can be utilised in groups of learners, to enable conditions for them to develop a healthy and productive group dynamic.

Belbin's team roles are based on observed behaviour and interpersonal styles. You can check which team roles you naturally fulfil, or if you want to profile your team, you can take Belbin's self-perception inventory or team inventory.[165]

While Belbin suggests that people tend to adopt a particular team role, it is important to bear in mind that their behaviour and interpersonal style within a team is to some extent dependent on the situation: it relates not only to their own natural working style, but also to their interrelationships with others, and the work to be done. Therefore, people may behave and interact quite differently in different teams or when the membership

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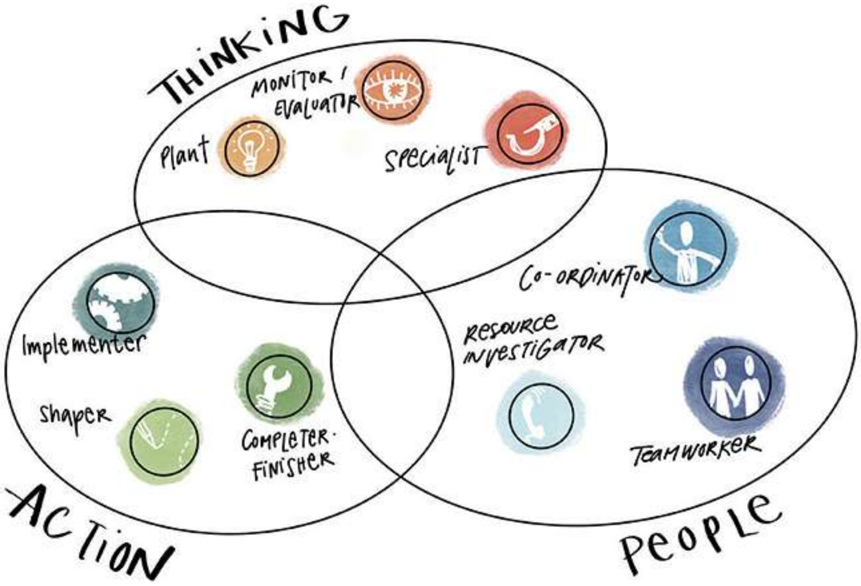
157. ibid.
158. *Berghof handbook for conflict transformation*, available at www.berghof-foundation.org/en/publications/handbook/berghof-handbook-for-conflict-transformation/, accessed 21 August 2020.
159. Fisher et al. (2000).
160. Folger, Poole and Stutman (2008).
161. Nonviolent Communication Books & Resources, available at www.nonviolentcommunication.com/, accessed 21 August 2020.
162. Beyond Intractability, Knowledge Base, available at www.beyondintractability.org/essay, accessed 21 August 2020.
163. Centre for Justice & Reconciliation: https://restorativejustice.org/, accessed 21 August 2020.
164. Boal (2002).
165. See Belbin Team Roles, available at www.belbin.com.

or work of the team changes. It is important to note that there are other approaches in use, some of which complement this model, some of which conflict with it. By all means use this approach as a guide, but not as an absolute truth, and the conclusions drawn should be made with common sense.

Understanding Belbin's team roles model

Belbin identified nine team roles and he categorised them into three groups: Action-oriented, People-oriented and Thought-oriented.



Action-oriented roles

Shaper: challenges the team to improve

Implementer: puts ideas into action

Completer-Finisher: ensures thorough, timely completion

People-oriented roles

Co-ordinator: acts as a chairperson

Team Worker: encourages co-operation

Resource Investigator: explores outside opportunities

Thought-oriented roles

Plant: presents new ideas and approaches

Monitor-Evaluator: analyses the options

Specialist: provides specialised skills

Each team role is associated with typical behavioural and interpersonal strengths. Belbin also defined characteristic weaknesses that tend to accompany each team role. He describes the characteristic weaknesses of team roles as "allowable" weaknesses; as for any behavioural weakness, these are areas to be aware of and potentially improve.

The nine team roles[166]

Action-oriented roles

Shaper (SH)

Shapers are people who challenge the team to improve. They are dynamic and usually extroverted people who enjoy stimulating others, questioning norms and finding the best approaches for solving problems. The

166. ibid.

The shaper is the one who shakes things up to make sure that all possibilities are considered and that the team does not become complacent.

Shapers often see obstacles as exciting challenges and they tend to have the courage to push on when others feel like quitting.

Their potential weaknesses may be that they are argumentative, and that they may offend people's feelings.

Implementer (IMP)

Implementers are the people who get things done. They turn the team's ideas and concepts into practical actions and plans. They are typically conservative, disciplined people who work systematically and efficiently and are very well organised. These are the people who you can count on to get the job done.

On the downside, Implementers may be inflexible and can be somewhat resistant to change.

Completer-Finisher (CF)

Completer-Finishers are the people who see that projects are completed thoroughly. They ensure that there have been no errors or omissions and they pay attention to the smallest of details. They are very concerned with deadlines and will push the team to make sure the job is completed on time. They are described as perfectionists who are orderly, conscientious and anxious.

However, a Completer-Finisher may worry unnecessarily, and may find it hard to delegate.

People-oriented roles

Co-ordinator (CO)

Co-ordinators are the ones who take on the traditional team-leader role and have also been referred to as the chairperson. They guide the team to what they perceive are the objectives. They are often excellent listeners and they are naturally able to recognise the value that each team member brings to the table. They are calm and good-natured, and delegate tasks very effectively.

On the other hand, co-ordinators might manipulate others for their own benefit. Being proficient delegators, they can end up over delegating and not pulling their weight in the team.

Team Worker (TW)

Team Workers are the people who provide support and make sure that people within the team are working together effectively. These people fill the role of negotiators within the team and are flexible, diplomatic and perceptive. They tend to be popular people who are very capable in their own right, but who prioritise team cohesion and helping people get along.

Their weaknesses may be a tendency to be indecisive, and to maintain uncommitted positions during discussions and decision making.

Resource Investigator (RI)

Resource Investigators are innovative and curious. They explore available options, develop contacts, and negotiate for resources on behalf of the team. They are enthusiastic team members, who identify and work with external stakeholders to help the team accomplish its objective. They are outgoing and are often extroverted, meaning that others are often receptive to them and their ideas.

On the downside, they may lose enthusiasm quickly, and are often overly optimistic.

Thought-oriented roles

Plant (PL)

The Plant is the creative innovator who comes up with new ideas and approaches. They thrive on praise but criticism is especially hard for them to deal with. Plants are often introverted and prefer to work apart from the team. Because their ideas are so novel, they can be impractical at times. They may also be poor communicators and can tend to ignore given parameters and constraints.

Monitor-Evaluator (ME)

Monitor-Evaluators are best at analysing and evaluating ideas that other people (often Plants) come up with. These people are shrewd and objective, and they carefully weigh the pros and cons of all the options before coming to a decision.

Monitor-Evaluators are critical thinkers and very strategic in their approach. They are often perceived as detached or unemotional. Sometimes they are poor motivators who react to events rather than instigating them.

Specialist (SP)

Specialists are people who have specialised knowledge that is needed to get the job done. They pride themselves on their skills and abilities, and they work to maintain their professional status. Their job within the team is to be an expert in the area, and they commit themselves fully to their field of expertise.

This may limit their contribution, and lead to a preoccupation with technicalities at the expense of the bigger picture.

Knowledge of Belbin's Team Roles model can help identify potential strengths and weaknesses within a team, help to overcome disagreements and clashes between the team members, as well as to understand and appreciate everyone's contributions. This model can bring more harmony to the team, as team members learn that there are different approaches that are important in different circumstances and that no one approach can be the best at all times. On the other hand, it can help support groups of participants in their work together, in particular when their task is to create, design or produce something. Nevertheless, it is important to remember not to depend too heavily on this idea when structuring a team – this is only one of many factors that are important in getting a team to perform at its best.

Reflection moment

- Have you gained any insights/inspiration from learning about Belbin Team Roles?
- Have you considered which roles and functions are needed in your training team? Which one(s) would be most suitable for you?
- How about your group of participants? How would the theory/roles stated above translate to them?
- How to deal with the dominant "alpha" participants (who want to take over the role of the trainer or simply compete with the trainer and/or other participants)?
- How to give a role to the very experienced participants among the group, versus the new-comers, or those with different abilities? How to make sure everyone is contributing and learning – shy participants vs outspoken ones?

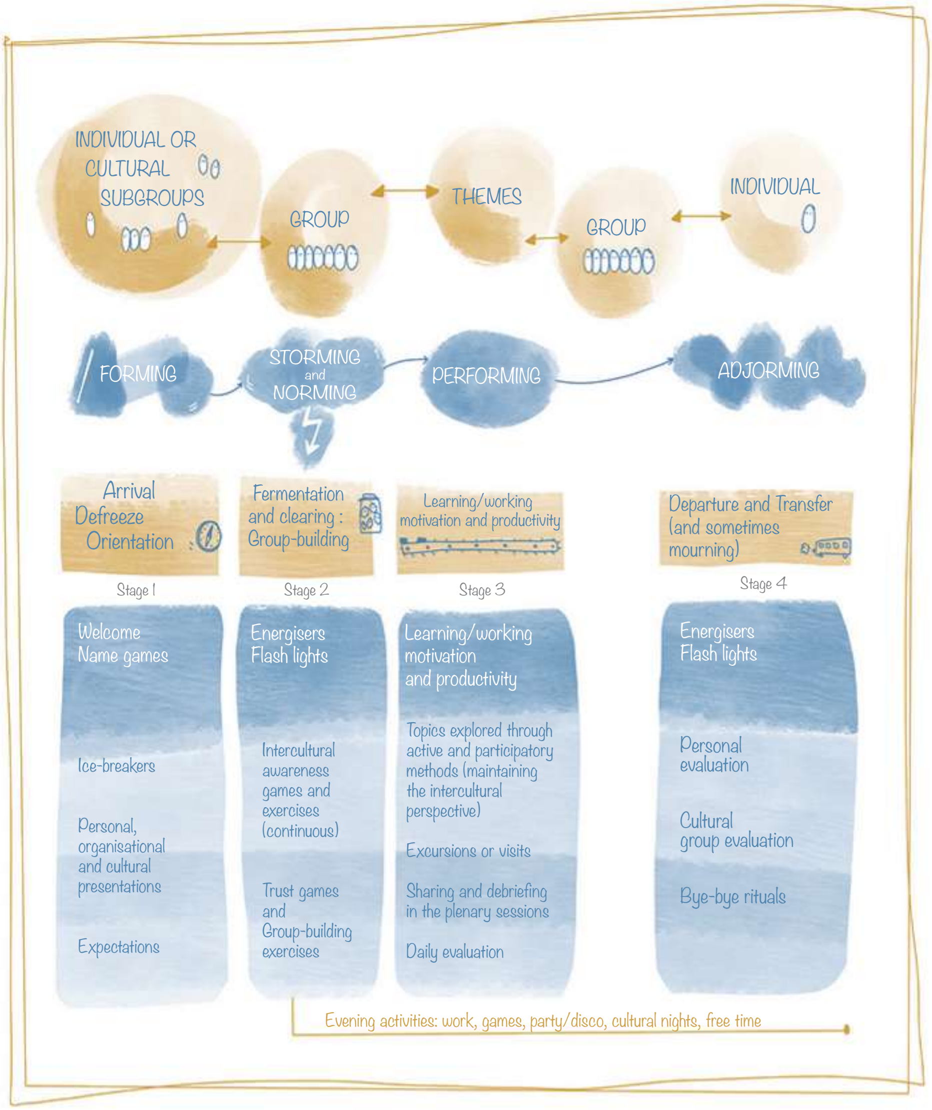
4.3.2. Group dynamics and programme planning

It is a reassuring feeling for the trainer to have a well-planned programme with interesting subjects and methods in the bag – the frame for the training is secure. While the content has been written and agreed upon, it is crucial to design a programme with some general rules of group dynamics in mind, and to consider the methodological strategy in relation to the different stages of group development.

The figure below shows the integration of some basic methodological elements corresponding to the stages of group development and the learning process. While methods and methodology are tackled in Chapter 3, it is worth reiterating that a method is just a tool to trigger a learning opportunity, to reach a certain training goal by creating an environment in which individual participants and groups feel free to experience, reflect, learn and change.

In the upper part of the visual below is the group process, built around Tuckman's (1965) stages of group development. Phases of Storming and Norming are joined as one, on the premise that the programme focus and methods and activities applied in those two phases have the same intention – to bring people out of Storming and allow them to find a common ground on which to build harmonisation. Above the phases is the focus of the group/learning process: it goes from the focus on individual or cultural and/or national subgroups to the focus on the group and its stabilisation. The Performing phase enables the focus to shift to the themes, the content and topics of the training, since the group is not so busy with itself anymore. Moving to Adjourning, the group is back on the focus facing the near end of the learning process and then slowly fading towards the individual. A similar process is captured right below the group phases, but this time with descriptions of concrete focus of both the group and each individual. Individual focus follows the stages of Kolb's (1973) experiential learning cycle, spread through the training course. The visual highlights methods and activities that are suitable for the different stages. Of course, this is just general guidance that needs to be adjusted to the particular group and the particular learning process.

Group/learning process, group development and the choice of methods



How to handle Adjourning

Not only the "forming", but also the "unforming" of a group has to be considered in your methodological planning. This is even truer if the training experience has been very intense or personal for the group. Participants need help to let go, to say goodbye and to turn towards their lives back home. While it might be painful to say goodbye, it is sometimes even more painful to arrive home without having closed an intense, emotional chapter of training and personal development. We consider rituals like the ones described below very useful to help the group "become individuals" once again, individuals who have to go home and might be full of emotions by the end of the training activity. It is important to note that, although arguably simple to implement, the rituals require some preparation (especially if team members are supposed to say something about any particular participant) and the full focus of everyone involved. It is important that people leave the circle and the whole process feeling special and ready to let go.

Bye-bye rituals

- *You will do it!*
  The group stands in a circle, and everyone has their arms on the shoulders of their neighbours. Each participant who wants to express a wish or to speak about a personal goal (perhaps even unrelated to the training) for the future, speaks and is supported by a collective "You will do it!". This continues as long as people want it to.

- *You've earned it because…*
  In the event that participants receive a certificate after the training, it is satisfying when they all stand together in a big circle to distribute them. One of the trainers starts by randomly selecting a certificate, and when presenting it to the participant the trainer speaks briefly about why that person has earned it, what they have contributed, and so forth. This person then randomly selects a certificate and carries on the process.
- *Thank you…*
  Through a guided process, participants go through the training activity once again, recalling important moments and changes that have been happening to them. The trainer then brings their attention to understanding that their experience would not be the same without all the individuals in the group. With their contributions, good or bad, they have all made this experience unique and enabled the learning and changes to happen. Participants then silently look around the circle, trying to understand the role of each individual in this process. And then, the trainer asks participants to stand up and to go to each individual in the group who had a role on their personal journey. They are only "allowed" to say "thank you", while the non-verbal expression is up to them.
- *Saying goodbye…*
  As the final act, participants stand in a circle, in a place where they can see the training venue, facing each other. The trainer tells them that this is the very last time that the group is all together. No matter what happens next in their lives, they will never be able to be all together again. Participants can share last messages they have for each other and then, when there is nothing more to be shared, the trainer tells them to take one last look at the group and then turn around, now facing the venue. They should spend time saying goodbye to the training venue and deciding what they would like to take with them and what they would prefer to leave behind. And when they are ready, each participant in their own time leaves the circle.

Reflection moment:

- To what extent have you considered the group process in your most recent programme planning?
- Do you think it is useful to put an excursion or visit in the middle of a training course?
- Have you left sufficient time for special interests or programme suggestions of participants?
- To what extent have you focused on the Adjourning process?

4.3.3. Responsibilities during training

Responsibilities of the team of trainers

The trainers have responsibilities in relation to different actors involved in the entire preparation and training process (that also depends on the training context, organisation, institution, etc.), and of course, trainers are not alone, functioning in a vacuum. Hence, in the following section there are some important facts and details a trainer in a youth activity may want to consider.

Usually, the trainers are responsible to the organisations involved in the preparation process and in sending their members. Furthermore, they have a responsibility to the funders. Whereas the accommodation and training facilities are most often chosen by the organisers, the trainers are responsible for an inclusive training environment, making sure that the setting is available for participants with different types of abilities for (within limits) participants' mental and physical health, as well as their well-being.

The trainers are the ones who decide on methodology (in our context: non-formal education, which might be already determined by the organisers) and methods, as well as materials and tools chosen during the residential/online learning experience, making sure that the chosen methodology, tools and instruments are fully adapted to the needs and abilities of the participants. Moreover, the trainers are in charge of the training – the subject of this T-Kit – for large elements of the content, facilitation of the process and sometimes as well for various organisational aspects.

Trainers are definitely responsible for themselves ("walk your talk") and their trainer colleagues.

In addition, organisers and trainers have to take special care of minor participants: hence, it is useful to be covered by appropriate insurance and to be informed about the host country's laws on minors, concerning responsibilities during youth events.

Responsibilities towards participants

- It is important to demystify your role as a trainer. Unless the group understands your role, they may view you as an authority figure and may not see that they have to take responsibility for their own learning process. Keep reflecting back to the group the need to take responsibility for their learning.
- Remember that you cannot expect your own emotional needs to be fulfilled while working as a facilitator. Do not be tempted to use the power delegated to you by the participants to meet your own needs, such as asking for attention or respect, or making friends.
- Being a facilitator does not mean that you are qualified to be a psychotherapist, either at a group or individual level. Take care when participants reach out to you, either directly or indirectly, with their emotional needs.
- It is essential that the group understands what you are doing with them: what your goals are, how you expect to meet their needs, what you can and cannot give them, and how you are going to do it. It is the group's right to hold you accountable for what you do with them.

Adapted from Auvine et al. (1979).

Participation and responsibilities of the participants

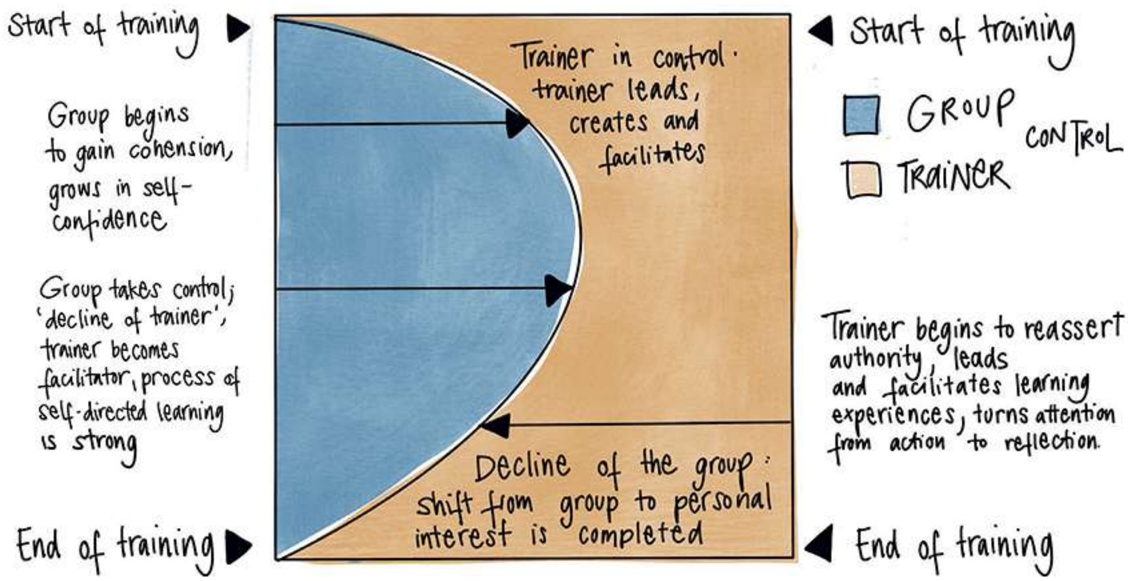
As we have seen, an explicit goal of training in the youth field is to facilitate the empowerment of participants. Besides the resources trainers bring to their work, empowerment can be supported from the very beginning by including participants in the training process.

This means that from the start the training power is shared with regard to the content, although this power balance can shift during the training. If a team makes a serious commitment to work in this way, power and the issues raised by it need to be made visible and discussed in the initial stages, and modes of decision making need to be thought through. Power is not a dirty word; it results from the range of cultural, structural and organisational positioning that training involves. The more trainers and participants unmask power and openly discuss how it works, the more they will be able to channel it into empowering the group. Of course, sharing control of the training process also means shared responsibilities. The nature and scope of these responsibilities need to be carefully worked out.

There are many different ways of including participants in a training course (see also section 3.5.3, Focusing the programme on the participants), including the following.

- Participating in the programme orientation can be achieved to some extent by asking about expectations and group resources and having participants set their own learning objectives.
- Daily evaluation groups or other feedback possibilities allow the expression of opinions and feelings about the training. The team should be clear about how it uses the feedback it receives.
- Responsibility and ownership of the training course may be shared by creating subgroups or committees who are in charge of different aspects of the training:
  - daily evaluation or reflection groups (with or without the trainers) that reflect upon the previous day or training sessions, and perhaps make further programme suggestions;
  - programme planning methods or decision-making initiatives which involve the group in substantive decisions concerning the programme;
  - small groups of participants delivering sessions or parts of the sessions, which correspond to their field of interest and/or expertise;
  - sessions prepared and facilitated by participants, in which they put their learning into practice (particularly common during training for trainers or facilitators or multipliers);
  - a social committee responsible for different cultural and social activities;
  - a report committee responsible for the daily training report (this does not mean that this committee should write everything, but it can be responsible for co-ordination and delegation);
  - a social media committee (shares pictures, important content and questions online);
  - a wellness or sports committee taking care of the physical well-being of the group.

The figure below shows the development and interaction between the team, being in control, or rather, being more present in facilitating and leading the group in addition to the learning process while participants themselves are leading the way. Once again, it reflects different phases of group development and envisages stronger involvement from the team at the beginning and end of the training process. Of course, responsibilities and co-responsibilities of the team and participants will also depend on the profile of participants and their level of independence as learners, as well as their cohesion as a group.



Adapted from Pretty (1995).

4.3.4. Group/team interaction and decision making

One of the more empowering aims of training is peer education; sharing responsibility for the training process and content to allow the knowledge, experience and interests of participants to develop as common resources. Often this is done by leaving some free space in the programme to be filled by the participants' stated needs and suggestions. But how is this space filled and how are these decisions taken? In general, this process helps the participants to gain ownership of the programme/training and often it leads to empowerment.

Empowerment does not just mean that participants gain from different learning experiences and new forms of knowledge, but also that they learn from active participation in decision making. Group decision making is a complex and at times infuriating process; trainers need to consider the way they – or the group – want decisions to be taken, and even what constitutes a decision.

Decisions, decisions…

- **Majority decision making**

  A vote is taken and the majority determines the decision – a normally efficient approach, and one we have been thoroughly socialised to accept. That said, there may be hidden subgroup votes (gender, culture, social or educational status), and in a group that has engaged in teamwork and participative processes a straight vote may be insensitive. The majority has to consider how to incorporate the needs of the minority, or run the risk of people opting out or becoming disappointed.

- **Consensus (or collective) decision making**

  This method is based on an agreement to reach an agreement, supported by the group as a whole on all decisions. It is highly participatory, drawing on the collective wisdom of the group and encouraging each group member to take responsibility for all decisions made. It can be a painstaking process, but with practice groups find their own rhythm. The pressure to reach consensus can cause some participants to compromise because of fearing to hold up the entire group, and it can also provide ample space for "mismatchers" who want to block decision making altogether.

- **Individual decision making**

  One person decides on behalf of the whole group. This style is acceptable for emergency decisions and certain routine ones, otherwise it is detrimental to the development of participation and responsibility-sharing in the group. It may give the team insights into emerging leadership roles.

- **Subgroup decision making**

  Decisions are made in subgroups by key people designated to do so (using majority or collective decision making). This can be helpful for specific tasks or areas of responsibility within the training as a whole.

Reflection moment

- How would you decide on group rules (programme elements or changes, task division among subgroups, special tasks for participants) in a training context?
- Which decisions can the team take without involving participants?
- What is the advantage of having open, transparent decision-making processes with a group of training participants?
- How do you take decisions within the trainers' team?
- Which decision-making process (from the ones mentioned above) is most familiar to you or has been mostly practised in the training activities you have taken part in? Why?

Relationships with participants

Good training courses are different from good movies; they can do without the love interest. The question of relationships (of any kind) between trainers and participants is an important professional consideration that not all trainers regard or handle in the same way. This is a crucial issue that goes hand in hand with trainers' ethics and power structures. In some youth organisations, this comes across as a real taboo. But how do we deal with love and relationships at the time of training?

To make the context a little bit wider: what do professional roles like teachers, psychologists, psychotherapists and trainers have in common? One important aspect is that they all involve entering structured relationships with people who are to some extent dependent on them because of different levels of knowledge and status. Crucially, power is ever-present in these relationships, from the institutional power of the teacher–student relationship, to the power of need fulfilment and interpretation that exists between psychologist and client.

Trainers, despite or perhaps even because of the participative framework in which they work, also inhabit complex relationships of power and dependence with their participants. On top of this, a professional view of limits in trainer–participant relationships also involves some obvious reasons concerning the quality of the training offered. Given that trainers are responsible for the training process and all participants, as a result, their attention and "love" should be given to everybody, not just to one person, or a few, without mentioning the impact on group dynamics.

However, in the field of youth training, which is small to the point of being a niche, and where trainers are very likely to have a person from their organisation, or a colleague, a friend, or even an ex or present lover or partner participating in the training, the lines of what is right and what is wrong are not so clear. Trainers should be aware of the impact that their relationship can have on a particular individual and the group as a whole and at the same time rely on their common sense when deciding whether and how to act. Falling in love, making friendships or creating new work partnerships is not something that anyone can fully control and being asked to do otherwise is quite unrealistic, especially when working with adults. In fact, if you were to look around the field of youth training you would find that many relationships, friendships and partnerships, besides having the word "ship" in them, have another thing in common – they have been born during a training activity.

That said, we are not trying to promote favouritism and singling out certain participants and establishing connections with them. What we are saying is that we should acknowledge the reality of these connections happening over and over again and the need to understand how to treat them with dignity, not to hurt or harm any one individual, the group or the learning process. One of the answers could be in staying true to oneself and one's values (which are hopefully in line with the values promoted by non-formal education) as well as "walking the talk" or practising what you preach. Meaning: putting the individual, the group and the learning process above personal interests and making sure that the power that comes with the trainer's role is not abused in any way. This might complicate one's life a little or a lot, but in a training context, a trainer is primarily responsible for those three components and should make sure to fulfil the role to the best of their abilities. And if, at the same time, a trainer manages to make some new friends, find reliable project partners or fall in love, well… such is life! And as life hopefully does not end with the training, the trainer can always acknowledge the connection and/or attraction and agree to meet that special someone (potential friend, lover or work partner) after the training in order to see if there really is a potential future connection.

Reflection moment

- What is the possible impact of a trainer giving a lot of attention to one participant (e.g. a good friend, the person from their own organisation, someone they feel attracted to)?
- How does this behaviour influence group dynamics? Or the training context?
- To what extent does this make a participant, the trainer (or even the trainers' team) vulnerable?
- Should trainers be allowed to make personal connections during the training?
- Could a trainer make personal connections and still maintain the needed level of professionalism?
- What are your personal limits in this regard?
- What do you think about it? Is there a right or wrong?

4.4. ADAPTING AND RUNNING THE PROGRAMME

Quality non-formal education training aims at actively involving participants during the course. Ways of achieving this should be prepared in advance, and a flexible programme is a necessity.

Participants' involvement should ideally be a pre-, during, and post-training process. In order to guarantee participants' ownership of the course and a satisfying learning experience, they have to be able to address their expectations, learning needs and objectives, even programme suggestions, and all these should or could be up for negotiation.

Very often these processes start online, or are dealt with online, prior to a residential training course.

Adaptation is not a question of consumer preferences; it involves scheduling ways of facilitating participant input into the learning process. While there are a number of possible approaches open to pursuit, we begin here by considering the value and use of expectations and feedback, crucial elements in non-formal education training settings.

4.4.1. Expectations

It is very common at the beginning of an event to ask participants to express their expectations of the course. (Keep in mind though that sometimes expectations might also change throughout a training course as it proceeds; a bit like in a restaurant when, depending on the experience of eating the entrée, you may wish to have a different dish for your main course.) This may be covered in the application form, in an online pre-course module or as a group-sharing activity, creating common ground at the beginning of a residential training.

Routine questions include:

- What is your motivation (personal/organisational) to take part in this training?
- What are your expectations and learning needs in regard to this course?
- What would you like to take back home from this training? What would you like to learn/experience? Which competences would you like to develop?
- What is your personal contribution to this course/learning experience/the group? What are you prepared to share and to give?

Prep teams should be able to welcome these expectations, to discuss them with the participants and among themselves, and to consider them as an input in the overall programme. The challenge is to integrate them meaningfully, as gathering expectations or learning needs/objectives[167] and leaving them unaddressed is a dangerous token gesture. Should you ever run an open agenda training course, be aware that the expectations are the key to designing the actual programme.

167. Kloosterman, Ratt-Nielson and Markovic (2016).

Great expectations?

Here are two ways of gathering expectations and learning objectives at the start of a course.

- *Small group*: After introducing the aims and objectives, ask participants to express their expectations and personal learning objectives of the course. It is important to make the link with the aims and objectives of the training because this is what participants are going to live, play and share during the course.

  Select pertinent questions and gather the results. Different colour sticky notes for different questions are a favourite, but feel free to innovate. After an appropriate time, expectations are shared in plenary, including those of the planning team. Following this, a group discussion should concentrate on highlighting expectations that are in line with the course content, those which are not strictly in line, but could be integrated, and expectations that the course, in all its flexibility, is unlikely to be able to deliver. The results of this discussion can constitute a working agreement, sometimes called a "training contract". This agreement links the central aims and objectives which need to be fulfilled with a mutual consideration of the participants' expectations. It can be referred back to during the course, and be used as a basis for feedback.
- *Large group*: The second example uses a two-step approach to deal with a large number of participants. After having asked the group to express their expectations a subgroup composed of some trainers and some participants is formed. They work on gathering and grouping similar expectations, and present the results in plenary. Participants should be available to answer questions or to clarify their expectations and learning objectives while this group is working. Then the discussion proceeds as in the previous case, working towards the same result.

Whatever method you choose, the phase of taking participants' expectations into account is very delicate. We said that it occurs at the beginning of the course when the relationship between trainers and trainees is being fostered, which implies that the team must pay attention not to come across as the exclusive owners of the course who welcome and deal with the participants' ideas just as a favour.

Even when participants express expectations that the course can clearly not satisfy, clarifying that this is the case should be handled with care. These expectations are rarely outrageous, and the expectation can be put aside without invalidating it as a learning objective in itself or making a participant feel that their needs may be marginal.

Treated in this way, expectations can act as a basis for evaluation during implementation. If they are considered as the result of an agreement, the team and participants should be able to recall them at each stage or phase of the course. During the course of a session, reference could be made to how proceedings relate to certain expectations, but attention should be paid to not create false links or stretch associations.

4.4.2. Facilitator, facilitation and facilitation competences – online and offline

What is a facilitator?

The concept of the facilitator was also touched upon in section 1.2 when clarifying the roles of the trainer; here we will go further into depth.

The Cambridge Dictionary explains the word facilitator as "someone who helps a person or organization do something more easily or find the answer to a problem, by discussing things and suggesting ways of doing things".[168]

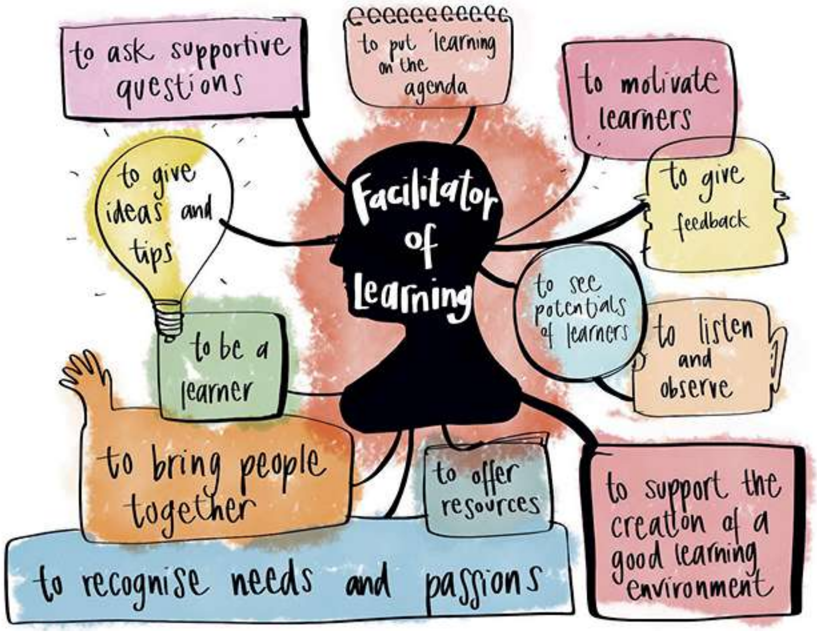
Participants of the TC Facilitators of the Council of Europe Youth Department defined a facilitator as follows:

> A leader of processes, a provider of tools and techniques that can get the work accomplished quickly and effectively in a group environment. A facilitator assists participants to bring out the full potential of every individual and the entire group.[169]

168. www.dictionary.cambridge.org, accessed 21 August 2020.
169. *Manual for facilitators in non-formal education* (2009), p. 37, available at https://rm.coe.int/16807023d1, accessed 21 August 2020.

The *Handbook for facilitators*[170] points out that the word originates from *faciliter* and Italian *facilitare,* where *facile* means *easy.* Therefore, the facilitator makes things easier. It is true that the facilitator leads the process, so that for the individual and the group it is easier to follow, to reflect and process their own learning, as well as the collective learning. A key role of the facilitator is, furthermore, to support the learner to plan and organise the learning and take responsibility for that process.

In addition, the *Handbook for facilitators,* which focuses on learning to learn (L2L), gives the following overview when it comes to the qualities of a facilitator for learning and for creating a fruitful learning environment.



Without wanting to give the impression that one has to be a super-person to be a competent facilitator or trainer, the qualities listed above may be quite complex at times. Plus, those qualities are embedded in the awareness and context of lifelong learning, trusting that learners know their own needs best and that there is authentic willingness and flexibility by the facilitator to support learners on their way.

In the *Manual for facilitators* , participants of the Training Courses for Facilitators state in detail what a facilitator is and is not. If you are interested to learn more about this, please refer to the manual, pages 37-8.[171]

Reflection moment

- What is a facilitator for you?
- Do you have a specific definition for it? Or a personal preference?
- How would you describe yourself as a facilitator?
- Has your role and definition or values and musts in this regard changed over the years?

Facilitation

Facilitation is, most of all, a service to others.

The function of facilitation is to keep a meeting or a training event focused and moving, and to ensure maximum opportunities for participation. The facilitator is the keeper of the task and does not influence the content or product of the group. Facilitation creates a dynamic, personalised process that empowers and challenges individuals and groups to engage in significant learning.

170. Taylor and Kloosterman (2012).
171. *Manual for facilitators in non-formal education* (2009), available at https://rm.coe.int/16807023d1, accessed 21 August 2020.

In *Compass*[172] (Chapter 1.3.2.), facilitation is understood as:

"Be[ing] prepared to hand over the responsibility for their learning to the learners."

Hence, the facilitator needs to protect the process of those being facilitated. The process can be any task the group of participants is trying to accomplish. The facilitator pays attention to how the group works (in terms of "process"); they may also act as a resource, intervening to help the group stay focused and/or build cohesiveness, while offering a set of techniques, knowledge and experience.

Encouraging participation

> *Freedom is not sitting on the top of a tree, freedom is not the flight of a bluebottle, freedom is participating.*
> ***Giorgio Gaber, Italian singer-songwriter***

In these discussions of different training methods and styles, it is worth bearing in mind that all of the choices we make are then mediated by our personalities bringing them alive in training. In all of these facilitation practices, encouraging participation is a fundamental requirement. There is no formula for this; it is a matter of the attitudes conveyed, body language displayed and the degree of naturalness we can attain. Encouraging participation is a matter of creating a comfortable space for participants to inhabit, catering for different types of abilities and needs of the group.

Without resorting to circus tricks or meaningless stunts, finding an appropriate and interesting way of introducing a new subject can arouse curiosity and motivation for a new session. The only limit to finding a way into a subject is your own fantasy, and a few methodological criteria. An introduction should:

- prepare people for the new subject, possibly on an emotional as well as intellectual level;
- give orientation for what is to follow, without going into details or pre-guessing the results to be reached;
- be timed appropriately – suggested maximum is 30 minutes, depending on the importance and complexity of the training session or topic;
- activate and motivate.

Chairing plenary sessions

Plenary sessions are important and may be exhausting:

Important	▸ for briefing and debriefing time ▸ for sharing organisational information about the training programme ▸ for sharing results with the whole group ▸ for the participants to experience themselves as a group
Exhausting	▸ because of minimal participation ▸ because concentration and discipline is required to work through interpretation, the big circle, bad air...

This means that the facilitator has to foster a balance between individual and group needs and the training process. The person in charge has to be aware of the communicative position, group energy and the length of the plenary session. Working in a team makes life easier for everybody by allowing a rotating chairperson, including participants if it is in context. It is also possible to work as a chairing team: one facilitator responsible for content and another for the discussion process. This co-facilitation is helpful in the event of conflict between the content facilitator and a participant; the process facilitator can lead the problem solving and is focused on the build-up.

A few "don'ts" that every chairperson and facilitator should try to avoid:

- not being sufficiently prepared, and asking the wrong questions during debriefing;
- concentrating too much on the personal feelings of participants;
- patronising participants;
- using jargon;

172. *Compass: manual for human rights education with young people*, available at www.coe.int/en/web/compass, accessed 21 August 2020.

- interpreting points to further their own agenda, dictating the agenda;
- entering into a dialogue with only one person, favouring certain speakers above others;
- continually giving mini-lectures, or generally talking too much;
- not listening, and talking too much;
- not watching the time and energy levels;
- making an inaccurate summary or none at all.

How to chair a lively discussion!

It is always great when chairing a plenary feels less like being a dentist; nevertheless, sometimes discussions can become too spirited and fast when many people want to talk at the same time (and the interpretation is collapsing).

In that scenario it is useful to introduce a speaking procedure or ritual:

The Talking Stick: originally used by Native Americans, the stick allows the holder, and only the holder, to speak. It is passed from speaker to speaker.

The Flying Microphone: a little ball with a coloured tail can be used instead of the Talking Stick. The main advantage is that it can be thrown from place to place, with fewer consequences than if you do that with the stick.

Speakers' List: can be useful to have a colleague help you by taking notes of who wants to speak. It makes particular sense when there is a constant flow of speakers, but if possible limit it to five at any one time to avoid a disjointed discussion.

Any of these methods allow you to apply a speaking limit, if necessary.

Please refer to the *Manual for facilitators*[173] when it comes to facilitation challenges, such as difficult participants/behaviour, how to deal with dominant participants, with negativity or non-motivated learners (p. 39). Furthermore, you can also find in the *Manual for facilitators* an in-depth description of techniques for successful facilitation, ranging from paraphrasing, gathering ideas, drawing people out, mirroring, encouraging, creating space, stacking, tracking, balancing, intentional silence to listening for common ground (pp. 40-41).

Facilitation of online learning

Facilitation of asynchronous and/or self-paced courses

Often when learners join asynchronous online courses or online parts of blended courses, they do not immediately spot the facilitators or recognise their role (unless it is clearly written next to their name). This is because the role and approach to facilitation is quite different from residential settings. Sure, the aim of facilitation remains the same: "to make it easier for learners to go through the process of learning and self-discovery", however the way of doing so can differ quite significantly.

When online learning happens (at least partly) in an asynchronous and even self-paced way, there are not so many opportunities for trainers to engage with the learners directly and facilitate their interaction. In addition, their main tool to facilitate interaction and engagement is writing or posting multimedia content. However, this does not mean that facilitation is not an essential part of online learning. It just means that it requires a different approach to what we are used to in residential settings. Besides direct facilitation, this includes facilitation in a wider sense, such as setting the learning environment that enables and supports learning. Below are some of the things that contribute to the facilitation of online learning:

- **A careful set-up.** Whether it is done by the tech support or a facilitator, it is important to pay attention to the learning environment – how things are presented and organised, and how they look visually. As a reminder, they should be as intuitive and user-friendly as possible, so that learners can focus on the reason why they are there – to learn.

173. *Manual for facilitators in non-formal education* (2009), available at https://rm.coe.int/16807023d1, accessed 21 August 2020.

- **Easing learners' existence in the online environment**. It is important to make sure that learners feel comfortable in their learning environment. Therefore, there needs to be some guidance on how to use and orientate them to the chosen learning platform, and be ready to answer their questions and support them with any technical issues (or call in the modern-day saviours – tech support!)
- **Being present**. It is sometimes enough to just stay in the background, unless there is a clear call for assistance. Nonetheless, the facilitator's presence makes learners feel that they are supported and not alone on their journey. By sending regular announcements to the learners, writing discussion posts, etc. you make yourself more available.
- **Visible and predictable rhythms of communication.**[174] Speaking of announcements, having regular and scheduled communication with learners in a similar format or pattern highlights the facilitator's presence and engages learners.
- **Instructions and messages**. We have mentioned above that writing or text-based communication is one of the key elements of elaborating content and engaging learners. This communication needs to be concise and clear, with as little clarification needed as possible, since learners are not very likely to ask clarification questions online.
- **Questions**. Questions are another essential tool in online learning as support to theoretical or conceptual input or for stimulating discussion among learners. Facilitators should choose their questions carefully (do not overdo it in numbers) and, once again, make sure they are formulated clearly and in an inviting manner.
- **Discussions**. In the absence of live online sessions, discussions or forums are the space where facilitators have the best chance to engage with their learners. Even when learners' posts seem to be clear and there are no clarifications needed, it is quite important to respond, give feedback and encourage learners to express themselves and engage further. This sends a message that learners' posts are acknowledged and their efforts in making an input is appreciated. And whenever possible, try to summarise discussions every now and then.
- **Be prepared to adapt**. Although the majority of the online content is often set up in advance, facilitators should be prepared to change it, based on participants' responses, especially in smaller/blended courses.

Facilitation of synchronous courses

Facilitation of online synchronous, facilitated courses is much closer to the reality of residential training activities. Therefore, facilitators have a very similar role to the one when engaging with learners face to face. Of course, online learning environments bring certain specificities, so a facilitator might need to adjust their role and approach to ensure that the process is learner centred and consistent with other non-formal education activities. Taking care of the online learning process, the facilitator decides how to split their tasks of: carrying out activities, facilitating dialogue and focusing on the dynamics and energy of the session. Together with a possible rapporteur, they observe the group dynamics, body language and catch any clues of tiredness or discomfort. The facilitator moderates the participation of the learners instead of taking the main spot.

The participation and engagement of the participants in this setting is the key concern. In order for this to be secured there are several scenarios to bear in mind:[175]

(1) **Engage the participants as frequently as possible and in different ways**

Varied methods and making sure there is enough space for participants to talk are the key adjustments which need proper planning. If there are specific inputs or expertise to be provided, they can be broken down into several segments and presented through different media (video, interview, visual presentation, etc.). Asking open questions to participants and making sure everyone gets the space to speak is very important in keeping up the engagement and not losing participants throughout the process.

(2) **Manage the energy**

It is very important to make sure that the online sessions are not too long, hence, keeping them in the time frame of a regular session or even shorter would make it work. Small energisers to encourage movement are also highly recommended. Moreover, if it is a process which is ongoing for several days, make sure that there is time for participants to disconnect from the meeting in order to read/reflect on the content which was shared during the day.

174. *Facilitating online learning: tip and suggestions*, Science in Education, available at scienceonline.terc.edu/facilitating_online_learning.html, accessed 21 August 2020.

175. Inspired by the "Quality standards in education and training activities of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe", available at https://rm.coe.int/ddcp-yd-etd-2016-202-quality-standards-yd-et-activities/16807c8bb9, accessed 21 August 2020.

(3) **Track the participation and confirm to participants that "you see them"**
Acknowledging someone's presence online is the difference between a meeting and a video. Therefore it would be good to have regular "slots" to check if everything is clear, use smaller quizzes or simply acknowledge what is happening (people have finished their task, someone wants to talk, someone left and came back, etc.).

(4) **Utilise the potential of different-sized groups**
Online meetings are usually not as long as the residential sessions and, in fact, they should not be. Therefore, facilitators should make sure that learners try to stay focused on the discussion in the whole group as much as possible, using tools like the chat or boards which are visible and available on the same platform. On the other hand, small groups enable more connection as well as intimacy and are a good vehicle for positive group dynamics. That said, splitting up into groups should only be done when there is enough time for it, with clear instructions on what to accomplish and how to report back.

(5) **Take into account the technical limitations which might prevent participants taking part**
Check with participants beforehand if the technical requirements for the online sessions can be met (for example: available internet connection, computer with an adequate browser, possibility to download additional software if needed, etc.). As a general recommendation – avoiding the use of platforms that require additional software will make sure that the activity is more accessible. If the participants are splitting up into groups, the organisers should take care of providing specific meeting rooms, etc.

And, to conclude, one more aspect that needs to be mentioned in relation to online learning is the digital competence of both facilitators and learners. We have elaborated on the digital competences of trainers in section 1.2.2, Trainers' competences. As for the learners, the fact that people are becoming more and more digital in their everyday lives does not mean that they are fully equipped for engaging in learning online. Extensive usage of digital tools does not guarantee that learners will be fully comfortable online and this is one of the things that should be considered. To get more information about digital competences, it might be worth checking the Digital Competence Framework for Citizens.[176]

4.4.3. Debriefing

At the end of any activity comes one of the most important tasks for a trainer – the debriefing. Without this the session is incomplete and its results confused and possibly prejudiced. Debriefing is the moment where trainers analyse an experience with participants in order to focus on and compound what they have learned from it. It is a moment to take a step back, review the objectives for the activity and spend time drawing ideas, conclusions and questions from the experiential component. In short, it is like taking someone by the hand and guiding the person through the experience, stopping to collect what has been learned.

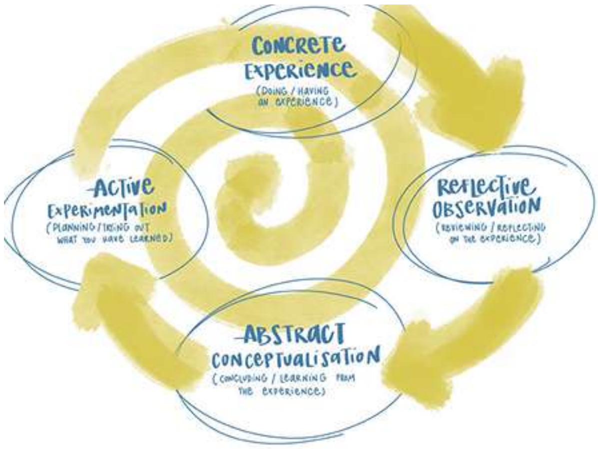
Many youth activities take place in which valuable exercises are run but they lack debriefing (because of a lack of time, preparation, knowledge and experience of preparatory team members). In an experiential learning context the debriefing is indispensable! Without it participants might not learn anything (or profit a lot less from the exercise than they actually could).

Debriefing is an essential element of training and it is necessary for facilitators to know its structure and principles. After every educational exercise a facilitator needs to organise participants to discuss the experience that they have just undergone at each stage of the exercise.

This process of debriefing after an educational exercise in non-formal education training follows the different steps of the experiential learning cycle by David Kolb (which was already mentioned in section 3.2.6 in relation to different learning preferences).

Participants in non-formal education training courses go through a concrete practical experience (for example a simulation exercise from the *Compass* manual or similar), then they sit together with their peers (for an intense exercise it might be best to start with individual reflection, then in pairs or buzz groups prior to getting together with the entire group) and the trainer does a debriefing in order to reflect on their observations, their feelings and the process. From there they move on to the phase of abstract conceptualisation, thereby concluding their learning. As a result they move on to active experimentation, thinking about what to do with what they have learned, how to link it to their realities, what to do in practice to change similar dilemmas/experiences… and then the circle continues… with the next concrete experience… which participants will perceive and go through differently because they will build on what they have learned.

176. DigCome EU Science Hub, available at https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/digcomp, accessed 21 August 2020.



If you do not do a debriefing, do not expect the participants to extract much learning from what they have just experienced (*Manual for facilitators*, pp. 59-62).

Objectives for debriefing

- To share the experience in order to decrease the frustration; to express verbally some of the emotions and feelings that participants have had; to identify feelings
- To reflect upon the activity; to allow time for personal/group reflections; to share opinions
- To enable participants to discover themselves; to air different points of view
- To conceptualise what has happened; to bring the ideas down from the "air" to the "ground"
- To introduce new elements; to see the interrelation; to answer the questions; to create new ones with a new dimension; to gain new knowledge; to find ways to transfer the knowledge to real-life situations; to share different perceptions and approaches
- To see how to apply the learning; to develop empathy and flexibility; to describe the objectives of the activity; to help participants become aware of the aim of the exercise; to check if the aim has been met; to evaluate the process; to analyse how the learning process is going; to try to show the objective of the activity (ibid., p. 60)

The following set of questions gives a short overview of the points which any debriefing should cover (following the experiential learning cycle).

- **Emotions/feelings:** how do you feel? What makes you feel like this?
- **Process (patterns/action taken during the activity):** what happened? Why did it happen? Was it difficult/easy to… ? What was the best/worst about it?
- **Links to reality (broader links and conceptualisations):** what does it remind you of with regard to "real life"? Can you give examples of similar situations? How does it relate to your organisation? Your community? Everyday life?
- **Learning:** what did you discover about yourself? What have you learned from this activity? How can you use this experience in life or in your work with young people?

These questions can be seen as a rough guideline, referring to the various steps of a debriefing. Nevertheless, one always adapts the questions to each exercise and prepares a set of questions for each step (feelings, process, patterns, links to reality, learning).

This is a basic debriefing structure, which gives you a framework as a trainer to build up your debriefing questions. Please, keep in mind, there is no magic debriefing formula that fits all context and activities. Different activities need different kinds of debriefing, depending on:

- the type and level of participation and involvement;
- the objectives of the session;
- the link between the exercise and the other sessions in the training.

In general, you are moving from CONCRETE to ABSTRACT and from ACTIVE to REFLECTIVE.

If there is a magic debriefing rule, it is to always refer to concrete instances of what happened when making a point, particularly in summation or in making links to abstract or theoretical material. Debriefing loses its meaning if it is exaggerated; a two-minute energiser hardly needs a 30-minute debrief. On the other hand, an intense simulation activity (for example from *Compass*) may easily require a 50-minute debriefing session.

Many educational materials provide the facilitator with a set of debriefing questions for each activity. Bear in mind that a debriefing is always a flexible process, depending on the group, their feelings, interventions and experiences. This can be a tough and unpredictable task for the facilitator; hence, it is important to prepare debriefings very well, and yet still be flexible. Make sure that as a facilitator you always have sets of extra questions prepared and are able to handle emotional participants, conflicts of opinions, and so forth. To be on the safe side, it is a good idea to always have a second trainer colleague present (who has also witnessed the activity and the entire process), as a sort of back-up (to throw in additional useful questions and suggestions on how to proceed), if needed.

And if by any chance as a trainer you get lost in the many pathways of debriefing, it can help just to check in your head "where am I now in the series of WHATs?"

- What? (happened? did we experience?)
- So what? (why is that important?)
- Now what (what are we going to do with it?)

A major part of non-formal education, learning and sharing derives from good and well-led debriefings. So make them your priority or special discipline and keep on preparing, as well as improving them! Enjoy the learning by doing. :)

Reflection moment

For which activities do you usually plan a debriefing?

Which questions do you ask? Why?

How could your debriefings be improved (considering the input above)?

4.4.4. Time management

It is not too little time that is our problem, but the time we do not use properly. ***Seneca***

If there is no time then you have time for everything. You are never in a hurry. That is true freedom. ***Native American saying***

These sayings come from two different cultural and temporal contexts, but remind us that the apparently simple concept of time can be the basis for a wild "culture clash" in training or in a team. (See also *T-Kit 1 – Organisational management*[177] for a similar discussion and look at "thieves of time", p. 29.) The Native American view focuses more on the spiritual – time as a process, while Seneca underlines a task- and goal-oriented perspective. This latter view has become naturalised in industrialised countries where the cultural onus to perform or reach goals have become core values. Contemporary theories also argue that globalisation, by compressing time and space, is altering the way we look at time once again. Despite these interesting debates on the nature of time (most) youth trainings will probably remain Senecan, in aiming to reach training goals that allow participants to improve their performance in their environments. Therefore, we have to use our time in a fairly controlled fashion, which asks a certain degree of punctuality from everybody involved. This should be made clear from the beginning, and the team could also prepare a strategy for addressing time as a potential problem.

Here are a few suggestions, relating to both the preparation and implementation phase of training, which could make training life easier by reducing time pressure.

The main training challenge is to find the right balance between content and time, for the trainers' team, for participants, sometimes also interpreters, and the venue or technical staff involved.

During the preparation and planning phase

Do not create a programme where every moment is planned. Sometimes, less is more! It is also true that certain learning styles need a more structured programme, so strike a balance.

177. *T-Kit 1 – Organisational management*, available at https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/t-kit-1-organisational-management, accessed 21 August 2020.

Identify which content will require more time, either to be delivered by the trainers or to be processed and/or put into practice by the learners, and see if it could be elaborated online instead.

Try to find a balance between formal (programme- or task-oriented) and informal (leisure or fun but nevertheless process-oriented) time. The informal time allows people to share personal experiences, to meet in a relaxed environment and supports the group-building process as well as informal learning.

Include time for ad hoc activities or subjects proposed by the participants.

Include the daily team meetings in the programme at times when the group is less likely to need you.

Reserve space for free time which allows the possibility for retiring from the group to simply relax, sleep or have some personal well-being and recharging time.

During the online learning phase(s)

Make sure you understand how much time certain content or interactions will take in the online learning environment.

Although units/sessions online are often planned in a number of days rather than hours, the learners will dedicate only a fraction of their daily or weekly time to them and therefore you need to allocate enough days for each of the individual sessions/units.

You should also count on people facing technical problems, being away from their computers for a variety of reasons and generally dealing with life, which is much more present during distance learning than when immersed in a residential setting.

And as in residential training, make sure that you do not overload the course with content and activities – you can always add some more if your learners are really engaged and active.

Throughout the training

Keep the suggestions above in mind when making programme changes, or clearing time for conflict management.

Watch out for the following "time bandits" in training courses: reviews or debriefings, room changes, presentations, transportation to visits and field trips, meals, especially in restaurants.

When giving a time limit, never say "You have 20 minutes for group work", but express it in relation to the actual time "We meet again at 3 p.m. in the plenary". It is simply much clearer for participants to have an exact time indication on when to meet again. If you want to keep time, when having time limits for presentations of World Café rounds, set up a visible timer/timing device in plenary.

Have an open conversation about time with participants (for example when establishing a training code of conduct or when discussing topics such as limits or ethics) and equally important, among the trainers' team, to avoid possible conflicts related to time, delays and constraints.

Reflection moment

- How is time treated in your culture/environment?
- When you meet a friend at 5 p.m., what would be an acceptable degree of lateness?
- When you have a daily trainers' team meeting in the evening of a training course, what would be an acceptable degree of lateness for colleague trainers?
- When participants show up late on the morning of their training or after breaks, in plenary, what would be an acceptable degree of lateness?
- For participants/trainers who always show up early/beforehand, how can they best use their time until the session starts? Is there a reward for them? How can they inspire latecomers?
- What are the advantages of a meticulously timed training course? What are the disadvantages? What do you prefer personally and feel more comfortable with?
- How do you react when colleague trainers run their programme elements over time? And "steal" from your input/workshop time?

Personal time management

Time management is like wanting to nail vanilla pudding to the wall.

You can only manage yourself.

The following two exercises will help you look at your personal time management in a critical and yet creative way.

Exercise 1 – Plate spinning

Imagine you are a plate spinner (balancing rotating plates on sticks), like they do at the circus.

1. Think of your own plates, establish their size (depending on how important they are in your life or during your training course), draw them/draw yourself!
2. How did those plates get on the sticks? Who put them there?
3. Is it equally dangerous for those plates to fall off, if you do not spin the sticks fast enough? What happens, if one of them falls off?
4. How have you arranged the plates? Are there other options? Where are the sticks? How do you hold/spin them?
5. What would be an improvement? What would be more beneficial for you? (during training: for yourself, for your team, your participants, your training course).
6. What would you do to change the current situation? What are the options?

Feel your way into the emotions which this exercise brings up. How do you feel? Are you happy with your personal time management? Is there room for improvement?

How do you adjust your time management, personal priorities and daily tasks when being a trainer at a residential training course? Do you consciously reshuffle your personal tasks and priorities for the duration of the course? What do you expect in this regard from fellow trainers and participants?

Exercise 2 – Visualisation:

- If time was a person, what would that person or figure look like? (old, young, strict, happy?...)
- Where would it sit in your plenary/office/youth centre?
- What does the person tell you?
- What would you say to that person/character?

When we think about time, we tend to think of and perceive it in closed structures. The above exercises should help you to think about time differently.

If you would like to learn more about time management you might want to refer to time management expert Lothar Seiwert, who published many books on such topics as “managing your time”, “simplify your time” or “effective time management”.

Chapter 5

After training

5.1. TRANSFER AND MULTIPLYING: HOW TO USE THE TRAINING RESULTS AND HOW TO PASS IT ALL ON

Applying and multiplying: what happens after the training?

The training activities aim to create an impact through some change that the participants can introduce back into their work context or everyday life. Among many discussions on the impact of the training courses in general, here are a few points to reflect on in the team of trainers and organisers.

1. The expected impact and follow-up from the organisers of the training course, notably any potential tasks or actions that the participants should be able to undertake, which reflect the desired improvements in their skills, knowledge or attitudes and values, and the extent to which the organisers can commit to supporting the participants in their follow-up activities.
2. The participants' learning expectations are also crucial in setting up the desired and possible actions after the training course. The participants had a clear motivation to take part in the activity, and this motivation (possibly adapted and changed during the course) is a very valid guide to the possible ways that the learning outcomes can be put into practice.
3. The needs, issues and challenges in the field are also relevant when proposing possible options to apply the learning outcomes from the course. Ideally, the participants should also be aware of developments in their field and in relation to the theme of the training, so that they can take this into account when planning their future steps.

When exploring the options for applying, multiplying and follow-up to the training, we should not forget that each training activity has an end, and this discussion and work should not impede the fact that the trainers will conclude the learning process within that course. The sense of concluding, identifying the learning outcomes and getting ready to move on is as important as the ideas for a possible follow-up and multiplying of the course.

What can be the impact of the training course?

A simple way to explain impact is to say that this is the overall difference the training activity has made. This would be the effect taking place after one or more training activities have been delivered. Long-term impact is used to measure the systemic changes (new policies, new ways of doing things, better services delivered, etc.) and the socio-economic impact (more tolerance and respect, less discrimination, respect for the environment, healthy habits, etc.).

The act of applying the learning outcomes of the training event basically means using the newly gained knowledge, skills, attitudes and values in the home context of the participants. When this act of applying the learning outcomes also means passing that knowledge and skills on to other people and into other projects, then we also speak of multiplying.

To measure the actual impact of training, we can use different tools, models and examples. One of these is proposed by Donald L. Kirkpatrick,[178] which contains four levels of impact of training, adapted as follows:

178. Kirkpatrick (1994).

1. **Reaction and planned action** – the initial measured reaction of the learners/participants and their initial conclusions from the learning experiences. This can be some new knowledge or information, some new skills gained from the training, etc.

2. **Learning and confidence evaluation** – includes a perceived increase in how the learners/ participants have increased their competences in a specific topic or subject and now feel more confident with it. It is about changes in attitudes, mostly internal feelings of empowerment and being able to take some action.

3. **Behavioural impact** – the ways in which learners/participants consciously and unconsciously change how they act in their jobs, in their daily lives with friends and in the community where they live. At this level, it is no longer about the learners only, but also about the impact the learning has had on the immediate surroundings of the learning. For example: as a result of communication training, the youth worker and the young people are now able to better connect and have improved their trust in each other.

4. **Impact on society** – the effect that the training has had on other (young) people in the community through the learners, or other changes that have been motivated by the participants either consciously, but most often as a result of a large mix of factors in addition to the training. Some training events can be a starting point for development of new procedures, policies, tools being put into practice, campaigns set up, new projects developed, etc.

Many existing European training programmes are built on the approach of working with "training multipliers". The word refers to people that work in a position that enables them to apply the training experiences in their own environments – their organisation or service, their youth group or project. Through such an approach the impact of training is wider than the personal competence development of the learner; it also contributes partially to the improvement of quality in youth services and other related fields, better performance of specific tasks, securing more successful ways in influencing public policies, engagement and behavioural change in society and much more.

5.2. MULTIPLYING – WHAT ARE THE POSSIBILITIES?

After an intensive learning experience during the training course, participants should also get ready to return home. Here, an important question is how to best enable them to use their learning experiences from training courses in their own working and living environments.

In the training context there are many different ways to support participants in taking action. A simplified model is used in *Taking it Seriously: Guide to the Committee of Ministers Recommendation on access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods*,[179] which can serve as a guide in planning the multiplying and follow-up work for the participants after the training. It consists of the following three steps.

1. Understand the situation

In this step participants should take time to understand that the different aspects of an issue are essential in order to be able to plan effective actions. Possible ways to support participants in understanding the situation or context where they could apply their learning outcomes from the training course could be through: (1) motivating participants to undertake research by thinking about, reflecting upon, and identifying the issues that confront young people or others; (2) identifying the key stakeholders who could help the participants in their intended follow-up as well as identify opportunities for collaboration or people who may hold different opinions; and (3) support the participants to reflect on their personal motivation to undertake change back at home.

2. Devise a plan of action

Participants can be supported through a planning session to help them focus on exactly what they want and are able to do, and what is the best way of achieving their results. For more ambitious aims, an advisable first move is to make sure that the motivation and encouragement to apply the learning from the course is properly directed.

Some commonly used tools in this step can include doing a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis, deciding on the problem or issue the participant(s) would want to address, and the results they want to achieve.

3. Take action

During the training course the participants can plan a possible follow-up action which they want to try out after the training course ends, which probably includes a wider community than the group itself. Taking action is designed to bring about a result, which is valuable not only from the educational point of view, but also beyond. Some of the possible points you would like to address in a training context could include:

- support the participants to link up with other groups or movements;
- reflect on the participants' colleagues, peers, target groups they work with, and how their actions would impact them;
- reflect on possible follow-up training and peer education;
- understand ways to do advocacy and campaigning;
- explore possible online tools to connect and work together, find resources and keep on learning.

179. See https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016806accfa.

Follow-up as an activist in society

More guidance on taking action can also be found in of *Compass*: Chapter 3, Taking action for human rights.[180] The suggestions contained there are not radical, and the participants are probably already undertaking many of them in their existing work: designing banners, debating issues, organising events, meeting different organisations, writing letters and so on. Such apparently simple methods could support the participants in planning their follow-up beyond their personal learning.

Follow-up with new training activities

One possible approach to designing follow-up from a training course is certainly by proposing new training activities that the participants could do themselves, both locally and internationally. In this way the participants would be in a position to multiply the experience back to their peers, the organisation and the community. Multiplying a training experience can happen in different ways and involve different levels of activity, as shown in the following table.

Type of multiplying	Examples
Educational action Take some action following the training course to use and pass on some of the training outcomes within your own environment.	▸ Inform your own organisation about the training and its outcomes. ▸ Use your strengthened confidence and motivation to present your new ideas to your own organisation, service, group or project. ▸ Use some of the methods experienced during the training with your own group of young people back home. ▸ If there is a course report, make it available and hold workshops on its use as a resource.
Enabling actors Enable other people to use experiences from the training course.	▸ Organise a workshop for other youth leaders in your area in which you use some of the methods from the training and discuss with your colleagues how it could be used in your work. ▸ Invite youth leaders or youth workers to a meeting where you inform them about the new information you learned in the training. Discuss how to spread and use this information. ▸ Train some of your colleagues or the young people in your group on some of the skills learned in the training.
Building a new project Pass on the experience of the training by creating a project that is implemented after the training (with or without your involvement).	▸ Run a specific project that was developed during the training, possibly involving other course participants, after the training course. ▸ Present a project to your organisation that you developed during the training, even if you cannot follow it up, but perhaps someone else can take it up and implement it.
Setting a working model Organise new activities using the model of activities experienced or developed during the training.	▸ Adapt a particular method from the training, or the training course itself, for use in your own context, and possibly publish and distribute it. ▸ Discuss and train colleagues how to use this new model that you have introduced.
Follow-up as a long-term programme Projects or actions developed, or methods acquired during a training course, are implemented following the training and give rise to new ideas for new projects, actions, methods, and so forth.	▸ After you have organised a multiplying training, the participants of this training also decide to take action.

180. *Compass: manual for human rights education with young people*, Chapter 3, Taking action for human rights, available at www.coe.int/en/web/compass/hre-and-activism, accessed 27 August 2020.

5.3. PREPARING PARTICIPANTS DURING A TRAINING COURSE FOR TRANSFER AND MULTIPLYING

After the training, e-learning, workshops or study sessions, participants have acquired new learning in the form of competences and need to translate them into practice. Follow-up is a way to accompany learners from being recipients of learning activities to actively utilising these new skills, knowledge and attitudes, effectively being active agents of change in their own environments.

The research[181] has indicated that participants are more likely to use what they have learned when they receive follow-up support. In addition, maintaining follow-up contact with participants enables the organisers of a training activity to develop a much greater understanding of how useful the activity has been. Obstacles that participants face in implementing their learning can also inform the design of future learning activities. Here again, it is important to mention that the training process also has an end, including the provided follow-up support from trainers or organisers.

Thinking about the possible follow-up of the participants should ideally start from the preparation phase of the training activity, and then become properly reflected upon in the implementation and evaluation phase:

Preparation phase

- Consider the participants during the preparation: what are their needs, motivations, interests, expectations and fears regarding the training? How will they use the experiences of the training? You could include questions relating to these aspects in the application form or deal with them at the beginning of the activity.
- Involve the participants' organisations in the preparation: make sure that the organisation, institution or service knows about the participant's involvement in the training and is willing to support them. You could ask for a support letter from the organisation specifying its expectations and interest in sending the participant to the training.

Implementation phase

- Design the programme in a way that takes into account the participants' expectations and needs. Create possibilities for participants to link experiences during the training to their home environment, for instance by using methods that encourage participants to try out actions by themselves.
- Create regular spaces for reflection and feedback from the participants to see how they find the training useful in relation to their own work.
- Ask participants to develop possibilities for follow-up during the training, by developing a project, creating or adapting a method, developing an action plan, etc.
- Provide spaces for personal or small group consultation, where participants can reflect upon and discuss possibilities for using and spreading the results of the training at home and the difficulties they might face.

Evaluation and follow-up phase

- Evaluate the usefulness of the training for the participant, if possible, sometime after the training.
- See how you can involve the participants' organisations. You could send an evaluation form to the participants and to their organisations several months after the training, asking how learning outcomes have been used since then and how the organisation has benefited from the training.
- Create a support system for participants after the implementation phase of the training, for instance by:
  - creating a mailing list where participants can easily contact each other and the trainers, or an email for specific questions. Could each trainer act as a contact person for some of the participants? Similarly, providing an online group for sharing information or resources is quite useful in supporting the participants' follow-up;
  - organising a follow-up meeting online that brings the participants together again after several months to discuss and evaluate the process following the training activity (adapted from Comelli (1985): 176-77);
  - setting up a system of peer mentoring among participants so they can support each other in putting into practice what they have learned, ask for feedback or keep up each other's motivation.

181. *FAO Capacity development*, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (2020), available at www.fao.org/capacity-development/en/, accessed 21 August 2020.

Creating support structures for participants after a training course is not always very easy, especially after international training courses. The motivation of the participants to implement some specific follow-up activities might change once they come back home. During the training it is possible to work in a way that makes it easier for participants to face their everyday reality and think of possible ways to overcome some of the challenges they might face when proposing their follow-up ideas.

In the Erasmus+ programme all of the above, such as transfer, multiplying and follow-up, is referred to as DEOR (activities serving the dissemination and exploitation of results).[182]

Commonly used tools

In training, you can develop and test many different tools to support the reflection and planning of the follow-up activities. Here is a list of some commonly used tools.

Guidance sheet for action or project planning: trainers can produce a guidance sheet for participants, which is useful in structuring their reflection and helping them devise a plan for follow-up. In some training activities you might want to share some suggestions for possible action (see the previous section on multiplying possibilities).

Mentoring possibilities: in some training courses it can be useful for participants to be offered the possibility of mentoring. In this case the trainers could take the role of mentor, or alternatively it can be set up as peer mentoring and support. When setting up such opportunities, it is important to clarify with the participants the purpose and duration of the mentoring, what it will be about and what they can and cannot expect from the mentors.

Communities of practice: participants can be referred to an existing community of practice so they can link with their peers for ongoing support. You might want to set up a community of practice possibly within a training activity, if this makes sense for the participants and their follow-up endeavours.

Internet forums and online spaces: many of the participants may wish to do their follow-up or multiplying activities online. In order to make this feasible, check if during the training course you can provide some support to explore online tools and spaces and see how these can be used for activism, educational activities, networking or research. Creating online spaces between participants can be useful to keep up the sense of community and motivation, even if it sometimes feels that there are too many parallel groups, chats and mailing lists. Check if in the trainers' team there are reference persons willing to follow and support such online social developments.

Refresher workshops in person or online: after some training courses which have a strong focus on the follow-up, you might want to organise a webinar or smaller refresher workshops locally/regionally. At such follow-up support workshops you can focus on some specific issues which the participants find useful for their follow-up work.

Toolkits and web-based materials for continued reference: provide the participants with resources and materials relevant for their further work. There are many online libraries with an overview of materials such as those of the Council of Europe's youth sector, the partnership between the European Union and the Council of Europe, the SALTOs, the European Youth Forum, and so on. Sometimes all it takes is to share the links.

Dealing with emotions

One of the effects of international training events is that they are intense emotional experiences as well. This intensity is created by the residential setting, the group process and the contents and methodology of such activities, where the focus is put on participation, active involvement, sharing of thoughts and feelings, learning by doing, group work and intercultural learning. The creation and facilitation of an intense group dynamic is an educational approach which uses the group as a learning resource and enhances the intercultural learning process. Another element is the excitement of meeting and living with often like-minded and equally motivated people from different parts of the world for a short period, and then having to disperse again. At the end of a residential training course, some participants might find it difficult to return home and might need support to deal with their emotions. The trainers' team could be available in such situations to talk with participants and, if needed, provide them with contacts, resources and ideas on how to overcome possible fears of going back home. An important aspect is to maintain a constant focus on the participants' home environment during the different phases of the training. Designing

182. To learn more about DEOR (dissemination and exploitation of results) in the Erasmus+ programme, please refer to: https://commandeor.codecvzw.eu/resources/deor-in-erasmus-programme/, accessed 21 August 2020.

concrete links to the participants' working situation and environment is an important element of the preparation phase, as well as during the implementation, evaluation and follow-up phases of the training.

Follow-up as a trainer

The reflection on follow-up and multiplying the experience and learning from a training activity is not only limited to the participants themselves. As trainers in the youth field there are many ways in which to conclude your learning, explore the feedback and set your personal development path after delivering a training course. As a trainer, each training activity you deliver can be a reference for your self-assessment process and for setting/adjusting your objectives for your personal learning.

Supporting the competence development of trainers is an important aspect to ensure the high quality of youth training in Europe. The European Training Strategy therefore calls for the development of a modular system to train the trainers of youth workers by defining a set of essential competences that can be acquired in specific courses and serve to establish pools of certified trainers in Europe. The innovations, conclusions and ideas coming out of a specific training experience can serve as a baseline for the learning of others in different fields. Some of the most commonly referred processes which trainers and practitioners in the youth field can further develop are described below.

Communities of practice

A community of practice is a group of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do better as they interact regularly. This definition, proposed by Etienne Wenger-Trayner et al. (2015), reflects the fundamentally social nature of human learning, and it is broad. Narrowing it down to the youth sector, a community of practice in the youth sector is built around:

- The domain: members are brought together by a learning need they share (whether this shared learning need is explicit or not and whether learning is the motivation for their coming together or a by-product of it). For instance, in the youth sector it might be the need to perform better as a trainer, to cover more topics, to have a variety of approaches, etc.
- The community: their collective learning becomes a bond between them over time (experienced in various ways and thus not a source of homogeneity). Nowadays, even if it is not well defined, we can identify various levels, with some trainers' communities in the youth field or the youth sector in general.
- The practice: their interactions produce resources that affect their practice (whether they engage in actual practice together or separately). Trainers often produce or design new approaches which can be shared and used again, as well as jointly reflect on how to address current societal issues in an effective way during the training activity.

Each community of practice should have its purpose or aim which will clarify to its members what they can expect from others, but notably they provide a forum for information and resource sharing between members.

Apart from communities of practice, there are a few biannual events gathering trainers to exchange, meet and discuss together. These events can target trainers in the youth sector in Europe as a wider form of a "community of practice". Some of these events aim to reflect on trends and core issues in the youth field and their effects on the work of trainers (such as Bridges for Trainers),[183] others aim to share tools and discuss approaches (such as the Tool-fairs), and others are focused on building specific competences and further developing a trainer.

Trainers' pools

Trainers' pools are also a potential space where trainers can follow up on their training activities, reflect jointly on their experiences and increase the quality of their work. The pools can be set up by an institution, such as the Youth Department of the Council of Europe, the SALTOs, national agencies for the European youth programmes, as well as by different organisations or networks such as the European Youth Forum or many other youth organisations in Europe. The pools vary in structure, purpose, membership and expected roles for the trainers; some pools look like a community of practice and others are more of a list. For trainers involved in

183. More information on Bridges for Trainers, available at: www.salto-youth.net/rc/training-and-cooperation/trainercompetencedevelopment/bft/, accessed 6 October 2020.

delivering activities, each of the pools they take part in is a potential space for discussion among peers and learning from each other. Some examples of pools are given below.

- The Trainers Pool of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe is a list of trainers and educational experts experienced in non-formal education and intercultural learning applied to international youth activities. Trainers from the pool are contracted to support the educational staff of the Youth Department in the implementation of the youth programme of the Council of Europe and to contribute to the quality of its education and training activities.
- A trainers' pool from a national agency for Erasmus+: Youth and Lifelong Learning Foundation of Greece (for example) has established a pool of trainers, aiming at providing specialised services in order to ensure the quality of non-formal seminars/training courses implemented to cover the needs of the Erasmus+/youth sector programme. The trainers, who are members of the Pool of Trainers, are responsible for the implementation of seminars/courses in the framework of Transnational Cooperation Activity – TCA, Training and Evaluation Cycle for EVS volunteers as well as those that derive from the annual work programme of the national agency.
- The European Youth Forum also has its pool of trainers and experts. The Pool of Trainers and Experts (PoTE) is a resource and capacity-building tool for the member organisations and partners, providing a high level of pedagogical, facilitation and expert support and consultancy. The PoTE is composed of highly skilled trainers and experts, with experience in advocacy, youth policy development, non-formal education and the areas of the Youth Forum's work.

Recognition of youth work and non-formal education

One specific follow-up which both trainers and learners/participants could do after the training activities is to explore ways in which their learning outcomes are recognised, and how society in general recognises the importance of non-formal education.[184] As SALTO-YOUTH explains it:

> Young people and professionals in the youth field across Europe gain essential competences through non-formal learning activities, but also on a daily basis. Recognition of youth work and non-formal as well as informal learning is an important issue for the field of youth. When reading about recognition, you may stumble across key words such as "validation of non-formal and informal learning", "Pathways" or the "Youth Report". You will soon realise that recognition incorporates a wide range of developments that are connected to political documents, tools, studies and events (SALTO Training web page).

Depending on the type of training, you might want to take some of the outputs and present the possible impact of the training beyond your organisations. To do so, you can check which are the recent discussions on recognition of non-formal learning and youth work, and if appropriate, join the discussion with examples from your own training experience.

184. Please also refer to Recognition of non-formal education training and learning in section 1.1.2.

Chapter 6

Conclusions – or, at the end is the beginning!

In concluding this training kit, a few *essential* questions are left: what will you do with what you have learned? How will you incorporate anything from this T-Kit into your approaches to training? What do you want to develop further or maybe explore more?

It is always good to read inspirational literature and develop your competences but most important in non-formal education and human rights education is: what do you do with what you have learned? Which actions will follow? What will you put into practice? Or take on board for your next training adventure? Or for your own personal development and lifelong learning journey?

Now is always the best time to get started! Do not let anyone in the universe stop you from letting go of old concepts or sets of beliefs and starting over, questioning the status quo, developing new ideas, views, theories, educational practices and inspirations. George Bernard Shaw would say: Progress is impossible without change, and those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything! At the same time, we would like to encourage you to strive for progress, not for perfection.

In this challenging period of time we get to create European youth work training anew – offline and online – and we are thrilled to see where this process leads us. What will always remain the bases for our work are: young people and their search for identity, their curiousness, their troubles, their enthusiasm, their worries, their energy and eagerness to change the world, to support the underdog, to find answers for their questions within their peer groups, youth organisations and networks.

And while those young people become adults, you are in the never-ending process of becoming a trainer, questioning your own growth process while being a "resource and education centre". Some of those trainers are political animals, hardcore activists, others, the spiritual types, the entertainment types or the calm, solid rock in the field. How do you perceive yourself as a trainer? Which direction do you want to go in? What kind of "light-tower" do you want to be for the young people and trainer colleagues you work with?

Our colleagues Gisèle Evrard and Darko Markovic describe the efforts and hopes of non-formal educators in the field very well:

> Of course, at this point we might have only a vague sense of what the future might look like, but we might hope to equip the "future generation" (in our youth organisations, youth clubs and projects) with the competences needed to take the "right" decisions when the time comes. In that sense, adjusting the words of Paolo Freire on education to youth work, we could say that youth work and youth worker training are maybe not changing the world, but they are changing people who can change the world.[185]

Whatever that "right" decision might be for a particular young person in their different, specific contexts!

Keep in mind that this publication is not the end of wisdom and we do not claim to hold the truth at all times. All of what is presented in this T-Kit has been applied and tested in practice, has proven to be useful and successful, and is backed up by educational theory and research. The mentioned contents create a solid base to non-formal education training and learning. Please adapt it to your context, target group, trainer style; be open minded and creative; take bits and pieces of it and transform or weave it into your own *essential* training practice, theory and wisdom.

Wishing you fruitful, enriching and sustainable training experiences! Have lots of fun working with young people and those young at heart while learning and creating together, as well as changing your local environment, Europe and the world – bit by bit together! And at the same time, becoming the quintessential YOU!

185. Evrard and Markovic (2017).


ROAD TRIP

Appendix 1

Co-worker profiling questionnaire

This questionnaire has been put together in order to support the process of two or more trainers, workers or facilitators, enabling them to learn about each other and thus enter into a fruitful and effective working partnership.

The questionnaire is made up of questions taken from various sources[186] as well as input from myself and a number of colleagues from the last few years. It is not a fixed series of questions, but should be organic and tailored to suit the use it will be put to. If your co-workers are inexperienced then some basic and simple questions should be the focus; if your co-workers are experienced, then adapt the questions accordingly – though basic and simple are still relevant.

The profiling questionnaire is in two parts. The first part allows you to focus on yourself, to become more aware of your assumptions, preferences and motivations when working with groups. Think about, record and share your answers with your co-facilitator. The second part brings the focus onto you and your co-worker, covering practical things you need to be aware of and do, as well as more theoretical concepts that are worth reflecting on.

Many people when faced with a questionnaire tend to avoid it or ignore it as unimportant. This does not have to be a boring questionnaire, as it can be used in different ways.

- Simply read through it and then enter into a discussion with your co-worker about how you will work together, using the questionnaire as a resource to trigger thoughts and ideas.
- Talk it through question by question with your co-worker.
- Write down everything, filling it out as the questionnaire that it is, then go through it with your co-worker.
- Use it as a training tool, especially when conducting training courses on co-working or with organisations where people work in pairs. Allow a good two to three hours for the workers to go through it individually and then in their working pairs.

After sharing information and discussing it, it might be a good idea to take a break in order to review and consider the information that you have received from each other, and then meet again to discuss any elements that need clarification.

In the first part there are 20 questions, in the second there are 18. The actual number is not relevant. Adapt it to meet your needs, change questions, add questions, cut questions. Use it and change it and make it work for you.

My style: This is about you – What are your typical responses in the type of group with which you will be working?	
1.	**When starting with a new group, I usually...**
2.	**The thing that makes me most uncomfortable in new groups is...**

186. Adapted from: *The art of training: co-facilitation*, R. Wade Younger (2005); available at Self-Help Resource Association of British Columbia; and *The 1975 Annual handbook for group facilitators* with adaptations by Spencer Brennan, OSHNET Coordinator, Self-Help Resource Centre of Greater Toronto.

3.	In group discussions when someone talks too much, I usually...
4.	When the group is unresponsive, I usually...
5.	When an individual in the group is quiet and does not join in discussions and has a low profile in activities, I usually...
6.	When strong emotions are expressed in a group, I usually...
7.	When mobile phones ring during group work, I usually...
8.	When a group member comes in late, I usually...
9.	When group members are excessively polite and unwilling to confront one another, I usually...
10.	When prejudices or stereotypes are expressed in the group, I usually…
11.	When there is conflict in the group, I usually...
12.	When I challenge behaviour in a group, I usually...
13.	When a participant acts like they can learn nothing from the training, I usually...
14.	My level of awareness of time when working with a group is...
15.	If something important is happening in a group and it is near the end of a session, I usually...
16.	If someone storms out of the group, I normally...
17.	If group members look bored or tired, I usually...

18.	My style is more (a) nurturing or (b) confronting…
19.	I want to learn more about...
20.	One skill I plan to practise is...

Co-working style Some practical details to sort out between co-worker(s) before we start to work together	
1.	How will we prepare the programme/agenda together for the group work activity?
2.	Where, when and how will you deal with issues between us?
3.	Can you agree to disagree in a session? How much tolerance is there for differences?
4.	I can get competitive about/when...
5.	If I do not understand something you do or say, or I am unsure how to support you I will...
6.	If I find that you are dominating, I will... If you find that I am dominating, please...
7.	If I find I am not trusting your judgment or your actions in sessions, I will...
8.	If I feel you are a distraction while I am conducting a session I will...
9.	If I feel we are not being honest with each other I will...
10.	How do you use your co-worker's energy in a session? And vice versa.
11.	How will you establish and maintain growth and development in our partnership?

12.	**How will you communicate with your co-worker during sessions?**
13.	**What is <u>not</u> negotiable for you as a co-worker?**
14.	**If I forget something or you have a great idea to share while I am talking or presenting, please...**
15.	**My signal to ask for my co-worker's help is...**
16.	**How do you like to receive feedback from your co-worker?**
17.	**I would like some feedback from my co-worker specifically on...**
18.	**I like to do team evaluations regularly because...**

Appendix 2

Team co-operation

This questionnaire can be useful to help you recognise, and if you wish also change, the dynamics of co-operation in your team. There is a six-level scale between the opposite statements. Each team member should circle the number that corresponds to their own estimation.

1. My ideas and suggestions never receive adequate attention.	1 2 3 4 5 6	My ideas and suggestions always receive adequate attention.
2. I do not have the feeling that the team leader is interested in my ideas.	1 2 3 4 5 6	I feel that the team leader is very interested in my ideas.
3. There is not enough good co-operation and too few reasonable agreements are made in this team.	1 2 3 4 5 6	The team co-operates well and makes reasonable agreements.
4. The team members are not involved in the decisions that concern them.	1 2 3 4 5 6	The team members are involved in the decisions that concern them.
5. I feel uncomfortable talking in the team about the mistakes I have made.	1 2 3 4 5 6	I feel so good in the team that I can talk about mistakes I have made.
6. Our team is not able to openly address conflicts and to learn from them.	1 2 3 4 5 6	Our team is able to openly address conflicts and to learn from them.
7. I do not receive enough responsibility to perform well and further develop my work.	1 2 3 4 5 6	I receive enough responsibility to perform well and further develop my work.
8. Discussions during our team meetings never reach a satisfying result.	1 2 3 4 5 6	Discussions during our team meetings always reach a satisfying result.
9. We never discuss how everyone in the team feels about the team co-operation.	1 2 3 4 5 6	We often discuss how everyone in the team feels about the team co-operation.
10. We never evaluate our teamwork.	1 2 3 4 5 6	We regularly evaluate our teamwork.
11. There is a low level of quality and performance in our team.	1 2 3 4 5 6	There is a high level of quality and performance in our team.
12. The team members never exchange preparation or background materials for our work.	1 2 3 4 5 6	The team members often exchange preparation or background materials for our work.
13. This organisation practises too many rules and restrictions for me.	1 2 3 4 5 6	This organisation has adequate rules and restrictions.
14. The organisation/team leadership controls my work too often and too much.	1 2 3 4 5 6	The control of the organisation/team leadership is reasonable and gives me some guidance and orientation.

Appendix 3

Access needs of participants

Template for additional questions to be added to application forms

Please note the following questions will not be marked and will not affect your application.

What do you need to be included in the meeting?

- Wheelchair access
- A sign-language interpreter
- Real-time captioning
- Documents in Braille (please specify if you require Grade 1 or Grade 2)
- Easy-to-read documents
- Other forms of disability-related adaptations (please specify):

Will you need to bring a personal assistant/support?

Template for "frequently asked questions" to complement application forms for mixed-ability groups

In case you are about to organise an activity for a mixed-ability group you may find it useful to create a document with *Frequently asked questions and answers* about the technical details for attendance of your training and attach it to the application form for participants. It can include, for example:

- Can I bring my personal assistant?
- Are the costs also covered for my personal assistant?
- Is there a participation fee?
- Will you provide any information at the training in alternative formats?
- Will someone help with planning my travel to and from the training venue?
- Will the training be completely accessible?
- Can you provide personal assistants?
- I need a hoist, etc. Can you provide this?
- I need a sign-language interpreter. Can you provide this?
- I am not a wheelchair user. Can I attend?
- I have a learning disability, etc. Can I apply?
- I am not very good at English. Can I bring someone to interpret for me?
- Can I have the application form in Braille, large print, easy read, my own language, etc.?
- Will you arrange travel insurance? / Do I need to take out travel insurance?
- Is there somewhere I can chat to other potential applicants?

Access Requirements questionnaire for participants of training with mixed-ability groups[187]

Please answer all the questions.

- We kindly ask everyone to complete this Access Requirements form with your own needs.
- This form will give us information about your specific requirements to cater for your needs.
- You can complete the digital form here. If you need a plain Word format please ask for one by emailing us: (email address)

Thank you

187. This template was developed and used by the European Network on Independent Living (ENIL) Youth and its partner organisations for study sessions and is available at https://enil.eu/.

Access Requirements

1.	Contact information First Name/Given Name (as written in your passport) Family Name/Surname (as written in your passport) Nationality (as in your passport) Country of Residence (where you live permanently)
2.	Which format would you prefer study session information in? ▸ electronic document ▸ standard print ▸ Braille ▸ large print Do you require information in any other formats?
3.	Do you require a Palantypist (speech to text) at the training?
4.	Do you need a sign-language interpreter? If yes, please indicate what language:
5.	Would you like a guided orientation tour of the training venue upon arrival?
6.	Do you need a quiet breakout room?
7.	Do you need a prayer room during the day activities?
8.	Do you need a car parking space? If yes, do you need a car parking space at:
9.	Do you have any medical conditions that may require urgent attention during the training such as epilepsy, diabetes or allergies?
10.	Do you have any specific dietary requirements?
11.	In the event of fire, if you are above the ground floor are you able to exit the building without help? If no, what assistance do you need during a fire emergency?
12.	Do you require step-free access?
13.	Are you a wheelchair user?
14.	If you are bringing a personal assistant are you able to share a room with them?
15.	Do you require a room with an accessible bathroom? If yes, does your bathroom need a: bath OR a roll-in shower. If yes, do you need to use a hoist in the bathroom?
16.	Bedrooms: What type of bed do you prefer? Do you need to use a hoist in the bedroom?
17.	If you are bringing a personal assistant are you able to share a room with them?
18.	Emergency information ▸ First Name/Given Name of the contact person: ▸ Family Name/ Surname of the contact person ▸ Relationship of the contact person to you ▸ Phone number of the contact person (including country code)
19.	Is there anything we need to know in the event you are unconscious, for example drug allergy, pregnancy, etc.?
20.	Is there anything else we can do to help you feel included (for example regular breaks, somebody to talk to you through meetings in advance, etc.)?
21.	Is there anything else we should know?

Appendix 4

Add-on to basic logistical considerations in Chapter 3.4

3.4.1. Before

Sequence	Action	Considerations
1	Needs assessment. Decision on the topic. Decision on date, hosting organisation, type/s of event/s and deadlines.	Each organisation has its own structure and its own decision-making process, but this is normally the first thing you have to do: investigate and assess the needs and aspirations of your members (target group) and identify the most suitable topics and competences to be acquired for the training.
2	Research available grant and necessary conditions to apply. Write the grant application.	It is extremely important not to underestimate the length of this procedure; check also the precise schedule for each grant.
3	Place request with hosting organisation. Confirmation. In the case of the online/blended part, choose online platform that will host the course.	A clear and detailed list of requests and expected support should be submitted to the hosting organisation to allow it to decide if they are willing and able to host the event. Access needs and inclusive facilities should be thought of at this stage. A preliminary date is set for the preparatory team meeting and the seminar. The exact venue is organised by the hosting organisation, with confirmation about its suitability being given by the preparatory team and/or those responsible for the event once the venue has been checked, e.g. during the preparatory team meeting. In some cases the event venue requires a deposit. Do not forget to ask about a cancellation fee. The platform that will host your online learning part should be carefully chosen and tailored for your training, ready to accommodate the team and the learners.
4	Selection of the preparatory team.	Organisations normally follow their own internal selection procedures (internal and/or external call for trainers), but should pay attention to questions of multiculturalism, gender, abilities within the team, etc. See section 2.2.1 on forming the team. It should be clearly stated what expectations are held regarding the experience and commitments requested from the team.
5	Preparatory team meeting.	The preparatory meeting is ideally held at the venue. The invitation to this meeting should include an agenda for the meeting and detailed information useful for the preparation of the event such as resolutions or policies, the funding application, reports from previous events and so forth. During the meeting the objectives, programme, session contents, working methods, participants' profile and team responsibilities are decided upon. The exact dates of the seminar are also confirmed. After the prep meeting all parties involved should have the meeting report, and be clear about their responsibilities and preparation work.

Sequence	Action	Considerations
6	Possible interpretation staff.	When the dates of the seminar have been confirmed those responsible should contact the interpretation company to check their availability, stating what facilities are available at the venue, what needs to be hired to include everybody's access needs, and also check on costs of possible cancellation fees.
7	Invitations to experts and external trainers. Invitations to media staff, access partners, caretakers and others.	If expert speakers have been included in the programme they should be identified, contacted and briefed by the preparatory team. Do not forget to update them on amendments to the programme and to forward the materials you send to participants.
8	Invitations to organisations and participants.	Following the preparatory meeting, an invitation to the event is written. The invitation is sent to all target group organisations and potential participants. The invitation should contain aims and objectives of the event, working methods, participants' profile, application form (including dietary requirements, different abilities and access needs: please refer to the access questionnaire from ENIL in Appendix 3) travel form, visa request, instructions for access and a clear application deadline. Do not forget to mention conditions for cancellation.
9	Shortlist of applicants and sending out of acceptance letters.	Based on the criteria expressed in the participants' profile the preparatory team shortlists the candidates and sends them acceptance letters. These normally contain detailed information about the programme and venue, how to get there, its accessibility and instructions for payments. Special attention should be paid to people with various access needs. They should be provided with accurate information and all the necessary procedures to allow them to participate equally.
10	Liaise with host organisation on visa requests.	Once the visa requests have been received they are sent to the hosting organisation, which issues the invitation to obtain the visa. Attention should be paid to the fact that a lot of countries have particular requests and formalities that need to be respected.
11	Payment of participation fee.	Some organisations require the payment of a participation fee beforehand by bank transfer, others by cash upon arrival, or some just deduct it from the travel reimbursement. This means that precise bank details should be provided and the relevant currency indicated.
12	Preparation of relevant documents and materials.	Once the number of participants is clear, material and relevant documents for the activities can be translated if necessary, and prepared for everyone. (This material could also include a certificate of attendance and learning, e.g. "youth pass").

3.4.2. During

Sequence	Action	Considerations
1	Preparatory team meeting.	It is advisable that the preparatory team arrives prior to participants. This is to fine-tune the programme and preparation work, do some team building, settle in and make sure that all prep team members are fine with running their upcoming sessions. Furthermore, last-minute tasks (arranging accommodation and meeting rooms as appropriate, finalising the preparation of material and a welcome pack with the necessary information about the venue and the event) and other challenges can also be dealt with.

Sequence	Action	Considerations
2	A range of administrative tasks, including checking payments, correcting the list of participants or relevant claim forms.	Participants are asked to check their details, and to give consent to sharing their contacts or pictures, and the like. Precise instructions should be provided for completing claim forms.
3	The daily report.	Sometimes participants may be responsible for writing a daily report, video or doing some daily social media work. These reports are later used as the basis for the event report. See section 3.4.8 on documentation and reporting.
4	Dealing with travel reimbursement.	Participants need to complete expense claims, attach, forward or upload receipts, tickets, bank statements, etc.
And	ALL THE REST!!!	The team should not be overwhelmed by these administrative tasks; remember the focus should be on the educational programme!

3.4.3. After

Sequence	Action	Considerations
1	Travel reimbursements, as applicable.	Those responsible for the event should pass all the claim forms to the appropriate person in the organisation to proceed with reimbursements.
2	Thanking the team, venue and hosting organisation.	Those responsible find the most appropriate way to thank the venue, host organisations, expert speakers and planning team.
3	The report: a written document/ online format, a video clip or podcast, a website, a multimedia report, a graphic report, other report format/s.	Depending on the practice of the organisation, and the grant stipulations, the appropriate report should be prepared and sent to the relevant people.
4	Evaluation meeting: residential or online.	When feasible, the preparatory team should meet once more to carry out a comprehensive evaluation of the event.
5	Follow-up activities.	Many events foresee a series of follow-up activities, which could include projects prepared during the course, exchanges of results, establishing a website or other/s. See Chapter 5, After training.

Appendix 5

Session outline

Training "title"

Written by: ________________ **Feedback by:** ________________

1. Title, date, time	
2. Background	Why this session? What happened before, what will happen next, why this session here?
3. Aim(s) and objectives of the session	
4. Methodology and methods	
5. Programme	
6. Outcomes	To be filled in after the session by the person(s) in charge
7. Evaluation	To be filled in after the session by the person(s) in charge
8. Materials needed and space required	
9. Further reading	
10. Appendices	

Appendix 6

Suggested report outlines

Brief outcome report

Target group:

For information:

Aim: To briefly inform about results and outcomes of the seminar, and to raise issues and make specific recommendations concerning the theme of the event

Proposal for headings:

- Aim, objectives
- Achievements and specific outcomes
- Future challenges and concerns related to the topic of the event
- Recommendations clearly addressed to:

Optional attachment

Outline of the programme

List of participants

Resource report on seminar

Target group:

For information:

Aim: To provide training resource material on the theme of the seminar

Proposal for headings:

- Background information on the topic of the event
- Tools and relevant materials prepared for/arising from the event
- Methods used during the event
- Group's dynamic process
- Details of where to seek further information on the topic (organisations/resources/internet)
- Expert input (speeches/specific session outlines, etc.)

Optional attachment

Outline of the full programme

List of participants

Evaluation report on seminar/event theme

Target group:

For information:

Aim: On the same lines as the outcome report, this will inform about the results achieved during the course but will also contain elements of its evaluation

Proposal for headings:

- Aims and objectives
- Achievements and specific outcomes
- Evaluation of the training, which could be used for future events on a similar topic, or should be considered as part of the culture and background of an organisation.

Optional attachment

Outline of the full programme

List of participants

Appendix 7

Evaluation

Level 1 Evaluation forms

ONE-MINUTE FEEDBACK

This provides a quick check of the "temperature". It is also useful after some striking emotional moments. The group may feel at ease after writing down some impressions that were in the air.

One-minute feedback So far I am finding this training course (workshop, etc.) to be (circle your response)…		
Uninteresting	**1 2 3 4 5 6**	Interesting
Too slow	**1 2 3 4 5 6**	Too fast
Too difficult	**1 2 3 4 5 6**	Too easy
Irrelevant	**1 2 3 4 5 6**	Relevant (to my interests)
Disorganised	**1 2 3 4 5 6**	Organised
Tense	**1 2 3 4 5 6**	Relaxed
Please provide brief comments for improving this workshop:		

SESSION HIGHS AND LOWS

This form is very convenient for gathering feedback at the end of a workshop, session, day or half-day.

End-of-session feedback
I was most energised today when (please be specific)…
I was least interested today when (please be specific)…
Comments and suggestions for improving the session (workshop)…

DAILY EVALUATION – HIGHS AND LOWS

This is a very convenient form for encouraging the participants to write down their everyday feelings and feedback. It can be organised as a diary during longer training courses (more than 7 days) and it should serve as a daily participants' own feedback (not to be given to the trainer).

End-of-day feedback

My feelings today:

My learning points:

Relation of the training to my work (organisation):

DAILY EVALUATION – EVALUATION GROUPS

These groups are very frequently used during longer training courses (more than 7 days).

Aim of the groups:

- To provide space for reflection on the training course. It is a moment to step back, give feedback to the trainers and analyse the training course.
- To have a place of confidence where people can share their feelings about the training and their emotional experiences during the training.

These groups are composed of 5-6 participants each. They meet at the end of each working day for 30-45 minutes during the course, with a prep team member assigned to each group. The preparatory team member in each group presents the aims of these groups.

Example method for the first meeting:

1. One of the trainers asks the participants to take something from their luggage that illustrates a characteristic of them which they would like to share with the others. In the group they will present what they brought with them and explain how it describes them.
2. The participants draw a face (smile, angry, tired etc.) which describes best their feelings about the day and then they discuss the day.

TAILORED AND QUANTITATIVE EVALUATION

The following example is for programme leaders and is tailored to a programme aimed at developing workshops and training. Quantitative evaluation allows the trainer to compare reactions among the participants in a given event and across different training courses and workshops. Asking "why" after each response helps clarify the ratings.

Training for workshop leaders

QUANTITATIVE EVALUATION

Rate the following questions on a scale of 1 to 6 (1 low, 6 high) and briefly outline "why" you have circled a particular rating.

1. How would you rate this workshop in terms of its value to you individually?

   1 2 3 4 5 6

Why? ....

2. How would you value this workshop in terms of the value to your target group (young people that you are working with):

   1 2 3 4 5 6

Why? ....

3. I received useful feedback following the workshop I have delivered

   1 2 3 4 5 6

Why? ....

4. My confidence as a workshop leader or trainer has improved

   1 2 3 4 5 6

Why? ....

5. I received valuable insights, models and suggestions for

Planning workshops 1 2 3 4 5 6

Why? ....

Designing workshops 1 2 3 4 5 6

Why? ....

Organising workshops 1 2 3 4 5 6

Why? ....

Evaluating workshops 1 2 3 4 5 6

Why? ....

Other comments:

TAILORED AND QUALITATIVE EVALUATION

The following example is also tailored to a training programme aimed at developing workshops and training programmes for youth leaders. It uses superlative adjectives (e.g. most, least, worst) to test the boundaries of participants' feedback and seeks help for improving the training programme. It also solicits participants' suggestions on how they can continue to develop as workshop and training programme leaders.

Training for workshop leaders

QUALITATIVE EVALUATION

1. What did you like most about this workshop?

2. What did you like least about this workshop?

3. What are the three ways this training can be improved?

4. What would you most like to improve about how you lead workshops?

5. What three things are you going to do to further develop your skills as a workshop leader or trainer?

CRITICAL INCIDENT

This approach is designed to gather descriptions of specific incidents where participants felt their strongest reactions during the workshop (e.g. helpful actions, puzzling actions). It encourages description as well as evaluation. Thus, it is an excellent tool for assessing workshop leader performance and for understanding and appreciating participants' emotions, involvement and learning.

Critical incident evaluation

At what moment during the workshop did you feel most engaged and enthusiastic about what was happening?

At what moment during the workshop did you feel most unresponsive and disinterested in what was happening?

What action (by anyone) during the workshop did you find most affirming and helpful?

What action (by anyone) during the workshop did you find most puzzling and confusing?

What about the workshop surprised you (e.g. your own reactions, what someone did or said)?

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