

Vocational
Education
Training
Guiding tools for
Professional Skills

**VET
GPS**

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

SOFT SKILLS GUIDE FOR TRAINERS

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Contents

Welcome to Youth Empowerment!	4
What about Soft Skills?	6
Getting started with <i>Youth Empowerment</i>	8
What is Youth Empowerment activity?	10
How to select the activities?	11
How to engage trainees?	12
Youth Empowerment activities	13
Activity – Gym faces closure	16
Activity – I win, you win!	20
Activity – Marshmallow Spaghetti Tower	24
Activity – Compass Points	25
Activity – I see- I think – I share	28
Activity – Stop Look Listen	30
Activity – Think – Connect – Create	32
Activity – Hit Parade	34
Activity – Confidence	35
Activity – Shared Drawing	37
Activity – Exchange of Secrets	38
Activity – 5-Day diary	40
Activity – Do you need (X) as much you think you do?	43
Activity – Self-Esteem exercise	48
Activity – Attitude Inventory	49
Activity – Good boss	52
Activity – My best speech	53
Activity – The Library	55
Activity – The decision	57
Activity – Gordian Knot	58
Activity – Planning of a town house complex	60
Activity – Communicate without words	64
Activity – What happened if?	66



Welcome to Youth Empowerment!

Youth Empowerment is a handbook designed in the context of the project **VET GPS - Guiding tools for Professional Skills development in VET**, to inspire and support VET trainers in the identification and definition of practices and activities to be implemented in their daily classes, fostering the assessment and development of trainees' soft skills.

Soft skills are widely recognized to be one of the success factors enabling individuals to fulfil their personal, educational, social and professional lives, career development and higher income.

Completely different from “hard skills”, soft skills can be defined as:

Soft skills

Skills that are cross-cutting across jobs (see **Job-specific skills**) and sectors (see **Sector-specific jobs**) and relate to personal competences (confidence, discipline, self-management) and social competences (teamwork, communication, emotional intelligence)

1

Youth Empowerment basic principle is that soft skills are suitable to be acquired, developed and strengthened in different learning contexts at any stage of people lives and aims at fulfilling companies' needs on recruiting young qualified people that can easily evidence the adequate balance of hard or technical skills and soft skills. Designed for VET professionals providing formal or non-formal training to young trainees, with this handbook they will be able to:



Figure 1 – The expected impact of the handbook in VET professionals.

The handbook provides information and identifies activities that can be used or adapted by VET professionals and implemented in their daily classes or activities. Jointly with this handbook, it was also developed two other documents addressed to VET professionals or trainees, allowing a complementary approach to trainees' soft skills by different professionals in different scenarios:

¹ Definition from the *Skills Panorama Glossary*, Cedefop, European Union available [here](#).

The Soft Skills Profile

- Counselling guidelines allowing VET counsellors supporting trainees in the assessment and development of their soft skills

SUCCESS@WORK

- Manual providing the guidelines, information and resources, allowing trainees to successfully assess and (continuously) develop their soft skills.

Figure 2 – Complementary documents that can be jointly used with Youth Empowerment handbook.

The handbook is organised in four main sections:

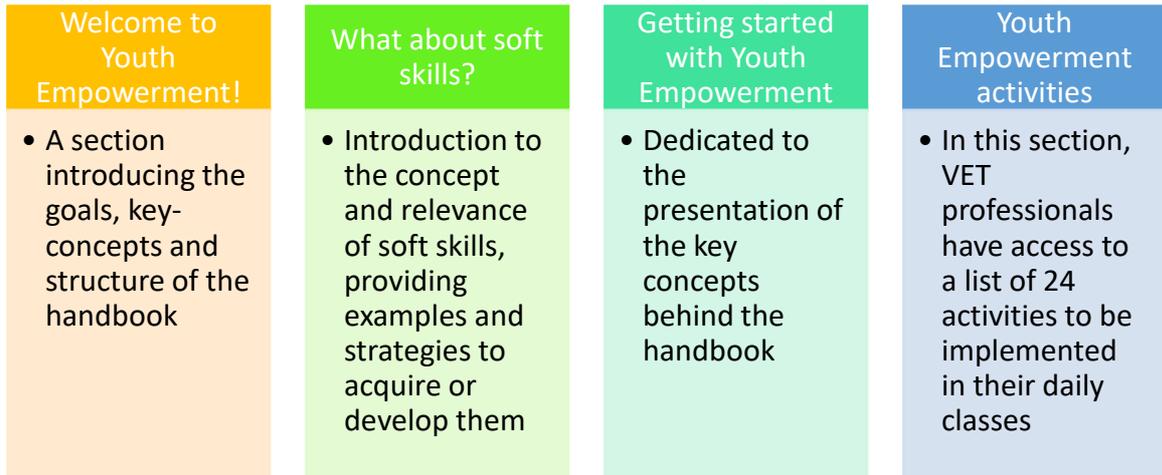


Figure 3 - Identification of the chapter of the Youth Empowerment handbook.

What about Soft Skills?

In the past years, soft skills are considered crucial and quite relevant, particularly to young qualified people. Among the diversity of reasons for its relevance in the actual society, soft skills are widely recognised as strategic for the:



Figure 4 – Relevance of Soft Skills in different dimensions and contexts of life.

Several examples of soft skills can be identified, and the relevance of each soft skill depends on many factors. Thus, when thinking about the soft skills relevant or strategic for the smooth and successful transition of trainees to the labour market, is crucial to involve all the parties in the identification of the soft skills:

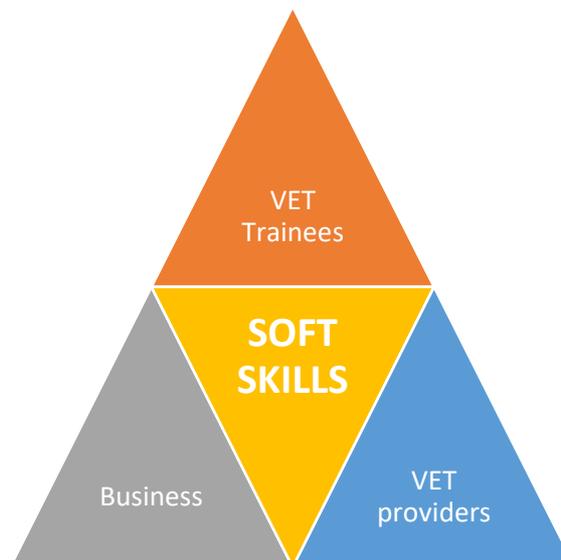


Figure 5 – Key-stakeholders involved in the identification of soft skills.

This tripartite approach was also considered in the study held by the VET_GPS consortium at the beginning of the project: a collection of surveys, focus group or interviews to representatives of VET system and companies, were two of the activities implemented in the framework of the study.

The results from this study are available in the document [National Validation of VET GPS soft skills list](#) and as a product of it, the partnership selected the following soft skills:

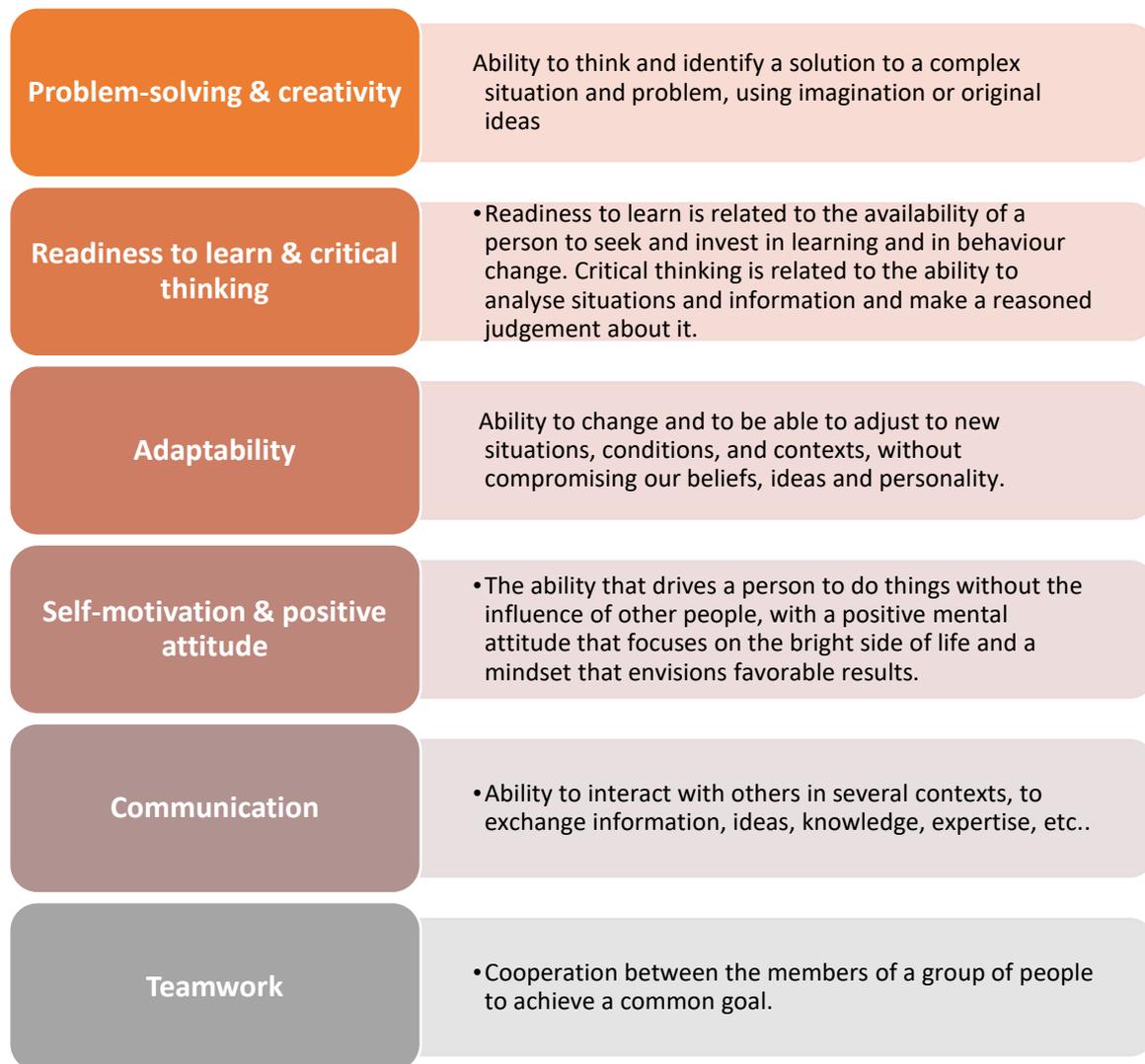


Figure 6 – Identification and a brief description of the soft skills that can be assessed and strengthened with VET_GPS tools.

In detail, all the tools and materials designed in the framework of VET_GPS project² are based on these six soft skills, the ones identified by different stakeholders as being more relevant. Nevertheless, is important to highlight that, other soft skills can be identified and developed in other contexts.

² Namely, the online soft skills self-assessment tool, the trainees' soft skills programme and the soft skills profile.

Getting started with *Youth Empowerment*

Youth Empowerment aims at supporting VET professionals promoting formal and non-formal learning, in the identification and implementation of activities in their daily classes, to promote the acquisition or development of the trainees' soft skills. Considering this, the handbook integrates a set of activities, designed to:



Figure 7 – The basis of the Youth Empowerment activities.

How to use Youth Empowerment?

Youth Empowerment handbook is integrated into a set of materials and tools to be used by VET professionals and trainees to assess and develop trainees' soft skills:

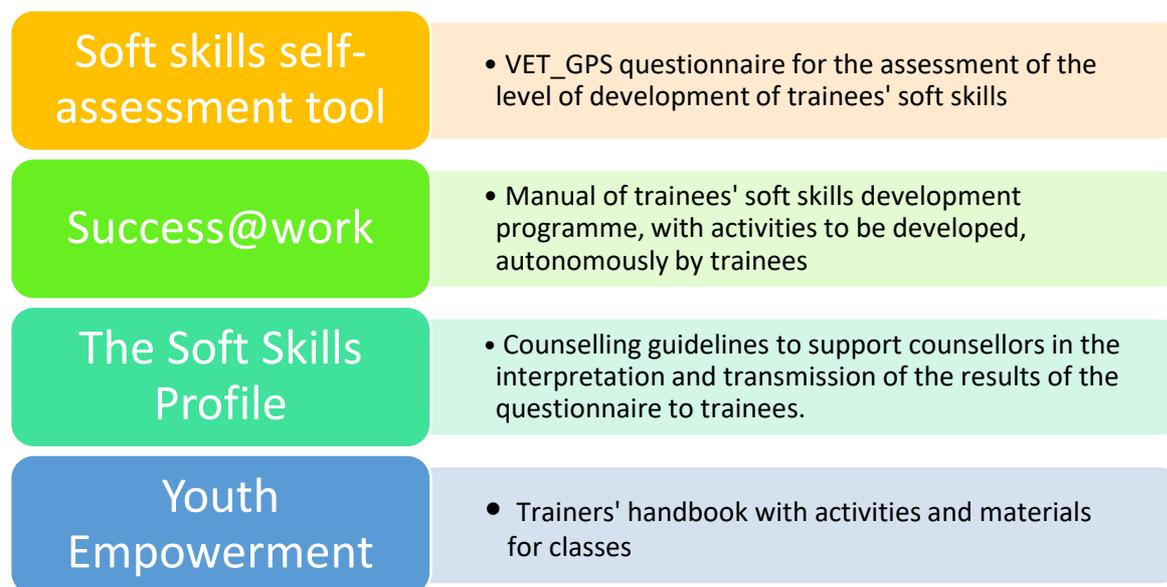


Figure 8 – The set of materials and tools of the VET_GPS project.

The process will start with an **assessment of the level of development of trainees' soft skills**. This is made in a group session with the guidance and support from a counsellor. Once having the results, the counsellor invites trainees to an **individual session to transmit and discuss the results of the questionnaires**. In this session, trainees will have the possibility of exploring the soft skills to be acquired or reinforced, defining a strategy for it. The **acquisition or reinforcement of trainees' soft skills** can be done in two ways: 1. **Autonomously** by the trainees, using one of the activities available in the **Success@work manual** or 2. In their **daily classes**, with the guidance and support from trainers, and based on the activities available in this handbook (see Figure 9.):

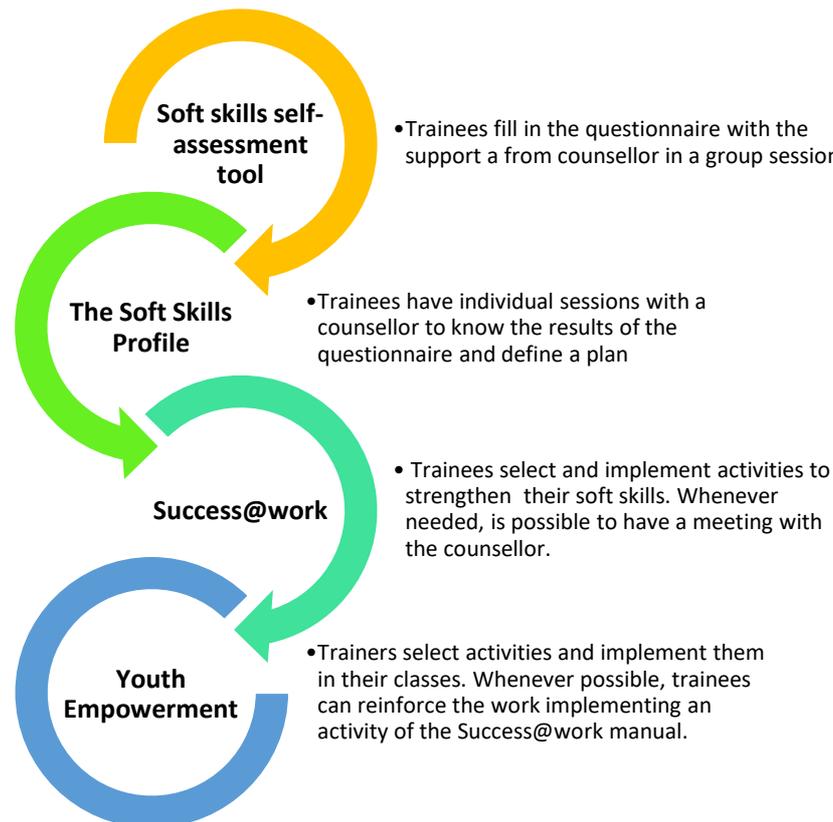


Figure 9 – Introduction of the process of use of VET_GPS tools and materials.

To take the highest benefit from the VET_GPS tools and materials is important to promote and maintain a high level of cooperation, commitment and communication between VET trainers, counsellors and trainees.

What is Youth Empowerment activity?

The activities of **Youth Empowerment** have been selected or structured to promote the acquisition and the development of trainees' soft skills, by promoting complementary activities and initiatives in their classes.

The activities can also be implemented in other contexts of promotion of non-formal learning, with different groups of trainees. VET trainers are responsible for identifying, guiding and monitoring the implementation of the activities in the class, always with high involvement of the trainees in the activities. Similarly, to the activities addressed to trainees, the activities included in this handbook integrates actions of self-reflection and debriefings, essential to raise trainees' awareness related to the impact of the activities in the acquisition and reinforcement of their soft skills, strengthen the possibility of being successful in this process.

Overall, the handbook has **24 activities** focusing on **six soft skills** (see Figure 10):



Figure 10 -The six soft skills approached in the VET_GPS project.

Every activity of this handbook is structured and presented in a single format, facilitating its analysis in terms of soft skill(s) approached, duration, type of activity, goals, methods, setting and resources necessary for its implementation. By this way, VET trainers can search for different activities, based on different and comparable criteria:

Name of the activity	Scope of the activity
Soft Skills approached	Soft skill(s) approached (from the 6 identified above)
Duration	Estimation of the time that will be needed to implement the activity
Method	Individual, Small group or Large group
Type of activity	Self-reflection, Practical or Interactive activity
Objectives	Expected results of the activity
Setting	Resources that will be needed to implement the activity (worksheets and hangouts are also provided)
Debriefing activity	Self-reflection questions about the activity and its impact
Tips for trainers	Suggestions that can help VET trainers in the implementation of the activity
Activity Description	Step by step instructions on how to prepare and implement the activity.

How to select the activities?

Is important to guarantee that the activities implemented in the classes are in accordance with trainees' needs, competencies and expectations. The scheme below (see Figure 11) introduces a suggestion of a process to support VET trainers in the identification of the activities to develop in their classes:

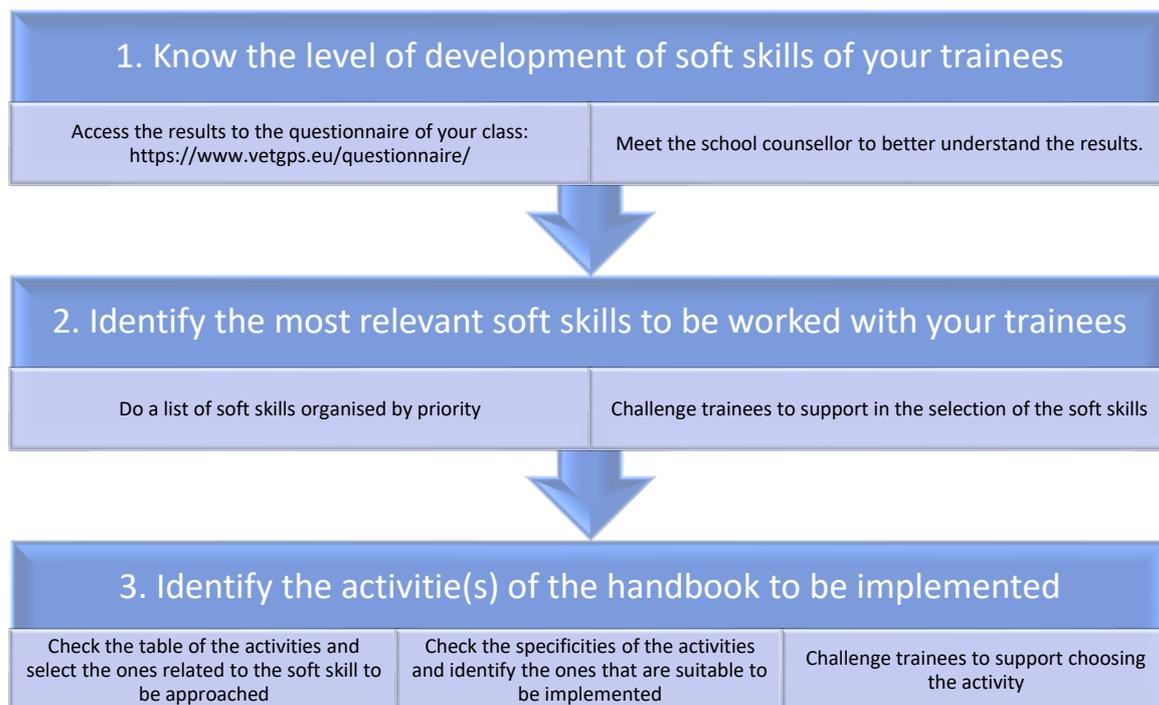


Figure 11 – Suggestion of a process for the selection of activity(ies) to be implemented by VET trainers in the class.

How to engage trainees?

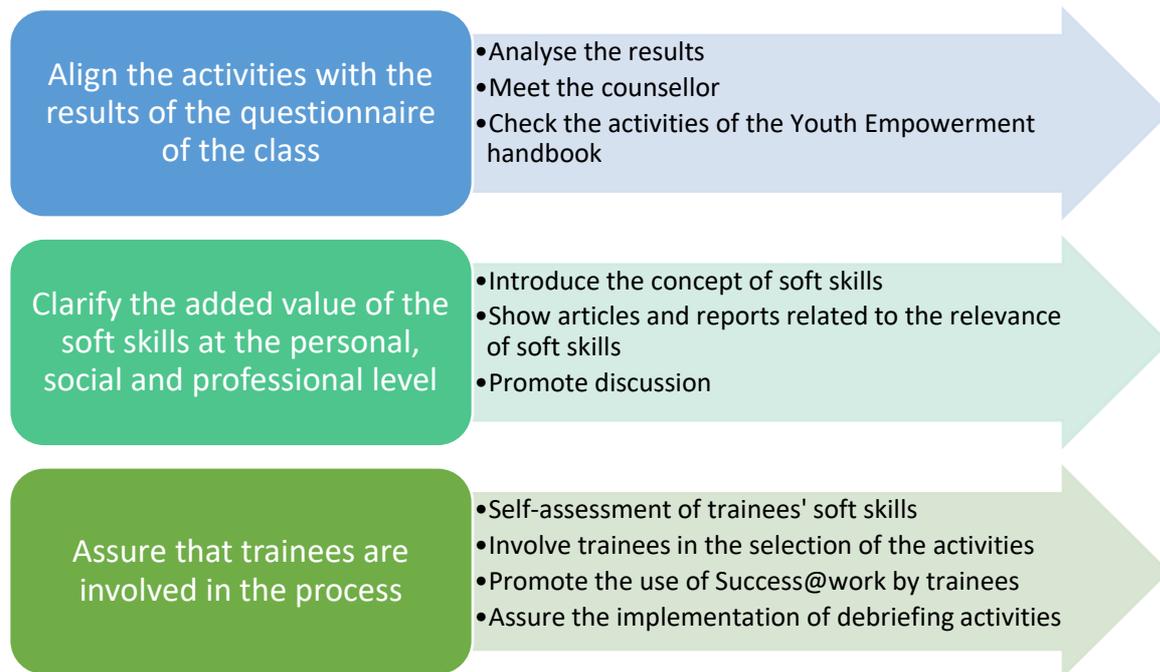


Figure 12 – Suggestions of strategies to successfully engage trainees in the process and activities.



Youth Empowerment activities

Check and select the activities for your class!

Nr.	Name	Type	Duration	Soft Skill(s) approached	Short description
1	Gym faces closure	Practical	30+ minutes	Problem-solving & creativity	Giving effective feedback, strategic planning, generating ideas and solutions.
2	I win, you win!	Practical	20 minutes	Problem-solving & creativity	Share your opinions and convincing the group; roleplaying.
3	Marshmallow Spaghetti Tower	Practical	20 minutes	Problem-solving & creativity	This team problem solving exercise helps teams think on their toes while building camaraderie, collaboration, creativity and leadership.
4	Egg Drop	Practical	40 minutes	Problem-solving & creativity	Egg drop is an exercise where the groups needs to construct a carrier for the egg and protect it from breaking. Students need to be creative to solve the problem.
5	Compass Points	Self-Reflection	30+ minutes	Readiness to learn & critical thinking	A routine for examining propositions.
6	I see – I think – I share	Self-Reflection	15-30 minutes	Readiness to learn & critical thinking	I see – I think – I share involves posing a question to trainees, asking them to take a few minutes of thinking time and then turning to a nearby trainee or a small group of trainees to share their thoughts.
7	Stop Look Listen	Self-Reflection	40 minutes	Readiness to learn & critical thinking	A routine for clarifying claims and sources.
8	Think – Connect – Create	Self-Reflection	20-30 minutes	Readiness to learn & critical thinking	Activity to map and connect students' knowledge.



9	Hit Parade	Practical	45 minutes	Adaptability	Perceiving the opinion of others about a taste or about a particular theme is important to respect and be flexible with regard to different opinions or feelings and to perceive the presences of different people.
10	Confidence	Practical	15 minutes	Adaptability	Adaptation to different circumstances, on the control of others and with plasticity and flexibility in the context of being commanded.
11	Shared Drawing	Interactive	30 minutes	Adaptability	The dynamics of shared design wants to show the team that working together overcomes all difficulties and that we have to adapt to situations in the team work.
12	Exchange of Secrets	Practical	30 minutes	Adaptability	Trainees train adaptability by changing their perspective and describe someone else problem as if they have it themselves.
13	5-Day diary	Practical	10-15 minutes per day during 1 week	Self-motivation & positive attitude	Trainees will need to fill in their diary on each day of the week with their thoughts. For each day they have a subject (Annex 1) and have to write about it.
14	Do you need (X) as much you think you do?	Self-Reflection	45 minutes	Self-motivation & positive attitude	Trainees will need to answer the “Appreciation Questionnaire”. After giving them the instructions, they will answer the questionnaire individually and then follow it with a general discussion in a large group.
15	Self-Esteem exercise	Self-Reflection	15 minutes	Self-motivation & positive attitude	People tend to focus on negative aspects of their personality harshly. Many exaggerate their negative traits or personal observations beyond what they really are which affects their self-esteem and self-worth negatively. This exercise will help them to look at the positive side and work on self-esteem. People can evaluate themselves by answering the questions provided.



16	Attitude Inventory	Self-Reflection	20-30 minutes	Self-motivation & positive attitude	Taking an “attitude inventory”, you’re asking to participants to take stock of what traits are and are not present in people with certain types of attitudes.
17	Good boss	Practical	20-25 minutes	Communication	The objective of the game is to help the trainees to give right information to a group of people in order to allow them to understand their tasks.
18	My best speech	Interactive	30-35 minutes	Communication	The main idea is to help trainees in the preparatory phase of a speech and in telling a story or an important fact.
19	The Library	Interactive	20-30 minutes	Communication	The objective of the game is to help trainees to improve their communication in a group, and especially within their colleagues.
20	The decision	Interactive	30 minutes	Communication	The main idea is to let the trainees discuss among them in order to reach a common decision.
21	Gordian knot	Interactive	40 minutes	Teamwork	In this exercise, the participants should work together in a large group under a certain time pressure to find their way out of a literally entangled situation.
22	Planning of a town house complex	Interactive	70 minutes	Teamwork	The purpose of this exercise is to plan a town house complex together and to decide who is allowed to move into this town house complex and who is not!
23	Communicate without words	Interactive	50 minutes	Teamwork	The purpose of this exercise is to collectively express different terms so that they are recognized by others. Attention! Trainees are not allowed to use words!
24	What happened if?	Interactive	50 minutes	Teamwork	In this exercise, trainees should develop in small groups under certain time pressure original questions, which are then evaluated by other groups.



Activities

Activity – Gym faces closure

Soft Skills approached	Problem solving and Creativity
Duration	30+ minutes
Method	Small group
Type of activity	Practical Activity
Objectives	<p>At the end of the activity trainees will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Analyse a problem and look for possible solutions ◆ Share his/her opinions ◆ Reach a win-win situation
Setting	<p>For the development of this activity you will need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Worksheet <i>Gym faces closure</i>
Debriefing activity	<p>At the end of the activity challenge trainees to think about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Present how you went about solving the "situation" (your plan), your options and steps chosen and the communication if you held a meeting. ◆ Did you solve it? ◆ How did the perception (attitudes) and approach affect the process and the outcome? What made things easier? What made things more difficult? What was within your power to achieve and how do you feel you did this?
Tips for trainers	<p>A problem is not being able to reach an objective easily at present. Perhaps -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ we may not know what our objective is (what we would want to happen – lack of goal) ◆ we don't know how to attain the objective (lack of strategy, knowledge, resources ...) ◆ we may know what to do but lack motivation ◆ we may not know what caused the problem or have a clear picture of all the elements ◆ a result/outcome may be genuinely beyond our control in which case we may have to modify our objectives or find new sources of support. It is always best to focus on what we CAN do rather than what we can't.



GOLDEN RULE: How we view a problem (as tangible and solvable or threatening and impossible) affects our attitude and approach. Invite participants to give their thoughts.

Activity Description

1. Describe the activity to the participants and share the handout *Gym faces closure*. Ask the participants what their initial options are...
2. Invite them to have a look at the considerations regarding our attitudes and perceptions of problems or challenging situations in **Tips for the trainers**. MUNICIPAL PROBLEM: GYM FACES CLOSURE.
 - *Then decide which is the best strategy for achieving satisfaction for themselves as regular clients of the gym*
 - *What would be necessary to achieve a potential win-win in which both you as client and the gym as a business achieve something positive.*
3. In pairs or small groups, come up with a satisfactory step by step plan including attitude, necessary resources, solutions / approaches etc. to face and deal effectively with this situation
4. As a follow up activity you could re-divide the group into groups of 4-6 persons giving them 10-15 minutes to prepare an initial conversation or meeting with the Gym management (2-3 people take the role of gym users and the other 2-3 the gym management and representatives of the municipal sports council).
 - *What is the result of the communication? What agreements (if any) does your group come to?*
5. Share the group dialogue and / or results and outcomes of the conversation with the other groups.

Gym faces closure

Worksheet

A. The problem

The local municipal gym you go to is facing closure. The number of users has been dropping for the past 3 years and there have been complaints that the facilities are old and poorly managed (changing rooms dilapidated – no dryers, lockers without keys ...) (swimming pool has no lanes and impossible to swim if not in a registered class). You can invent further problems. Subscription prices have gone up but services have not improved. If the gym closes you will have to travel 15km to the nearest municipal facilities in another town or pay higher quotas at private gyms without a swimming pool. You and your family go to the gym at least twice a week.

B. What would you do?

Read the situation carefully.

1. Think about all the possible initial reactions you might have and what the resulting actions would look like.

2. What are your initial options? Have a look at the tips below concerning our relation to problems or situations.
 - Which options are applicable in this situation?
 - What are you going to choose to do?

3. In pairs/small groups make a plan for how you would approach this entire situation: your objectives resources needed (especially your own skills – what is within your sphere of possibility and try to imagine those of the gym/the municipality), timeline etc.
 - What might bring about a win for you and a win for the municipality/gym management?
 - Brainstorm some strategies that would be helpful

4. OPTIONAL: organise a meeting with the gym management / municipal sports council and role play the communication. Notice the effects of your language (including body language) and attitude throughout. What are your sensations afterwards? How far did you achieve your objectives?



C. Some tips....

A problem is not being able to reach an objective easily at present.

Perhaps

- we may not know what our objective is (what we would want to happen – lack of goal)
- we don't know how to attain the objective (lack of strategy, knowledge, resources)
- we may know what to do but lack motivation
- we may not know what caused the problem or have a clear picture of all the elements
- a result/outcome may be genuinely beyond our control in which case we may have to modify our objectives or find new sources of support. It is always best to focus on what we CAN do rather than what we can't.

D. Challenge trainees to think about...

1. Present how you went about solving the "situation" (your plan), your options and steps chosen and the communication if you held a meeting.

2. Did you solve it?

3. How did the perception (attitudes) and approach affect the process and the outcome? What made things easier? What made things more difficult? What was within your power to achieve and how do you feel you did this?

[Go back to the table](#)

Activity – I win, you win!

Soft Skills approached	Problem solving and Creativity
Duration	20 minutes
Method	Small group
Type of activity	Practical Activity
Objectives	At the end of the activity trainees will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Analyze a problem and look for possible solutions ◆ Share his/her opinions ◆ Reach a win-win situation
Setting	For the development of this activity you will need: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Worksheet <i>I win, you win!</i>
Debriefing activity	At the end of the activity challenge trainees to think about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ What were the difficulties (attitudes, communication habits and skills including non-verbal body language and listening..., degree of flexibility, openness etc.) in resolving the conflict positively? ◆ Were the persons involved clear about what they really needed in the situation? Were they able to express it adequately? If so/not-why? ◆ How could the situation be resolved to WIN-WIN satisfaction for both parties? Would anything else work? ◆ What are the key elements of a WIN-WIN communication?
Tips for trainers	In case there are groups of 3, the third person can assume the role of the moderator/observer and comment once the two finish role playing how they have played role A and B and analyse the way they tried to reach a win-win situation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ How did they explain their point of view? ◆ Were they convincing? ◆ Did they reach a win-win situation? ◆ Were they flexible?

Activity Description

1. Divide the group into pairs and distribute role cards A and B.
2. Invite the pairs to role-play the situation in the worksheet
3. The aim is to reach a win-win solution (if possible) to the situation.



I win, you win!

Worksheet

A. The situation

1. You are going to role-play (or observe) a situation in which two colleagues hold a meeting over an issue (conflict) at work.
Read your role carefully.

Role A

You are an employee in a small company. You have to get out of the office on time each evening to pick up your child from day care. This means you almost never help with the closing up chores but you work hard to get your work done on time. You feel others waste time during the day which then hinders your leaving on time.

You are going to role-play a meeting with one of your colleagues who has asked to speak to you. You are aware this person has been distant towards you lately but you never have time to bother about it as you are focussed on getting your job done well. Your colleague is very sociable and typically always chatting and telling jokes in the office. Sometimes this irritates you.

Nonetheless you aim for a WIN-WIN / positive outcome from the meeting

Role B

You have a colleague who leaves at 5.00pm no matter what still has to be done. You end up finishing a lot of tasks which your colleague hasn't finished and you have to do the time-consuming clearing up chores at the end of the day.

You are going to role-play a meeting you request with this colleague. They haven't picked up any hints you've dropped.

You aim for a WIN-WIN outcome

Role C

You observe two colleagues having a meeting over a dispute regarding their workload and schedule.

OBSERVE and make notes:

Analyse the way they tried to reach a win-win situation.

How did they explain their points of view?

- Were they convincing?
- Did they reach a win-win situation?
- Were they flexible?

B. CHECK OUT before you start

TO initiate a WIN-WIN communication it's important first of all to know what a WIN WIN communication looks/sounds like.

1. Have a look at the following web:

<https://medium.com/@InnerConqueror/how-i-create-win-win-situations-for-success-d59edc06313d>

2. Plan the meeting carefully for a few minutes

- Can you imagine beforehand what they might need?
- How can you best express what you need that leaves the other open to your suggestions/needs
- How are you going to be able to listen adequately if/when you are accused of something as typically happens in disputes
- Plan carefully what you are going to say to your colleague

3. Reflect with all the groups what

- What were the difficulties in resolving the conflict positively?
- How important is it for the people involved to be clear about what they need in the situation?
- How important is it to express this adequately?
- What does this look/sound like in practice?
- How could this situation be resolved to WIN-WIN satisfaction for both parties? Would anything else work?



- What are some of the key elements of a WIN-WIN communication and positive outcomes?

C. Challenge trainees to think about...

1. What were the difficulties (attitudes, communication habits and skills including non-verbal body language and listening..., degree of flexibility, openness etc.) in resolving the conflict positively?

2. Were the persons involved clear about what they really needed in the situation? Were they able to express it adequately? If so/not-why?

3. How could the situation be resolved to WIN-WIN satisfaction for both parties? Would anything else work?

4. What are some of the key elements of a WIN-WIN communication?

[Go back to the table](#)

Activity – Marshmallow Spaghetti Tower

Soft Skills approached	Problem solving and Creativity
Duration	20 minutes
Method	Small group
Type of activity	Practical Activity
Objectives	At the end of the activity trainees will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Collaborate with each other
Setting	For the development of this activity you will need: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ 20 sticks of uncooked spaghetti ◆ 1 roll of masking tape ◆ 1 yard of string ◆ 1 marshmallow
Debriefing activity	At the end of the activity challenge trainees to think about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Did you work as a team? How? Who assumed the role of the leader? How did this work? ◆ Have you worked efficiently?
Tips for trainers	Why collaboration is important for problem solving: “Collectively, we can be more insightful, more intelligent than we can possibly be individually,” writes Peter Senge in “ <i>The Fifth Discipline</i> ”. We can solve problems better as a team than we can alone, which means developing your team’s collaboration skills will lead to better problem solving outcomes.

Activity Description

1. Divide the group into teams of 4-5 and provide instructions for the activity.
2. INSTRUCTIONS: teams must make a marshmallow spaghetti tower using any/all of the materials provided
 - *OBJECTIVE: to build the tallest tower within an allotted time period, 5 minutes for example. The tower must be freestanding*
 - *ADDED DIFFICULTY – (OPTIONAL) make the exercise more challenging by adding a marshmallow to the top of the tower.*

[Go back to the table](#)



Activity – Egg Drop

Soft Skills approached	Problem solving and Creativity
Duration	40 minutes
Method	Small group
Type of activity	Practical Activity
Objectives	At the end of the activity trainees will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Make quick decisions and effective choices ◆ Be more adapted to problem solving through creativity
Setting	For the development of this activity you will need: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ A carton of eggs ◆ Basic construction materials such as newspapers, straws, tape, plastic wrap, balloons, rubber bands, popsicle sticks, etc., tarp, or drop cloth ◆ A parking lot, or some other place you don't mind getting messy!
Debriefing activity	At the end of the activity challenge trainees to think about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Is making decisions easy now for you? ◆ Can you make decisions and effective choices quickly? ◆ Was important to you to solve the problem?
Tips for trainers	This exercise works well with small groups with 2-3 elements.

Activity Description

1. Each team gets an egg and must select from the construction materials.
2. Give everyone 20-30 minutes to construct a carrier for the egg and protect it from breaking.
3. Drop each egg carrier off a ledge (i.e. over a balcony) and see whose carrier protects the egg from breaking.
4. If multiple eggs survive, keep increasing the height until only one egg is left.

[Go back to the table](#)



Activity – Compass Points

Soft Skills approached	Readiness to Learn and Critical Thinking
Duration	30+ minutes
Method	Individual
Type of activity	Self-Reflection Activity
Objectives	At the end of the activity trainees will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Explore various sides and facets of a proposition or idea prior to taking a stand or expressing an opinion on it.
Setting	For the development of this activity you will need: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Pencil or Pen ◆ Paper
Debriefing activity	At the end of the activity challenge trainees to think about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Do you feel this structure gives you a better view of the “whole picture”? ◆ What have you learned from your colleagues during this session? ◆ Did you write the same perspectives as your colleagues?
Tips for trainers	<p>This activity is repeatable for a number of contexts and situations, it will always help defining a structure when analysing an idea, a problem, a situation.</p> <p>The routine needs to be modelled with the whole group initially with responses recorded for the entire class to see. This enables students to build on each other’s ideas. You might record responses using the directions of a compass to provide a visual anchor. That is, draw a compass in the centre of the board and then record responses corresponding the appropriate direction: E, W, N, or S. It is generally easiest for students to begin with what is exciting or positive about the idea or proposition and then move to worrisome and need to know. Students might be asked to write down their individual stance or suggestion for moving forward after the initial group discussion.</p> <p>You can also ask students to make an initial judgment or evaluation of the idea or proposition before doing the compass points and then ask them how their thinking has changed after discussion using the compass points routine.</p>



Activity Description

1. Think about an idea to develop, a proposition or a statement.
2. Develop the proposed routine passing through the following questioning phases:

E = Excited

What excites you about this idea or proposition? What's the upside?

W = Worrisome

What do you find worrisome about this idea or proposition? What's the downside?

N = Need to Know

What else do you need to know or find out about this idea or proposition? What additional information would help you to evaluate things?

S = Stance or Suggestion for Moving Forward

What is your current stance or opinion on the idea or proposition? How might you move forward in your evaluation of this idea or proposition?

A routine for examining propositions to help students flesh out an idea or proposition and eventually evaluate it.

[Go back to the table](#)



Activity – I see- I think – I share

Soft Skills approached	Readiness to Learn and Critical Thinking
Duration	15-30 minutes
Method	Small group
Type of activity	Self-Reflection
Objectives	<p>At the end of the activity trainees will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Develop their critical thinking ◆ Understand multiple perspectives ◆ Promote understanding through active reasoning, explanation and argumentation
Setting	<p>For the development of this activity you will need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Classroom ◆ Paper ◆ Pencil or pen
Debriefing activity	<p>At the end of the activity challenge trainees to think about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Did you and your partner/group think different? ◆ How did you see the perspective of the other person? ◆ What are your arguments to defend your position?
Tips for trainers	<p>Following up this activity is very easy, critical thinking can always be further developed. Mix your students constantly so they are not always with the same colleagues.</p> <p>When introducing the routine, remind students to take turns, listen carefully and ask questions to one another. One way to ensure that students listen to each other is to tell students that you will be calling on individuals to explain their partners thinking, as opposed to telling their own thoughts.</p> <p>Encourage students to make their thinking visible by asking them to write or draw their ideas before and/or after sharing. Journals can also be useful. Student pairs can report one another's thoughts to the class and a list of ideas can be created in the classroom.</p>



Activity Description³

1. Pose a question in the classroom, make them reflect on this statement by themselves.
2. Make them share their ideas with a small group.
3. Help them summarize the ideas they concluded together with all the class.

NOTE: *I see – I think – I involves questioning your students and developing their critical thinking skills. Questioning them and asking them to share can be applied in a number of moments in the classroom. For example, when approaching a solution, during a math problem, after an history lesson, or after reading a passage or chapter of a book you may ask students to take a moment to think about a particular question or issue and then turn to their neighbour and share their thoughts. Sharing can also be done in small groups. Sometimes you will want to have pairs or groups summarize their ideas for the whole class.*

[Go back to the table](#)

³ Biography: Frank Lyman: Lyman, F. T. (1981). *The responsive classroom discussion: The inclusion of all students*. In A. Anderson (Ed.), *Mainstreaming Digest* (pp. 109-113). College Park: University of Maryland Press.



Activity – Stop Look Listen

Soft Skills approached	Readiness to Learn and Critical Thinking
Duration	40 minutes
Method	Small group
Type of activity	Self-Reflection
Objectives	<p>At the end of the activity trainees will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Investigate truth claims and issues related to truth ◆ Stand back and think about ways to obtain information when trying to find out about the truth of something ◆ Think critically about sources ◆ Appreciate the deeper complexity of truth situations by addressing issues of bias and objectivity
Setting	<p>For the development of this activity you will need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ PC or Smartphone ◆ Pencil or Pen ◆ Paper
Debriefing activity	<p>At the end of the activity challenge trainees to think about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ What differs from what you thought you knew and what you found out? ◆ Where you able to qualify a source as biased or not true? ◆ What level of quality was the information you found in general?
Tips for trainers	<p>Begin by helping students to pin down a claim about a topic. Students may have a good idea about a question or claim they would like to investigate. Help them take stock of what they know by creating a list of facts and uncertainties around their claim. Students may need to redefine or restate their claim.</p> <p>Once a clear claim has been identified, ask students what they can do to investigate it. Brainstorm source by encouraging students to think broadly about different kinds of information available to them. Consider having students make a mind map of sources that can provide information about their claim.</p> <p>Document students’ ideas by creating a chart of identified sources, the perspectives of the source and potential biases they might represent. Display the chart on the wall and add comments</p>



as each source is investigated. Keep this chart accessible so students can return to it during the investigation of future truth claims. Track the instances or types of bias that students identify and use it as a way to further conversations about new situations in the classroom.

Activity Description⁴

1. Identify a claim.
2. **Stop:** Be clear in the definition of the claim, define your question from a list of facts and uncertainties.
 - *Define your question from your list of facts and uncertainties.*
3. **Look:** Find your sources.
 - *Where will you look? Consider obvious and non-obvious places.*
4. **Listen:** Listen to what your sources are telling you, identify possible biases.
 - *Is it possible for your source to be biased and how does it affect your information?*

[Go back to the table](#)

⁴ Biography: Harvard Project Zero.



Activity – Think – Connect – Create

Soft Skills approached	Readiness to Learn and Critical Thinking
Duration	20-30 minutes
Method	Small group
Type of activity	Self-Reflection
Objectives	<p>At the end of the activity trainees will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Make connections among ideas and generate ideas about a topic ◆ Develop concept maps to help uncover their mental models of a topic in a non-linear way
Setting	<p>For the development of this activity you will need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Classroom ◆ Pencil or Pen ◆ Paper
Debriefing activity	<p>At the end of the activity challenge trainees to think about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Do you understand the connection between the initial concept and everything you connected? ◆ What is connected and what isn't? What is the line that divides it? ◆ Has this broaden your view of the subject? Did this helped you to have new ideas?
Tips for trainers	<p>Depending on how much familiarity students have with concept maps, you may need to demonstrate making a concept map using this routine with the whole class. However, if students are relatively familiar with the idea of concept maps, you can launch right into the routine explaining that students will be making concept maps but in a structured way. Give time for students to complete each step of the routine before moving on to the next step. It isn't necessary that students generate an exhaustive list of all their ideas initially, but make sure they have time to generate a rich and varied list before moving on. Tell students that at any point they can add new ideas to their list and incorporate them into their map. If you are adding to a map over time, you might want to have students use a different colour pencil each time they make additions. Explaining and discussing maps with partners helps students to consolidate their thinking and gain other perspectives.</p>



Activity Description

1. Ask students to define a topic, concept or issue.
2. They have to generate a list of ideas and initial thoughts about it.
3. After sort ideas according to how central or tangential they are.
4. Ask them to connect their ideas by drawing connecting lines between ideas that have something in common.
5. At the end they have to elaborate on any of the ideas/thoughts you have written so far by adding new ideas that expand, extend, or add to your initial ideas.

[Go back to the table](#)

Activity – Hit Parade

Soft Skills approached	Adaptability
Duration	45 minutes
Method	Large group
Type of activity	Practical Activity
Objectives	At the end of the activity trainees will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Work on the self-knowledge of the elements of the group; ◆ Train listening skills; ◆ Increase group cohesion and the sense of belonging.
Setting	For the development of this activity you will need: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ PC, MP3, Smartphone
Debriefing activity	At the end of the activity challenge trainees to think about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ How this activity allows participants to express personal feelings in a socially acceptable way; ◆ The individual differences that are reflected in the choice of different types of music.
Tips for trainers	At the beginning of the activity, it has to be explained that we all have different and personal tastes in different contexts. The ability to listen is a strong tool and music can represent different perceptions in different people

Activity Description

1. In the previous session, the trainer asks the group to bring to the next session a CD/mp3/ youtube link or with some of their favourite song / songs.
 2. Each of the members voluntarily puts their music to play while the rest of the group listens
 3. After each song is played, the trainer asks the element who chose it the meaning of their song and what it says about themselves.
 4. Next, ask the rest of the group to comment on the song and give feedback to your partner.
- This activity allows participants to express personal feelings in a socially acceptable way; it also allows the exploration of individual differences that are reflected in the choice of different types of music. Define a topic, concept or issue.

[Go back to the table](#)

Activity – Confidence

Soft Skills approached	Adaptability
Duration	15 minutes
Method	Small group
Type of activity	Practical Activity
Objectives	<p>At the end of the activity trainees will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Put in a situation of incapacity; ◆ Look at the world in a different way; ◆ Placing yourself in a position of disability; ◆ Understand that we may have to adapt to unforeseen circumstances.
Debriefing activity	<p>At the end of the activity challenge trainees to think about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ How did you feel during the activity? ◆ Were you able to move without colliding with your colleagues? ◆ How did you feel when you were blindfolded? ◆ How did you feel when you controlled the "robot"?
Tips for trainers	The type of tasks to be performed can vary starting with basic tasks for more complex tasks.

Activity Description

1. The trainer divides the class into pairs. One of the elements will blindfold the other, puts himself behind him.
2. The trainer explains the activity:
 - The front element will function like a robot, commanded by the colleague who is behind it. This one, in turn, will have to command his "robot", taking him to cross a course with obstacles. Since the "robot" does not know how to speak, the activity will take place without any of the elements speaking;
 - The control panel is placed on the back of the "robot" and consists of three buttons placed in a row: the middle one takes the "robot" to move forward, the one on the right indicates the right and left to walk to the left;
 - The buttons should be pressed gently. The "robot" continues to walk while the button is



being pressed and is quiet if neither button is pressed.

3. The trainer starts the activity, indicating to the players that they must move throughout the room, simultaneously, without colliding with the other pairs. The speed of movement is controlled by the trainer.
4. At the end of some time, the trainer indicates to the pair that they change position.

[Go back to the table](#)

Activity – Shared Drawing

Soft Skills approached	Adaptability
Duration	30 minutes
Method	Small group
Type of activity	Interactive
Objectives	At the end of the activity trainees will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Learn to work in group with persons with different abilities
Setting	For the development of this activity you will need: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Paper and coloured pens
Debriefing activity	At the end of the activity challenge trainees to think about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ How was it to work in group with persons with different abilities? Did you adapt it well? ◆ Could you adapt to the work that was proposed? ◆ How did you feel during this activity?

Activity Description

1. Divide the class into groups of 5 people. Each group will have the task of drawing a boat using a sheet of paper and coloured pens.
2. Each participant will take one action at a time. Example: the first participant makes a dash, and the next action is for another participant.

However, participants will have to meet the following individual characteristics:

- Participant 1 is blind and only has the right arm;
- Participant 2 is blind and has only the left arm;
- Participant 3 is blind and deaf;
- Participant 4 is blind and speechless;
- Participant 5 does not have the arms.

When the groups are ready, start counting the time, letting the groups do the activity without interruption.

[Go back to the table](#)

Activity – Exchange of Secrets

Soft Skills approached	Adaptability
Duration	30 minutes
Method	Large group
Type of activity	Practical Activity
Objectives	At the end of the activity trainees will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Learn to accept and help develop empathy with the other members of the group.
Setting	For the development of this activity you will need: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Pencil or pen ◆ Paper
Debriefing activity	At the end of the activity challenge trainees to think about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ How did you feel when you saw your problem described? ◆ How did you feel about explaining the other's problem? ◆ How was it to find a solution to a problem that you did not really live? ◆ Did the solution proposed by your colleague help you think about overcoming your difficulty?
Tips for trainers	No debate or question should be allowed. When everyone has already spoken, the trainer may propose some questions for the participants to reflect on the activity.

Activity Description

1. Each person should write, on the piece of paper he/she has received, some difficulty that he/she finds in his/her relationship with others, but which he/she would not like to talk about.
2. Then, all the papers should be folded in the same way. The trainer collects and mixes them.
3. Next, each participant takes a problem/difficulty. The trainee should read the problem out loud, explain it as if it had been written by him/her and propose some solution.
 - The trainer should observe whether the trainee can actually appropriate the other's problem or if it does so unnaturally. How one appropriates another's problem and proposes solutions can tell a great deal about how he/she understands the other and how



he/she is willing to contribute.

- Another point that can be observed during this dynamic is whether people will be empathic or talk about each other's problem with grace, debauchery or even disdain. It is important that they consider that, even if they do not have the same difficulty as the colleague, they should be respectful and in solidarity with the point of improvement of the other.

[Go back to the table](#)

Activity – 5-Day diary

Soft Skills approached	Self-motivation & positive attitude
Duration	10-15 minutes
Method	Individual
Type of activity	Practical Activity
Objectives	At the end of the activity trainees will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Feel more motivated ◆ Have a better attitude through life ◆ Appreciate good things in life
Setting	For the development of this activity you will need: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ 1 pen or pencil ◆ 1 diary / book ◆ Instructions (worksheet)
Debriefing activity	At the end of the activity challenge trainees to think about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ What did you think of the exercise? ◆ Was it helpful? ◆ Did it make you think about different topics of your life? ◆ Are you happier?
Tips for trainers	This is a simple yet powerful exercise to make people feel happy. There are no right or wrong answers here. The trainer will evaluate if participants wrote down their thoughts. The process of writing down is more structured and systematic than talking which is why the diary technique is so much more effective.

Activity Description⁵

1. Give a book/diary for each trainee and explain the purpose of the diary.
2. Give simple instructions about what is expected (Worksheet).
3. Each day tell them the topic of the day to reflect and write about.
4. At the end trainees may do an overview of the diary and, probably, will feel happier.

⁵ Seligman, M. E. P., Steen, T., Park, N., Peterson, C. (2005) "Positive Psychology Progress: Empirical Validation of Interventions", American Psychologist, 60, pages 410-21

Wiseman, R. (2009) "59 seconds: Think a little, change a lot", Macmillan.



5-Day Diary⁶

Worksheet

A. Trainees must consider the following notes:

1. While writing, don't worry too much about grammar, punctuation, and style. The aim is to get down on the paper what they have in mind quickly. The act of writing will encourage them to think systematically.
2. Keep it short. It doesn't have to be a long. Follow whatever helps them to keep up with the exercise and make it into a habit rather than going crazy on it one day and then giving up the next.
3. What they need to write in their diary each day:
 - ◆ Monday: Appreciate What They Are Grateful About
 - Think about their life in the past week and think of three things that they appreciate. Write these in their diary. The three things can be anything: people, possessions, states, status, experiences, etc.
 - ◆ Tuesday: To Think About One of the Most Enjoyable Moments of Their Life
 - Think back and pick a moment in time where they were truly happy. A moment that they were content with life and felt they did not want it to pass; a moment that they wish to revisit. Imagine how it felt. Write about this single moment in the diary.
 - This moment doesn't have to be symbolically significant. It also doesn't have to be the single most enjoyable event ever. They just need to pick up one they enjoyed a lot and keep their focus on the writing task rather than comparing them in their mind.
 - ◆ Wednesday: Think of a Compelling Vision of Future
 - Trainees need to imagine a future where everything has gone according to plan and they have achieved what they wanted. Think of a realistic future where they have worked hard to get what they wanted and have succeeded spectacularly. The focus is not necessarily to set goals. Instead, the aim is to understand their vision and to identify what they really want.
 - ◆ Thursday: To Think of a Significant Character in Their Life
 - Think of a person who has a significant impact on their life—usually a close family or friend. Tell the participants: “What if you had only one chance to tell this person how much they meant to you? Write down why you care for them so much”.
 - ◆ Friday: To Think About How Much They Have Progressed This Week

⁶ Seligman, M. E. P., Steen, T., Park, N., Peterson, C. (2005) “Positive Psychology Progress: Empirical Validation of Interventions”, American Psychologist, 60, pages 410-21 | Wiseman, R. (2009) “59 seconds: Think a little, 41 change a lot”, Macmillan.



B. Challenge trainees to think about...

1. What did you think of the exercise?

--

2. Was it helpful? Did it make you think about different topics of your life?

--

3. Are you happier?

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[Go back to the table](#)

Activity – Do you need (X) as much you think you do?

Soft Skills approached	Self-motivation & positive attitude
Duration	45 minutes
Method	Individual & Large group
Type of activity	Self-Reflection
Objectives	At the end of the activity trainees will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Reflect about their answers to see if they feel more positive with their choices in life
Setting	For the development of this activity you will need: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ 1 pen or pencil ◆ Worksheet: “The Appreciation Questionnaire”
Debriefing activity	At the end of the activity challenge trainees to think about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ What did you think of the questions? ◆ How easy was it to answer? ◆ Which questions were most difficult? ◆ Which questions were most helpful? ◆ Which one of your own answers surprised you? ◆ Which one of other people’s answers did you find inspiring? ◆ Do you feel more positive with your choices in life?

Activity Description

1. Distribute a copy of “The Appreciation Questionnaire” to each trainee.
2. Ask them to answer the questions. Please bear in mind that since this is a personal questionnaire, they will be working on their own for the duration of the activity. Explain that they don’t have to share anything they don’t want to and it is important that they provide honest answers rather than censoring themselves because of others.
3. Bring back everyone together. Go through each question and ask volunteers to share what they have written. Don’t force anyone to share anything if they don’t want to. The aim is to share ideas so that people can get inspired by answers given by others.
4. Follow with a discussion.



Do you need (X) as much you think you do?

Worksheet

A. Introduction

In today's world, we seem to be constantly chasing something: a new job, a new house, more money, more time, new cloth, a new partner, a new car, a new gadget and on and on. This chase is becoming a major source of anxiety for many people. It is like you live in a world where you can have a lot, but you are not getting much. The problem is not with you though. The problem is that several significant trends in the past century have led to the explosion of content, products and experiences. As such, to reduce any potential anxiety that arises as a result of all the abundance and our inability to have it all, we must consciously practice being content and appreciative. By being content we focus on what we desire the most and take pleasure in having it. By being appreciative we focus on what we already have and feel happy about our good fortunes.

Many techniques exist for practicing being appreciative or content. Here is an exercise that help you in this regard and make you reflect about what motivates you. The questions can be answered individually and with as much time as necessary. At the end you will feel more positive with your choices in life.

B. The Appreciation Questionnaire

TO initiate a WIN-WIN communication it's important first of all to know what a WIN WIN communication looks/sounds like.

1. Do you need money as much as you think you do? List three things you can do during the next week that doesn't require money but that it will certainly boost your happiness.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



2. Do you need time as much as you think you do? List three things you can do during the next week that doesn't require any extra time but that it will certainly boost your happiness.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

3. Do you need someone else's attention or company as much as you think you do? List three things you can do during the next week that doesn't depend on someone else's attention or company but that it will certainly boost your happiness.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

4. Do you need friendship as much as you do? List three things you can do during the next week that doesn't involve a friend but that it will certainly boost your happiness.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

5. Do you need luck as much as you think you do? List three things you can do during the next week that doesn't require luck but that it will certainly boost your happiness.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

6. Do you need a promotion as much as you think you do? List three things you can do during the next week for your work that doesn't necessarily contribute to a promotion but that it will certainly boost your happiness.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



7. Do you need a new job as much as you think you do? List three things you can do during the next week in your current job that will certainly boost your happiness.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

8. Do you need a new partner as much as you think you do? List three things you can do during the next week with your current partner that will certainly boost your happiness.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

9. Do you need a new house as much as you think you do? List three things you can do in your current place during the next week that will certainly boost your happiness.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

10. Do you need a new _____ [fill the blank with any desired possession] as much as you think you do? List three things you can do during the next week without having this that will certainly boost your happiness.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

11. Reflect on your answers given about. How do you feel now that you have answered these questions? How do you view life? Did you have difficulty answering any of the questions? What does this suggest?



C. Challenge trainees to think about...

1. What did you think of the questions? How easy was it to answer?

2. Which questions were most difficult? Which questions were most helpful?

3. Which one of your own answers surprised you? Which one of other people's answers did you find inspiring?

4. Do you feel more positive with your choices in life?

[Go back to the table](#)

Activity – Self-Esteem exercise

Soft Skills approached	Self-motivation & positive attitude
Duration	15 minutes
Method	Individual
Type of activity	Self-Reflection
Objectives	At the end of the activity trainees will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Reflect on their personal observations; ◆ To look at the positive side and avoid negative and destructive generalizations.
Setting	For the development of this activity you will need: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ 1 pen or pencil ◆ Blank sheets
Debriefing activity	At the end of the activity challenge trainees to think about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Was it easy to change your perspective? ◆ How do you feel as a result? ◆ Do you feel more positive? ◆ What do you think of this exercise?

Activity Description

1. To get the best from this exercise it is best if you don't explain what the exercise is about.
2. Distribute two blank sheets to each trainee.
3. Write the following statement on a flipchart or whiteboard: "Sometimes I make the following negative statements about myself...".
4. Ask trainees to write this at the top of one of their sheets. Ask them to complete it based on what they think about themselves. Reassure them that they don't have to share what they write with others so they can be honest with themselves.
5. Next, write the following statement on the flipchart: "Now that I think about it, I can state it more accurately without generalization or judgment..."
6. Now ask the trainees to use the second sheet and write this at the top and then write their answers. Follow with a discussion.

[Go back to the table](#)

Activity – Attitude Inventory

Soft Skills approached	Self-motivation & positive attitude
Duration	20-30 minutes
Method	Individual & Large group
Type of activity	Self-Reflection
Objectives	At the end of the activity trainees will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Identify different attitudes that a person can have; ◆ Have a discussion without making judgments of their peers or hurt someone’s feelings
Setting	For the development of this activity you will need: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Chalkboard or 1 pen / pencil and paper ◆ Instructions (worksheet)
Debriefing activity	At the end of the activity challenge trainees to think about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ What did you like the most in this activity? ◆ Did you learn about how to stay positive? ◆ Do you think you hurt anyone’s feelings?
Tips for trainers	By having participants take an attitude inventory, you are allowing them to see and learn how they view themselves and their problems, as well as their peers. You can have a brief discussion after the inventory between peers to check and compare their answers.

Activity Description

1. Give students a chalkboard (or a paper) and have them answer some questions one at a time.
2. After each question, allow students to hold up their chalkboards (or paper) and ask them to discuss their answers.
3. Encourage students to not make any judgments of their peers, and to choose answers that will not hurt anyone’s feelings.



Attitude Inventory

Worksheet

A. Instructions

A smart way for students to learn about the different attitudes that people have is to take an attitude inventory.

Give participants a piece of paper and a pencil (or a chalkboard) and ask them the following questions, one at a time.

1. Identify someone you think typically has a good attitude. What clues tell you this person has a positive attitude and why do you think they're like that?

2. Identify someone you think typically has a poor attitude. What signs indicate this person has a negative attitude?

3. When you think of the person with a negative attitude, what things or which people do you think put that person in that mood?

4. Do you think you can have a bad attitude one day and a good one the next? Why or why not? What influences that?



5. Do you have to have a bad attitude if things aren't going your way, or do you think it's possible to have a good attitude even when things you don't like are happening? Tell me why.

6. Are there things in your life you'd like to change to help you have a more positive attitude?

7. If negative stuff is happening to you, are there things you can do to keep your outlook positive? Tell me about a few of them.

B. Challenge trainees to think about...

1. What did you like the most in this activity?

2. Did you learn about how to stay positive?

3. Do you think you heart anyone's feelings?

[Go back to the table](#)



Activity – Good boss

Soft Skills approached	Communication
Duration	30-35 minutes
Method	Individual & Large group
Type of activity	Practical Activity
Objectives	At the end of the activity trainees will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Give precise information to people ◆ Coordinate more than one people at once
Setting	For the development of this activity you will need: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ An empty room or with enough space ◆ XXX blindfolds (depending on the number of people)
Debriefing activity	At the end of the activity challenge trainees to think about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Did you receive the right information in order to carry out your tasks? ◆ Was the speaker clear when giving all the indications? ◆ What key points of communication did you learn, when the information was given to you?
Tips for trainers	The activity can be suggested in class whenever it is related or can be connected to the topic of the lesson

Activity Description

1. The trainer needs to create different groups of at least 4 people.
2. The trainer needs to appoint a “guide” for each group who will give the information. The other members of the group will be blindfolded.
3. The appointed guide will need to give detailed information to each member of each group, for instance grab some objects in the room and bring them to another part of the room, create a shape with all the members of the group, or ask to write down precise part of a speech he/she will give.

[Go back to the table](#)

Activity – My best speech

Soft Skills approached	Communication
Duration	20-25 minutes
Method	Small & Large group
Type of activity	Interactive
Objectives	At the end of the activity trainees will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Develop a speech in little time ◆ Speak in front of people ◆ Be concise and reach the main points of the communication
Setting	For the development of this activity you will need: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Pen or pencil ◆ Paper
Debriefing activity	At the end of the activity challenge trainees to think about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ I think that my speech was... ◆ I could have said... ◆ During the speech I felt... ◆ I encountered the following challenges...
Tips for trainers	The activity can be suggested in class whenever it is related or can be connected to the topic of the lesson

Activity Description

1. Each participant has 5 minutes to think about a story to be told in front of the other. It can be a creative story or a company case history).
2. Each participant has 10-15 minutes (at most) to develop their history in bullet points or following a method they think is the best for this part.
3. Each participant has to step up in front of the other and tell the story they created trying to be convincing and persuasive as much as possible.
4. The “public” each time a person has done, has to give some feedback regarding what it can be improved (can be tone of the voice, words that have been utilised, body language etc...). The speaker has to note all these feedbacks and try to improve what is suggested.



5. The next time this activity is carried out, all the speakers need to tell their story with trying to put in practice the feedback they received previously.

[Go back to the table](#)

Activity – The Library

Soft Skills approached	Communication
Duration	20-30 minutes
Method	Small & Large group
Type of activity	Interactive
Objectives	At the end of the activity trainees will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Introduce different topics to a group ◆ Start a conversation regarding a topic and let the group to be involved in it ◆ Manage a conversation within a group making the participants interacting among themselves
Setting	For the development of this activity you will need: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ An empty room or with enough space ◆ A public space where the group can sit
Debriefing activity	At the end of the activity challenge trainees to think about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Did the speaker helped to understand deeply the topic? ◆ Was your communication efficient to give suggestions or to connect new topics to the conversation? ◆ How did you feel while giving your advices/comments?
Tips for trainers	The activity can be suggested in class whenever it is related or can be connected to the topic of the lesson

Activity Description

1. The group has to sit in a circle and one of the members has to start speaking about a fact or telling a short story (it can be personal or not).
2. After finishing with telling the story, he or she should start with some questions regarding what the other members think about this fact/story, how would they react and so on in order to start a group conversation that can spill over to other broader topics.
3. The member of the group who told the story should always manage the ongoing conversation both answering questions or controlling that no arguments come up being able to keep the conversation going on. At a certain point he or she needs to understand when it is the moment to wrap the activity up.



4. The member of the group who told the story should summarise all the topics that have been discussed during the conversation.

[Go back to the table](#)

Activity – The decision

Soft Skills approached	Communication
Duration	30 minutes
Method	Small & Large group
Type of activity	Interactive
Objectives	<p>At the end of the activity trainees will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Interact and express oneself ◆ Understand how to interact in a group in a difficult situation ◆ Communicate persuasively in a group ◆ Manage a discussion/difficult situation
Debriefing activity	<p>At the end of the activity challenge trainees to think about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Which decisional manners were used in order to reach a final decision? ◆ Were all the communication resources available in the group utilised? ◆ Was the final decision accepted by everyone?

Activity Description

1. Context: The students need to simulate a meeting and decide a movie they want to watch. The discussion needs to take place with the students divided in two groups. Each of the group needs to propose a movie to watch. Each student needs to defend the cause of the group in the best way he/she can.
2. Discussion: When the discussion takes place some of the students have to intervene forcefully in order to defend his/her interests, some other will have renounced to their interests to avoid issues in the whole group. The participants will have to draw on strategies to manipulate and convince who has different ideas or strategies of negotiation. The member of the group who told the story should summarise all the topics that have been discussed during the conversation.

[Go back to the table](#)

Activity – Gordian Knot

Soft Skills approached	Teamwork
Duration	40 minutes
Method	Large group
Type of activity	Interactive
Objectives	At the end of the activity trainees will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ collaborate with others in challenging situations. ◆ take a systemic view: One person's behaviour has an impact on all other people.
Debriefing activity	At the end of the activity challenge trainees to think about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ What happened during this exercise? ◆ What causes led to the result of the exercise? ◆ What is the relation to reality?
Tips for trainers	Be indulgent with the final results of this exercise, because the ease of success of this activity depends on how the hands have been entangled at the beginning. It is important not to dismiss the group with a feeling of disappointment! Intervene, if necessary, to make a successful conclusion possible. If you want to use this exercise as an activity to illustrate team-building processes, have the group discuss the solutions they have chosen or not chosen to escape from the knot. This exercise can also be used as a metaphor for getting a team out of a complex, confusing situation by working together.

Activity Description

1. All participants stand shoulder to shoulder in a circle. Now everyone closes their eyes. Ask the participants to stretch out their right hand and hold on to any hand of an opposite person. After this has happened, ask the participants to repeat the process with the left hand of another person in a circle.
2. Within the set time limit, the participants must untangle the "arm knot" without letting go of their hands. If the group is too large, you can divide the participants into several circles and thus encourage the competition between the individual groups. The aim is for the participants to wind themselves out of a knot of hands, arms and bodies in such a way that at the end a circle is formed in which everyone stands next to each other and holds



their hands. To do this, they must work with the other participants to loosen this knot, because moving one arm has an effect on the whole group!

3. Reflect together with the whole group on this exercise.

[Go back to the table](#)

Activity – Planning of a town house complex

Soft Skills approached	Teamwork
Duration	70 minutes
Method	Small & Large group
Type of activity	Interactive
Objectives	<p>At the end of the activity trainees will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ make decisions together with others. ◆ to work closely with others
Setting	<p>For the development of this activity you will need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Pens, oil crayons, a sheet of wrapping paper, ◆ Written Instructions for the exercise (Worksheet) ◆ Evaluation sheet
Debriefing activity	<p>At the end of the activity challenge trainees to think about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ How could you develop your ideas? ◆ Who hampered you? ◆ Who supported you? ◆ How did you influence others? ◆ What feelings - friendly or unfriendly – you did not express? ◆ Whose ideas have been considered? ◆ Whose ideas were ignored? ◆ What did you learn about your ability to cooperate or your readiness to cooperate? ◆ How were decisions made? ◆ Have disturbances been pronounced? ◆ Did someone feel ignored?
Tips for trainers	<p>Watch the work groups. Take the evaluation sheet to hand. This is how you can make structured notes.</p> <p>Support your trainees in the last phase of this exercise, the feedback-round, and also share your impressions with them.</p>



Activity Description

1. This exercise is about planning a town house complex together with others. Find six or seven other trainees with whom you would like to do this exercise together.
2. Read together the written instruction. Then, begin to plan the town house complex together. You can use all the materials provided to design the town house complex and present it on the wrapping paper. Attention! Of the 7 applicants only 6 are allowed to move into the terraced house complex.
3. Now present the plan of your town house complex to the other planning teams and justify your decision who may move into the town house complex and who may not.
4. Now take the evaluation sheet and answer all questions alone in writing. Be as honest with yourself as possible!
5. Now find someone else from your workgroup. Together, you now discuss your evaluation forms. Give each other feedback! Does your self-assessment agree with how your counterpart would evaluate you?



Planning of a town house complex

Worksheet

A. Instructions

The town house complex needs to be planned - six houses are to be built - the environment is still to be designed. (Parking ?, play area ?, park with pond?)

The planning team is you - the group - and you have every opportunity to build this complex according to your wishes. (There are no limits to your imagination - money does not matter).

The planning team also decides on the entry of the candidates for this facility.

7 candidates are available:

These are:

- ◆ the couple Rosa 62 years and Franz 68 years young with their Dachshund Waldi
- ◆ the single mother Ingrid 29 years young with her children Sebastian 5 years and Florian 8 years)
- ◆ the extended family Huber (she is 37 years old, he is 45 years old)with her 4 children (Lisa 18, Manuel16, Patrick 12, Maria 3)
- ◆ Single Thomas 23 years old - independent musician
- ◆ Single widow Anna Sophie 60 years young
- ◆ A young couple Karin and Werner (26 and 28 years old)
- ◆ A patchwork family Manuela (32 years) with her boyfriend Peter (35 years) and the 2 children Lena (8 years) and Lisa (6 years) from their previous relationships

Plan and build this town house complex together. Justify and argue together in your team the selection of candidates well. Your decision must stand the Supreme Court. You have 25 minutes for this exercise.

B. Challenge trainees to think about...

1. How could I develop my ideas?

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2. Who hampered me?

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3. Who supported me?

4. How did I influence?

5. What feelings - friendly or unfriendly - did not I express?

6. Whose ideas have been considered?

7. Whose ideas were ignored?

8. What did I learn about my ability to cooperate or my readiness to cooperate?

9. How were decisions made?

10. Have disturbances been pronounced?

11. Did someone feel ignored?

[Go back to the table](#)

Activity – Communicate without words

Soft Skills approached	Teamwork
Duration	50 minutes
Method	Large group
Type of activity	Interactive
Objectives	At the end of the activity trainees will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Make decisions together with others. ◆ Work closely with others. ◆ Use different types of non-verbal communication (without words). ◆ Communicate clearly, although they are not allowed to use words.
Settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Pens ◆ Paper
Debriefing activity	At the end of the activity challenge trainees to think about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ How satisfied am I with the results of my group? ◆ How well could I get involved in this group work? ◆ How well have I managed to accept other suggestions? ◆ What could I do even better with the group work?
Tips for trainers	As you discuss this exercise with your trainees, you may also ask them how each group has agreed to choose 5 terms to illustrate, and why they chose the terms they ultimately selected.

Activity Description

1. This exercise is about being able to communicate without words. Find two to three more trainees, with whom you would like to do this exercise together.
2. There are different ways to communicate without words. Collect opportunities on a flipchart paper to communicate without words.
3. Now choose 5 terms from the list and also choose 5 different methods you just have collected. For each chosen term you must use a different method, to convey this term to the other trainees. Then practice together. Attention! For each mediation of a term that you have chosen, ALL group members must be involved! Make sure you have a good relationship so that your wordless communication is clear and unambiguous!



4. Now convey your chosen terms to the other trainees. As soon as a term has been recognized by the others, start to express the next term without words. When you have completed your task, the next group begins to present their terms with different methods.
5. Answer the questions for yourself first and then reflect together with the other group members.

[Go back to the table](#)



Activity – What happened if?

Soft Skills approached	Teamwork
Duration	50 minutes
Method	Small & Large group
Type of activity	Interactive
Objectives	<p>At the end of the activity trainees will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Listen to the ideas of your team members ◆ Actively contribute your ideas in a group work. ◆ Be open to unusual questions (develop your creativity) ◆ Think hypothetically (think scientifically)
Settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Pens ◆ Paper ◆ List of terms, ideas or things
Debriefing activity	<p>At the end of the activity challenge trainees to think about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ How satisfied are you with the reviews by the other groups? ◆ How well could you get involved in this group work? ◆ How well have you managed to accept other suggestions? ◆ What could you do even better with group work?
Tips for trainers	<p>Attention! It makes a difference whether you give each group the same list of words, or whether each group receives a different list! If all groups use the same terms, the competition might still be tackled at the end of this exercise: “How easy is it for me to value and positively emphasize posts on the same topic by others who have not been in my group (giving them a point or even giving them more points)?”</p> <p>This exercise is not primarily about getting the right answers to the questions asked. This can be another important step later on. For now, trainees should be open to unusual questions and learn to think hypothetically.</p>

Activity Description

1. Choose two or three other trainees with whom you would like to work on the upcoming task together. Attention! This task is about developing new ideas, new perspectives!

Maybe it's just about thinking about things like you have not thought about them before! It may therefore be crucial for the success of this task that you choose team members who are different from you, who think differently than you! Team members who bring you new ideas!

2. Now put the default list on the table, so that all group members can read the terms of this list well. Now formulate for the terms of this list "what-if-questions", e.g: What if flowers could talk? What if there were no more birds? For each of these terms, try to find an original question that always starts with the words "what if". Attention! You may only formulate one question for each term, but this question should, as just said, be very original and make you think about it further. So you have to agree on one question per term in the group and remember that you have only 15 minutes time for this task! Write all questions on a sheet of flipchart paper. Attention! For the rest of the exercise, only those questions count that are put on the flipchart paper!
3. Attach your poster to the wall with tape. Now look at the posters of the other groups together in your working group. You can now award a total of 10 points for questions that the other groups have worked out that you particularly like because they are very original. It is up to you whether you want to give one or more points to a question. All in all, you cannot spend more than 10 points!
4. Finally, take a look at your own poster. Have the other groups also found individual questions from you very original? Now take the questions "Debriefing and Evaluation" and reflect on your group work together.

[Go back to the table](#)



Youth Empowerment handbook was designed by a set of organisations representing Vocational Education and Training (VET) providers and companies from Portugal, Spain, Italy, Austria and Brussels.

Aiming at supporting VET trainers, *Youth Empowerment* handbook is a document providing the necessary guidelines, information and resources, allowing them to select or develop activities to be implemented in their daily classes, fostering the development of trainees' soft skills.

With this handbook, trainers will be able to understand the relevance of the soft skills in the learning process, in the transition and integration in the labour market and in the success and career development in companies. At the same time, trainers will be able to have access to different information and materials, for the assessment and development of their soft skills.