

Facilitator Handbook #2
HOLISTIC LEARNING

**PLANNING EXPERIENTIAL,
INSPIRATIONAL AND PARTICIPATORY
LEARNING PROCESSES**

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INSPIRATIONAL AND PARTICIPATORY
LEARNING PROCESSES**

**Fostering a collaborative and diversity—
conscious attitude in facilitators for
goal oriented and methodologically
competent planning**

The handbook is part of the series "Facilitator Handbooks", created as a part of an Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership Collaboration.



MitOst -SKORO-

Südwind
GLOBALISIERT
GERECHTIGKEIT



WORKING
BETWEEN
CULTURES

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A NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

Why and for whom?

How can we best inspire people to pursue personal, professional and societal development? As editors from a range of organizations representing the fields of empowerment, community development, and education, this is our guiding question.

In an Erasmus + Strategic Partnership collaboration, we identify best practices from education and learning. Together we elaborate on how to strengthen individuals' key competencies. Competencies are best developed by learning processes that include a broad range of learning opportunities such as incorporating knowledge, learning by doing, reflecting on specific actions, and cooperative learning. In this regard, it is crucial that facilitators learn how to combine these different learning opportunities in a targeted way. Furthermore, holistic learning addresses the whole personalities of learners with all their diverse characteristics and preferences. To successfully manage this diversity, facilitators develop planning skills that combine goal-orientation with needs-orientation.

Whether you work as a teacher, tutor, trainer, facilitator, group leader, educator, or a volunteer in civic initiatives with others – we hope our facilitator handbooks will be useful to you.

Facilitator handbooks and tools

This handbook is the second part of a series of four printed publications:

- Publication 1 deals with facilitating self-driven initiatives
- Publication 2 deals with facilitating and planning experiential and holistic learning
- Publication 3 deals with learning within European, global, and international contexts
- Publication 4 deals with stimulating creativity; using art, culture, and holistic expression as tools of empowerment

In addition to the handbooks, our online toolbox offers information on a broad range of topics, from active citizenship education to the theoretical aspects of a broad range of educational approaches. Competendo is free of charge and is an open educational resource.

www.competendo.net

CONTENTS

page **08**

Chapter 1

HOLISTIC LEARNING – A HOLISTIC DEFINITION

The learning spiral

Learning opportunities in a holistic setting

Addressing the whole personality

Making use of unconsciously gained experience for learning

Your impact: Zooming in and out of the bigger picture

Case study: Empowerment for civic action

Case study: How do we experience the world?

page **19**

Chapter 2

THE FACILITATOR'S ATTITUDE

Empathy: Understanding the feelings and needs of your participants

Establishing a qualitative partnership

Dealing with different opinions and conflict

Staying open to self-development

Case study: Transformational social therapy

Chapter 3

PLANNING

Five fingers – five fields of needs

The importance of goals

Addressing self-directed learning

Focusing on self-learning strategies

Flexibility: Between goals and the process

The right method mix

Planning matrix

Chapter 4

THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF A HOLISTIC APPROACH

Needs

Establishing good working conditions

Your participants' personalities, beliefs, and expertise

Work on content

Reflection

Validation and identification of the learning outcome

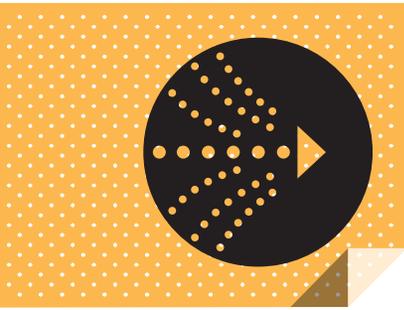
Case study: Exploring needs

Case study: A wealth of experience

Case study: Tower of Power – an experiential approach

Case study: Identifying learning outcomes

OUTLOOK: MOVING TOWARD HOLISTIC LEARNING IN OUR CONCRETE PRACTICE



OUTSET: THE HOLISTIC APPROACH

Competencies are best developed through processes that include a broad range of learning opportunities, such as incorporating knowledge, learning by doing, reflecting on specific actions, and cooperative learning. This allows for a conversation between self-driven activities and methods of facilitation that include participants and groups and their diverse needs, experiences, and expertise.

It is crucial that facilitators maintain an empowering attitude, showing confidence in their participants' abilities to feel, accept, and use their individual powers to take self-motivated independent action. Chapter 2 emphasizes aspects such as empathy, partnership, willingness to deal with different opinions and disagreements, and a facilitator's motivation for self-development.

Furthermore, good facilitators are able to plan and manage a learning process in a goal and needs oriented way. For this work, it is important to connect experience and deep reflection on the question: What did I learn, what experience brought me new knowledge? This is a condition for further learning and (self-)development. We introduce a planning approach and the building blocks for a holistic learning experience in the last part of the book.

Copy, share, connect

We encourage you to share your feedback, your approaches, and your visions of active citizenship education.

Contact info: editors@competendo.net



Competendo toolbox for facilitators

Want to know more? Our online toolbox gives you additional information and methods, and discusses the theory behind planning, conducting, and evaluating empowering learning processes in greater detail.

The content of our toolbox is published under a CC Creative Commons License – feel free to use, share, and develop these materials within your educational context.

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Legend:

Throughout the publication we use three types of labels:



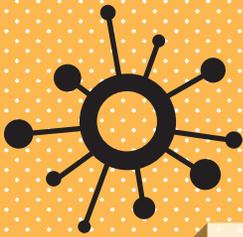
Under the label “Case study” you will find specific examples from real life that address a certain topic from the chapter.



Pay attention to the label “Task” if you are searching for tasks or methods for how to work with your group on a certain topic.



The label “Checklist” contains tools for individual reflection.



Chapter 1

HOLISTIC LEARNING – A HOLISTIC DEFINITION

Pedagogical approaches that encourage learners to become civically involved emphasize the active components of learning: discovery, reflective observation, trial and error, and growing with challenges or collaboration. The ability to act as autonomous, responsible individuals, and the skill known as “civic competence” are formed in broad-reaching, heterogenous learning environments, and therefore are inherently composed of a variety of learning experiences. These experiences, in turn, need to be connected by means of a consciously designed learning process. The more these “different learning opportunities complement each other, the more efficient and sustainable the learning process becomes.” Such processes combine group interactions and experiential learning, cognitive learning, opportunities for informal learning, and reflection.¹

Other authors emphasize the active role of the learner in the learning process: “Learning to become an active citizen is about knowledge and attitudes, which require the use of methodologies that actively involve learners in their own learning. For example, experiential learning, project-based learning, and learning by doing based on everyday life are effective ways of increasing the appetite for learning and the acquisition of transversal skills such as teamwork.”²

These active approaches to learning are holistic in the sense that they apply to a broad range of fields in which a learner acts as an actual or potential instigator of change in society.

The learning spiral

Learning is an ongoing process defined by the phases of observation, action, and cognitive reflection. This dynamic could be described as circular development. It involves referring to previous experiences as well as anticipating outcomes. Learning is in that sense a spiral—reflecting, moving on, turning into a new loop with new experiences and qualitatively

new challenges. Based on the observation that people do not learn like computers, whose progress can be shown as a linear progression, David and Alice Kolb state that a learner has to move through several phases. Applying this curricular model we propose specific definitions for these phases.³

Active

experimentation

Action, involvement, and trial and error help us to apply these new models and to prove their worth in new experimentation.

Then, once again, we enter a new circle with new specific experiences.

Active

experimentation

In the beginning the challenge is defined through a phase of concrete experience.

Abstract

conceptualization

From observation and evaluation, we generate models of reality that allow us to define a few basic rules: : If I do this, that happens.

Reflective observation

Reflective observation helps to identify whether or not the implemented action has led to success.

Learning opportunities in a holistic setting

Facilitators shape learning opportunities in which their participants may experience, reflect on, and develop their existing skills and resources. In the best case scenario, this activates complex knowledge and establishes key competencies. A training that creates opportunities to experience different aspects of learning and ways of being can make learning more relevant to “real life” situations. Linking previous and new knowledge in an interconnected network allows participants to flexibly and actively apply their new skills to a variety of situations.

The different learning opportunities that holistic learning brings to an interactive model are:

Kind of learning	Exemplary methods for how to achieve this kind of learning
Practical experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Role-playing games → Independent work on tasks → Teamwork → Small projects or civic initiatives → Simulations → Visiting organizations or working with experts → Participants presenting their experience and expertise
Acquiring knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Involving experts → Sharing expertise among participants → Text work, media work → Analytical tasks
Reflective evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Collaborative feedback → Independent evaluation by participants of the experience and outcomes → Facilitating skills to identify personal criteria for success → Discussion

Addressing the whole personality

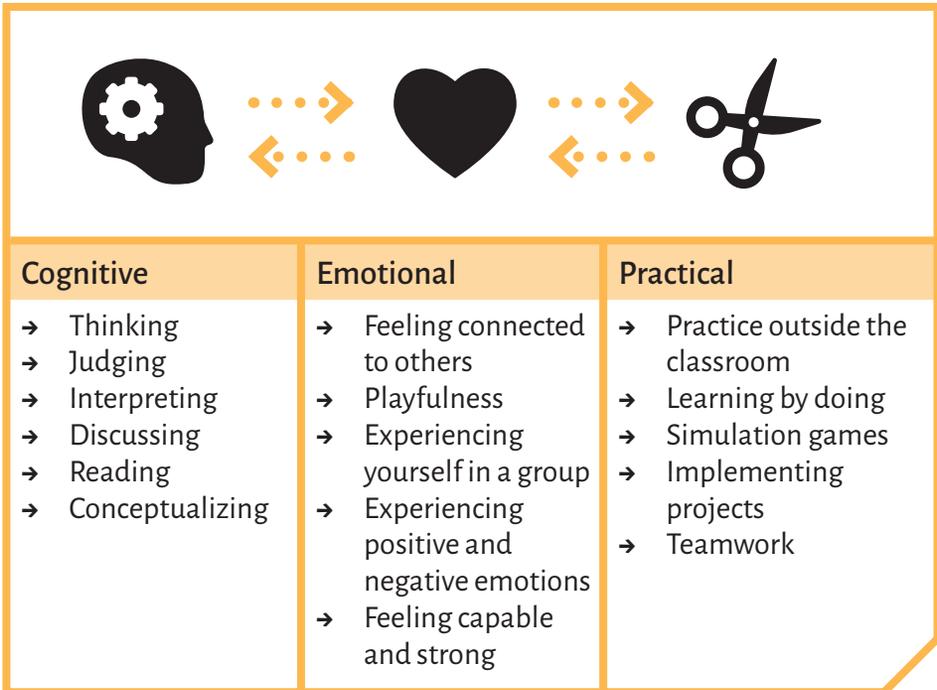
Holistic learning is not only defined by the range of learning opportunities that facilitators use to create a complex and deep learning experience. Another aspect of holistic learning is that it addresses and involves the learner's whole personality.

- **Cognitive** – learning facts, theory, logical relations
- **Emotional** – playfulness, feeling connected to others, experiencing positive and negative emotions by being challenged, emotions regarding values and intellectual concepts
- **Practical** – turning ideas into decisions and actions, practicing skills and experimenting

If you plan a meeting, you should choose methods that require your participants to use their cognition, emotion, and experience actively.

Emotion, practical experience, and cognition are interconnected. Such a rich variety of training stimulates creativity, empathy, and passion. Furthermore, it provides participants with a deeper learning experience, in the sense that they reflect more on the relevance of their learning when they feel emotionally involved and when they have the chance to apply what they have learned.

Activities that support different aspects of our personalities



Making use of unconsciously gained experience for learning

When cognitive, emotional and practical experiences are the “material” that a learner is supposed to gain, the success of that learning process depends on whether a learner knows what to do with this material, how to *interpret and evaluate* it. In many learning environments, we are used to reflecting primarily on cognitive processes. We rationalize practical experience. As facilitators and participants, in this case we feel less capable of reflecting on the emotional aspects associated with learning. But in reality, we experience feelings towards other people, roles or situations, even though these are less observed and reflected upon. Generally speaking, positive and negative feelings come up when we act in unfamiliar situations or deal with unknown issues. Therefore, it is not only a condition but a criteria of holistic learning that participants should uncover that treasure.

But not all unconscious learning is firstly related to emotion. A great deal of *informal learning* takes place in social activities. We experience the world and culture at the same time. We create relationships, explore what our purpose is, structure time, and (re-)create our engagement without thinking of it as a planned process. Here, non-formal education offers a space in which experiences may be reflected upon as “purposeful and useful”. Such learning is described as “*learning in planned activities not explicitly designated as learning*”, for example a gathering in a volunteer initiative or a seminar outside of school.⁴

In a way, holistic learning seeks to *increase our consciousness* of our behaviors and skills. This helps individuals see how self-development takes place. Furthermore, an increased capacity to observe personal experience on a meta-level helps people to become active in a targeted way.

In the learning spiral, we raised the importance of learners’ capacities for reflective observation. Through the use of observation, people can see their behavior from a *meta-perspective*. “People can step out of their own subjective points of view, putting themselves in positions to better analyze their situations.”⁵

Therefore, holistic learning shapes opportunities for such self-observation. In a broader sense, we should encourage participants to search for the unknown, to look “beyond one’s own nose”. Anyone who can observe themselves more abstractly becomes less irritated and more inspired by diverging from the status quo or even taking on new, “strange” experiences.

Your impact: Zooming in and out of the bigger picture



On the one hand, holistic learning is about emotional learning, but on the other hand it helps us understand how *many individual aspects are interconnected*. In schools it is very often the case that we are not encouraged to develop this “bigger picture”. Instead, we are expected to take notes that are as detailed as possible so that we can reproduce them in an exam.

An individual's specific activity is embedded in social interactions, which are in turn embedded in larger social structures. This continues all the way up to the global level. In this sense, each individual is not a free molecule, nor a static part of a large construction. People are part of different groups and social sub-systems with whom they interconnect in different roles.

For successful, targeted social activities, people need to recognize the links within such systems so that they can build a bridge between their personal behavior to larger social issues and the general (democratic) principles that shape our society.

In order to deal with such complexity, participants must increase their capacity to exchange with representatives of other parts or “systems” in society. Some are better able to represent their sense of initiative to employers, so they get a job and more money (their interaction with the economic system). Alternatively, a student may be motivated to learn more about a topic and he or she starts to study independently in the library, gaining a new academic reputation from his or her new expertise (interaction with the educational system). Or, three neighbors start a public initiative for cleaning up the park and challenging the city municipality (interaction with the administrative or political system).

In this sense, *thinking in systems* reveals how our behavior has a social impact. It helps learners to understand how they might influence their direct environment, their larger surroundings, and also their entire society, as when other people join or copy an idea.

Engagement affects many different societal subsystems, some of which are intended to be affected, and many of which were not. Sometimes change takes place directly, but more often it takes place indirectly and you see the changes better with the benefit of hindsight. When it comes to competencies, people require the *capacity to observe themselves* within the bigger picture and to develop strategies for complex action. There is a variety of methods that may support this learning.

How to encourage systemic thinking

Visualizing complexity

Charts, infographics, tables, brainstorming maps, or schematic visualizations of developments increase the comprehensibility of complicated issues and help us organize. We could use such tools to clearly show interconnections.



Verbalizing complexity

In a group, every learner has a different perspective on the topic or a process. Since all of these perceptions are “true”, include these *different perspectives* in order to better describe what reality appears to be. Traditional facilitation often only promotes a dominant narrative, the institutions’ official version of reality.

When learning occurs in a complex process, we better *adjust our vocabulary*. This includes clarification, or defining what exactly we mean when we use a concrete term.



Exploring reality in all its facets

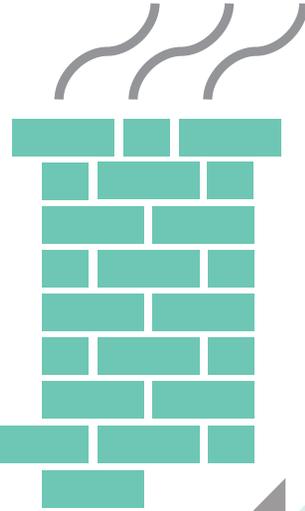
Participants need to gain a more complete picture of reality if they want to shape it with socially relevant activities. In order to achieve this big picture, individuals need to *increase their capacity for observation and analysis*.

Approaches like Human Centered Design or Design Thinking emphasize a deeper exploration of social conditions and needs before planning and implementing an intervention in the form of an initiative or a project.



Brickscape

A brick on its own is just a brick. Five hundred bricks on their own is just a pile of bricks. But with the right plan and layout, five hundred bricks can build a house. The components of holistic learning are just bricks. On their own they aren't very impressive or useful. But when put together properly, they form an entire structure. Your structure is the sum total of your web. It's how all your ideas fit together to create an understanding of a complex idea.⁶



Our working definition of holistic learning

HOLISTIC LEARNING

addresses learners' knowledge, skills, attitudes, emotions, and practice. It helps build their key competencies, and improves their ability to meet complex demands*

combines many different opportunities for active, cognitive, emotional, and practical learning

reflects on systemic complexity

offers tools for self-reflection and practicing meta-level observation

includes a bandwidth of different realities within society

*More about key competencies can be found in: Facilitator Handbook #1: Steps toward action—Chapter 2



Case study: Empowerment for civic action

Development of Civic Competencies in the Theodor-Heuss-Kolleg
By Nils-Eyk Zimmermann, MitOst

The education program Theodor-Heuss-Kolleg empowers young adults to take responsibility and work for the common good, and to take part in decision-making processes that involve the use of social resources and initiate social change. To this end, we have developed a four-step empowerment concept that takes participants' individual visions, capacities, and social contexts seriously.

We use a curriculum that spans several months and includes one-week seminars that take place outside of the local environment, targeted training, individual learning through project work, mentoring, as well as a reflection phase that takes place over the course of a multi-day seminar.

1. The idea

We ask: What would you like to change? What makes you angry? What appeals to you? These questions are raised among diverse groups of participants, who exchange ideas on socially relevant topics in an inspiring atmosphere.

2. Implementation of initiatives

Now participants come up with a project idea. At this stage, we expect to work on planning and provide targeted input. Teams form and supporters are gathered. Financial plans and schedules are concretized and teams receive a small low-budget-grant. Methodologically, this phase primarily comprises individual learning “at home” through engagement in the community.

Additional training sessions address the peculiarities of project management in non-profits, often in the form of an intensive project management meeting that combines input and coaching.

3. Guidance and support

We provide support to the project teams for the duration of their engagement. Our peer-mentorship is based on an individual combination of counseling and coaching, and thus supports self-directed learning, a sense of initiative, and autonomous action.

4. Final and fresh perspectives

In our societies, project work is frequently judged by its results. Often, the problems encountered along the way go unmentioned or are redefined as “challenges”. For participants, however, they are decisive elements of the qualification process. That is why we emphasize making individual learning

successes visible and evaluating them after the project work has come to an end. This takes place in a reflection seminar after the civic initiatives have been implemented.



Case study: How do we experience the world?

The global dimension facilitated in local training

By Matthias Haberl, Südwind

One example of the interdependence of local and global levels is global trade. Our daily lives have been shaped by global procurement chains and economic forces. Increasingly, the globalization of society and the relative ease of international travel have made it possible for many people to experience the world and participate in processes of global significance.

By definition, “holistic” education is not only focused on acquiring new skills or knowledge intellectually, but also on incorporating personal experience and feelings into the learning process. How do we experience the world? Well, we experience the world all the time, but we're often unaware of it. Our task as educators, teachers and facilitators is to make that experience accessible.

I am currently writing this text in a small city in Austria on a computer whose various components have come from all over the world – quite likely it has been assembled in China even though its brand is Taiwanese. The electricity on which my computer runs is provided by oil or gas from the Middle East or Russia, or by wind or hydro-electric energy harnessed in Austria. The hydro-electric stations and windmills were built with various materials not available on Austrian soil. This text is composed with the help of text-editing software developed by a US corporation. And while you read this article you might be enjoying a cup of coffee, perhaps from Ghana or Brazil? You might prefer to add milk? The milk likely comes from your local farmers, but maybe they use soybeans to feed their cattle, and maybe these soybeans have been imported from South America.

- Hundreds of people from all over the world have contributed to this one moment. In a training, we can visualize the complex collaborations and interactions that enable this text and its production.
- Secondly, we might facilitate an understanding of the consequences of our daily actions or inactions on a certain matter. For example, the choice to drink a particular type of coffee or to buy a computer of a certain brand is a choice to support certain business practices and finance their activities.

- Therefore we could develop more complex models and definitions: What is a global procurement chain? What does it look like in concrete numbers? What political interests are involved, and on which stages? On a global scale, we will face the fact that globalization does not benefit everyone equally.
- Fourth, the examination of our participants' different perspectives on the topic – in combination with an introduction to different approaches for how initiatives and organizations deal with global trade as a social challenge – might help our participants to rethink and expand their worldviews.



You can find more theory and methods for this topic online at **www.competendo.net**

Understanding → Experiential learning

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Chapter 2

THE FACILITATOR'S ATTITUDE

The term attitude (or similar terms like position or mindset) has played an important role in history when it comes to describing educators' skills. Often, it is identified as something they "should have". There is a great deal of consensus that the "right" attitude is a crucial resource for educational processes. But what does "right" mean, especially in the context of holistic learning? We recommend five basic features of attitude that you can work on to develop your skills as a holistic facilitator.

Facilitators with a holistic attitude

- Try to understand the feelings and needs of their learners
- Pay attention to their relationship with learners (relationship as partnership), they don't only focus on the content
- Are open to dealing with different opinions and conflicts resulting from them
- Are interested in their self-development as facilitators

Empathy: Understanding the feelings and needs of your participants

In order to understand the feelings and needs of our learners, we use empathy. It lies at the core of holistic understanding and activates not our cognitive but our emotional intelligence. This is the primary prerequisite and skill for a holistic learner and facilitator. It is the capacity to understand or feel what another person is experiencing from within his or her frame of reference, i.e., the capacity to place oneself in another's position.

The four qualities of empathy ¹

Adopting perspectives	Avoiding judgment
An ability to adopt the perspective of another person or recognize others' perspectives as their own truth.	An ability to withhold judgment on someone's behavior as right or wrong in order to meet the person eye-to-eye
Recognizing emotion in other people	Communicating this recognition
Accepting that everyone has the right to feel what they feel and that those feelings should be taken seriously.	Making it clear to other people that they are perfectly entitled to their own perspective and feelings and that they have someone who can listen.

Empathy should run in both directions, both to and from the facilitator. We can also establish a connection with participants by showing that, in a way, we are equally imperfect but motivated to share and willing to learn. ²

Establishing a qualitative partnership

In a shared and holistic learning environment, facilitators are also included in the process, on cognitive, experiential, and emotional levels. Our relation to the participants has a direct impact on the learning process. The challenge is to establish a trusting relationship with our participants while still keeping the intended outcome in mind, unless the facilitator is primarily responsible for achieving it. In other words: We are part of the game, but are also partners with a larger responsibility for the whole.

A good relationship between facilitators and learners may lead to an experience where learning and facilitation feel like they are taking place more or less automatically – a nice process for both parties. A facilitator whom a participant trusts might be a source of inspiration.

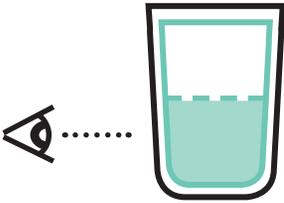
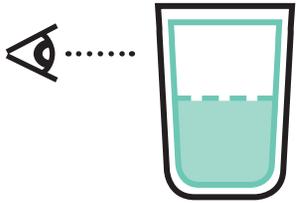
In addition, partnerships depend on trust as a kind of generalized confidence that the expectations one has for the other person will be fulfilled. The simple sentence “Yes, you can” expresses the facilitator’s confidence in the learner. But it only works when you really believe in what you are saying. Do you trust in your learner’s capacity to act successfully?



Facilitator Handbook #1: STEPS TOWARD ACTION:

- What are "facilitation" and "empowerment" in contrast to "teaching"?
- How do we best inspire and motivate participants?

The basic groundwork for good cooperation requires facilitators to develop an attitude of *resource orientation*. This means that they emphasize the positive qualities of their participants. This idea of resource orientation contrasts with the approach of deficit orientation in trainings. The two models stand in opposition to each other.

Resource orientation	Deficit orientation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Takes into account participants' existing knowledge and expertise → Focuses on options and possibilities → Focuses on developments → Identifies learning material within the process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Based on teachers' or experts' knowledge and expertise → Elaborates on the complexities and disadvantages of various options → Emphasizes on the learning material → Defines of learning material in advance
	

As resource-oriented facilitators, we can strengthen learners' self-esteem and trust in their existing knowledge and skills. We might also create an atmosphere that fosters a critical view of skill development. It makes a difference to learners whether you present yourself as a "glass-is-half-empty"

or a “glass-is-half-full” type of person. This is not a question of methodology—the right method and the wrong attitude simply don't fit together.

Beyond personal relationships and resource orientation, it is also crucial as a facilitator to *interact* with the group. Be willing to share resources if you expect your participants to do so as well. Tell them about your experiences if you want them to share their own. Show a supportive attitude and mobilize solidarity with participants if you expect them to develop a trustful and open atmosphere for deeper experiential learning.³

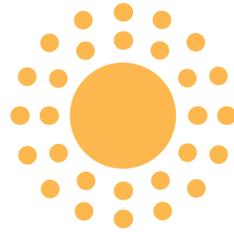
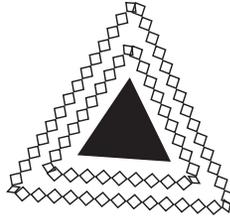
The attitude that you assume has to prove its worth in practice. Sometimes your participants will prove its worth. Sometimes the situation will. Keeping this in mind, we remain friendly, active facilitators, no matter how challenging the circumstances are, even if we are faced with complex situations such as a lack of time, a goal dilemma or a conflict.

Facilitators take participants' needs seriously by...

- Relating to others in a personable way
- Adjusting the methods and the plan according to participants' wishes
- Letting the group decide and accepting their decisions
- Appreciating the participants' resources
- Explaining their needs as facilitators
- Making learning steps and goals transparent

Dealing with differing opinions and conflict

How can we bring people together in times of conflict? How can we overcome the gap that racism, terrorism, war and other forms of violence create in our societies and in our minds? We better should acknowledge that conflict and violence exist in the world around us and are therefore “silent visitors” in our learning space. And honestly speaking – wouldn't it be boring to live on an island of harmony without disagreement and contrasting opinions? Therefore, we facilitate the skill of learning to live with disagreement and conflicts.



Conflict occurs when a person has a need and that need is not met. In conflicts, at least two parties are involved (individuals, groups, states, etc.). At times, it can seem that meeting one party's need is incompatible with meeting the other party's need.

Every conflict has its positive and negative sides, and these depend on various factors. However, we know that conflicts are disruptive and can be destructive. But conflicts also contribute to the creation of positive relationships and to the improvement of bad relationships through transformation. By employing good *conflict management*, facilitators improve the quality and efficiency of communication in a group and equip participants with conflict management skills. Approaches like *Non-violent Communication* or *Transformational Social Therapy* (or French: *Therapy Sociale*) support this insight. Their goal is not harmony – it is to pacify and transform, to live and deal with conflicts. The most important thing is to overcome “violence” as a negative exaggeration of conflict.

People often employ a strategy of avoiding conflicts, and this avoidance leads often to violence. Violence happens when I demonize other people because I do not want to confront a conflict with them. According to *Therapy Sociale* (see case study on p.27), violence is not only bodily aggression, it's more often subtle: blaming, looking down on others, treating others like an object. Here the facilitators' attitude comes into play. You can be violent without doing anything – just because of your beliefs. And this violence does not have to be targeted at other people – it can also be used against yourself. In this way, facilitators develop the capacity to reflect on how they use violence, and identify strategies for non-violent behavior.

That said, we advocate for facilitators' use of basic conflict management skills. The more trustful and holistic your learning process is, the more likely it is that people will make conflicts transparent, and you will need to deal with them.

Ways to deal with conflicts



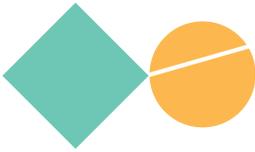
Consensus

all needs of the conflicting parties are met



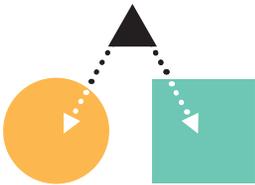
Compromise

the needs of the conflicting parties are partly met



Fight

one wins, one loses



Delegation

the parties submit themselves to the decision of a third party



Escape

one or more parties leave the arena of the conflict

Everyone has tendencies in situations of conflict. What are yours? Some situations seem to suggest certain approaches. Are you able to follow such suggestions? Are you able to rationalize a conflict by thinking about strategies, methods, and (fair) outcome?

Staying open to self-development

Facilitators stimulate others' learning processes and create spaces for it. This implies the use of dynamic lenses to be able to observe group processes, foresee needs and motivations, and codesign the process accordingly.

However, focusing on others may lead to a lack of focus and space for the facilitator's individual learning processes. This is an important consideration, because facilitators are expected to be role models for learning. Therefore, facilitators using the holistic approach develop skills

and abilities to learn from a variety of experiences and in diverse contexts: formal and non-formal, group settings and individual personal interactions, outdoors and indoors, when communicating to a broader public and conveying messages but also in their own private lives, where they need to create space for personal reflection. In other words, being a facilitator and imparting holistic learning, means committing to being a *lifelong learner*.

Lifelong learning is an ongoing, voluntary, and self-motivated process of pursuing knowledge, gaining new skills and competencies. It lasts one's whole life. The process of gaining relevant knowledge or updating existing experience consciously enhances social inclusion, active citizenship, and personal development.

As a facilitator who empowers groups and individuals, and embodies the values of lifelong learning and systems thinking, it is essential to be aware of the key concepts in self-directed learning and become more sensitive to your own learning needs. An active attitude towards learning and building your personal competencies is important for participants and facilitators. We emphasize this in *Chapter 3*, and offer tools for how to support this kind of attitude. Some of the tools can be used by facilitators, some by participants, some by both.

Your Learning Zone

In handbook #1, *Steps toward action*, we introduce the model of three zones: comfort, learning, and panic zones. It is a helpful perspective when planning one's own learning experience.

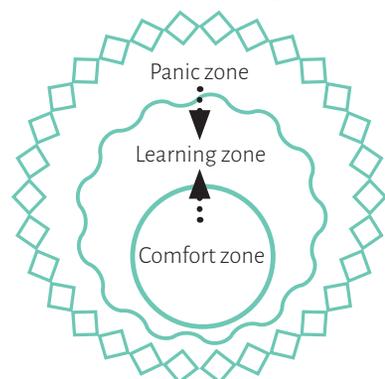
What is a learning zone?

This is where we allow ourselves to acquire new information, adjust to new conditions, and try out new, challenging experiences based on things we already know and feel comfortable with.

How we work with the zones as facilitators:

Comfort zone: What we do usually. *Example:* Designing a learning event for a group of 20 people on a certain topic.

Panic zone: Reaction in a situation when the program does not meet the participants' needs and expectations. *Example:* A big group conflict crops up and you have to moderate it.



Learning zone: Considering participants' changing needs by getting feedback from them every evening and planning for the next day based on your previous ideas as well as this participant feedback. *Example:* Learn about conflict management approaches. Try to implement adequate methods for conflict management.



Checklist: My learning goals

Before leading a group through a learning process, in self-directed learning we find it valuable to create a list of learning objectives and set a scale next to each skill or ability we would like to improve upon during the experience. For example it could be:

- Improve my ability to impart knowledge about design ...
- Increase awareness of others in the facilitator's team...
- Improve my ability to gauge group moods and dynamics...

Depending on the duration of your learning experience, you may consider measuring your progress in your own goals either at the end or regularly throughout in order to track your progress.

Goals: What	Learning space(s): Where	With whom, through what kind of action: How
	In the seminar . . . At home... . . .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Seminar group · Facilitator colleagues · External persons and sources



Case study: Transformational social therapy

by Anne Wiebelitz

The aim of *therapy sociale* (social therapy) is to live in a society with conflict, chaos, and insecurity. Most of us have never learned how to deal with conflicts – and that's why we usually avoid them. This avoidance leads to violence, which is different from conflict.

Charles Rojzman, a Jew born in France under the occupation of the Nazis, has spent a lot of his life dealing with racism. At some point he realized that work against racism was mainly moralization: Racism is bad and people who say racist things are stupid and manipulative. In the 1980s, he started developing an approach called *Transformational Social Therapy*. His work led him to a French hospital to help the employees there deal with racism. There he found out that the people who discuss racism can also suffer from it, that immigrants can be racist, and that in addition to racism, there were many other forms of violence in the hospital, e.g. classism which resulted in disrespect for the cleaning staff.

Therefore, a key term in *therapy sociale* is violence. The approach seeks to transform conflicts and to pacify them: “*Racism is one facet of violence that exists throughout society. If we want to fight racism, we have to deal with violence.*”

In *Transformational Social Therapy* trainings, a key method used to achieve this involves working on individuals' attitudes and using group processes to reflect and practice peaceful ways of dealing with disagreements.

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1. Brené Brown: The Power of Vulnerability www.ted.com/talks/brene_brown_on_vulnerability; B. Brown: Daring Greatly: How the Courage to be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent and Lead.
 2. Working Between Cultures/Eliza Skowron in: N. Zimmermann, H. Fahrur, E. Skowron (Ed.): Diversity Dynamics: Activating the Potential of Diversity in Trainings, Berlin 2014; MitOst; ISBN 978-3-944012-02-5
 3. Facilitator Handbook #1: Step towards action: Cooperative learning, p. 35



Chapter 3

PLANNING

To apply the ideas about learning from Chapter One, we need to reflect on some planning principles that support holistic education.

Five fingers – five fields of needs

When planning and organizing a seminar, there are a host of aspects you consider as a facilitator.

Imagine your participants' needs are represented by a hand with five fingers. Each finger stands for a different type of need: 1. *Social*, 2. *Physical*, 3. *Intellectual*, 4. *Emotional* and 5. *Spiritual*. In your seminar there should be a space for covering all five needs.

If one is missing, your participants will (un)consciously notice/feel that it is lacking. Of course, not every one of us feels every need with the same intensity. It depends on the situation, activity, personality etc. There are participants for whom the emotional level of the seminar is extremely important, and others who prefer to concentrate on the intellectual part.

As a facilitator with your own individual preferences, you do not have to give equal attention and space to all spheres. If you're working in a team let other team members "take care" of "their" preferred levels. In many situations, it is also preferable to empower your participants to organize themselves and fulfill their own needs in the seminar as they crop up. It is crucial though, that you pay attention to the changing needs of your group, inform them of your observations, and empower/remind them to take initiative.



Checklist: Five fields of needs

The following checklist will help you to analyze your plan:

1. Social level:

- Do the participants have enough time to get to know each other?
- Which methods will support them in overcoming uncertainty?
- Is there enough time and space to socialize in the evening?
- Are the methods diverse enough to find new combinations of participants over and over again?

2. Physical level:

- Do the starting and ending hours and breaks of the seminar allow for participants (and facilitators) to go for a walk, a jog, etc.?
- Are energizers planned, are they enjoyable for everyone?
- Do the methods “force” participants to “get up” from their chairs from time to time?
- Does the food provided in the seminar give participants and trainers enough energy for work?
- Is the seminar room a welcoming and inviting space to work?

3. Intellectual level:

- Are discussion or exchange sessions planned?
- Do the starting and ending hours of the seminar enable participants to organize an extra session before or after seminar hours?
- Is there a seminar library/ resource recommendations for the topic?
- Is there a designated time for questions that crop up during the seminar/ session and a space for tackling them?

4. Emotional level:

- Is there time for participants to arrive emotionally to the seminar?
- Is individual work/ working in pairs or small groups planned?
- Is there enough individual space before and after the sessions?
- Are there methods/approaches that strengthen trust in the group and foster an open attitude on the part of facilitators and participants alike?

5. Spiritual level:

- Do the starting and ending hours of the seminar enable participants (and facilitators) to organize a special session (e.g. meditating, yoga, etc.) before or after seminar hours if they want to?
- Does the schedule of the seminar conflict with participants or facilitators’ religious needs (praying, visiting a place of worship)?
- Do the chosen methods and working culture reflect particular values that might not be shared by all participants?

The checklist can be extended according to the nature of the event and can also be reflected upon during the seminar. This reflection should have an influence on the ongoing program, e.g. giving more attention and time to the emotional level of the seminar based on the group dynamics.

The importance of goals

It will often be the case that you already have a concrete method in mind that you want to pursue. We promote an approach that works the other way round—begin by gaining clarity about your goals and the shared learning goal.

Why goals help...

Gaining clarity	<p>Goals help you to think about <i>what you want to achieve</i> and where you currently are in the process.</p> <p>The disadvantage of thinking in methods, not in goals, is that you might not necessarily be able to describe the deeper meaning behind the unit you are teaching.</p>
Being transparent	<p>Goals help you <i>inform your participants</i> about what you want to achieve and what is going happen.</p> <p>Otherwise you have to offer them an explanation along the lines of: “We’re playing a game—you’ll understand later on.” This is not transparent.</p>
Setting criteria for evaluation	<p>Goals establish your <i>criteria for success</i>. You will need them for further planning and for evaluation.</p> <p>If you do not know what you want to achieve, then it is difficult to measure success.</p>
Gaining more flexibility for participatory interaction	<p>Clear goals make you <i>flexible and free to negotiate</i> with your participants. They help you decide quickly whether the process is moving in the right direction or, you should stop or change.</p> <p>When you have to change quickly, you can act more spontaneously and have more freedom to negotiate with your participants if you keep the “big picture” in mind.</p>

Addressing self-directed learning

Learning processes can be designed with more or less involvement on the part of the participants. In this series of publications however, the facilitator's role in inspiring and empowering learners for active participation in civic and social life is the main topic. That is why we now ask the question: How can one design a learning event so that active participation and self-directed learning are fostered not only after, but from the very beginning?

Ways to engage participants in planning and conducting a learning session

Flexible planning and moderation

- Involving participants every evening in planning of the next day and letting them decide on the direction.
- Parts of the event's content are decided by participants: practical workshops, defining topics, and moderating discussions. Full ownership is here in learners' hands.
- (Co-)moderation by participants, presentations.

Decision-making

- Asking participants how much time they need rather than giving timeframes for task completion.
- Leaving "open windows," such as one hour each day where learners decide for themselves what they want to work on and how.
- Whenever a problem or difficulty appears, ask participants to verbalize it and moderate the search for solutions.

Reflection and feedback

- Discussing and answering ongoing questions in front of the group.
- After each session or working day, establishing *transfer rounds* where participants clearly define what learning outcome they find useful.
- Pairs of participants discuss their reflections independently of facilitators.

Co-creation in the learning space

- Co-creation of the learning environment: shaping the space where the learning event takes place directly after entering the room and according to learners' wishes.
- Participants deciding on their own music and entertainment.
- Teams take care of specific activities (during program and social time).
- Shared decisions about social activities.



Checklist: Possible ways to activate participants during a training

Participants/ responsibility for...	What you can plan or do concretely...
Learning goals and outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/> Shared daily evaluation <input type="checkbox"/> Discussing alternative paths and goals <input type="checkbox"/> Allowing participants to define their needs
Program steps and activities	<input type="checkbox"/> Shared planning sessions <input type="checkbox"/> (Co-)moderation by participants <input type="checkbox"/> Presentations
Well-being of the group	<input type="checkbox"/> Method: Secret friends <input type="checkbox"/> Method: Code of conduct http://competendo.net/en/Code_of_Conduct
Free time, party, social activities, seminar room	<input type="checkbox"/> Defining groups responsible for... the condition of the seminar room, the organizational aspects of a seminar, topical planning, common social activities... <input type="checkbox"/> Encouraging participants to bring with them things they like (music, instruments, good personal experience from their work, movies), creating time windows where they could share these with the group.

Focusing on self-learning strategies

Competency-based learning is different from traditional concepts of knowledge dissemination in that it focuses on the applicability of the learning outcomes in practice. For this people acquire self-organizing skills, observational skills, and an ability to evaluate what needs to be learned. We also learn to identify where one may gain the most knowledge and through what kind of effort, and, last but not least, how to instill in learners a sense of responsibility for their own acquisition of knowledge. Facilitators might stimulate this attitude. They offer learners spaces and methods where they can practice and experience responsibility.

Encouraging self-directed learning

- Learners *reflect on their learning styles* and preferences, and gain awareness of their conditions for successful learning
- They become familiar with *planning skills*: learning plans, assessment, checklist work
- Training an *orientation toward opportunities* and solutions (in contrast to analyzing problems)
- Practicing *goal-setting* methods
- Using learning diaries or portfolio tools for *(self-)documentation*
- Using *self-assessment* tools for evaluation

Flexibility: Between goals and the process

Striking a healthy balance between a goal-oriented and process-oriented approach is what makes a holistic learning experience complete, and reflects the values of holistic understanding. This means that we always have to be aware that changing plans might be necessary, and that you cannot completely stick to the seminar schedule you created beforehand.

When we agree on regular adjustments of our plans and learning goals, this implies that we have *to discuss plans and goals* with our participants transparently. In this sense, we encourage them to:

- Share tasks
- Decide together about changes in subjects, methods, or agendas
- Negotiate conflicting goals
- Ask themselves how we can ensure that plans have enough flexibility and yet also enough structure?

Possibilities for changing plans during an event

- Having regular team meetings on the evening of the event
- Morning sessions: discussing program and goals with participants
- Encouraging participants' reflection
- Checking an anonymous feedback box before every daily planning meeting
- Opportunities for participants to influence the process during the event (e.g. speeding up some parts if participants already have knowledge of it, taking breaks when participants say they need it, letting participants facilitate parts of a session, etc.)

At the beginning, it might make us feel insecure to give up control, but experience shows that it actually strengthens participants' sense of responsibility for the process and their identification with the seminar content.

The right method mix

A goal determines the "what" of a learning process, while a method determines "how" the goal will be achieved.

In the first chapter, we presented some key aspects for how holistic learning is defined. Therefore, our methods reflect these aspects.

Basically, we need to make sure that the outcome of our teaching is more than just knowledge, and includes building skills and attitudes. Our methods need to be appropriate for the development of such competencies as the sum of skills, knowledge, and attitudes.

When looking over your learning schedule, check, to what extent all fields of key competencies are reflected':



COMPETENDO: A template for your planning:
www.competendo.net/en/Planning_with_Key_Competencies



Method mix: Addressing key competencies

Task-specific factual competence

Do your methods help your participants to: Identify adequate, knowledge-based solutions for tasks and problems?

- Expertise in the specific field or topic of your training...
- ...and how it relates systematically within its field and to other fields.

Methodological competence

Are you offering adequate opportunities for training and conscious, goal-oriented action?

- Practicing choosing methodologies and evaluating outcomes.
- Experiential learning

Social competence

How might your participants consciously experience their relationships with other people and actively experiment in shaping their social relationships?

- Cooperation and teamwork
- Reflecting on different interests, needs, and tensions.
- Team and conflict management skills.

Personal competence

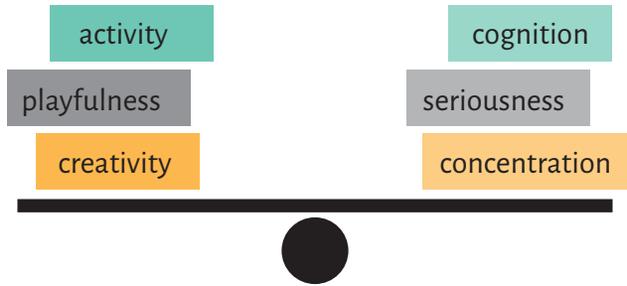
Do you leave enough space for your participants to act autonomously, in a self-organized and reflective way?

- Addressing responsibility, appreciating existing competencies in your participants
- Training participants to observe and evaluate requirements or options.
- Reflecting on how a participant assumes responsibility and approaches self-directed learning.

Balance of counterparts

Your training can address the diverse needs of a target group with a variety of methods.

The challenge is to get the attention of all your participants, despite their differing needs and preferences concerning methodology. This is less a question of what kind of competencies are being addressed than of preferred learning styles and ways of incorporating knowledge. Recognizing people's diversity, we advocate for a balance – creative and diversified learning arrangements that address different senses and stimulate participants' motivation. For example:



After a phase of playfulness for example, seriousness helps us to refocus. After a phase of group work, some people enjoy silent individual reflection.

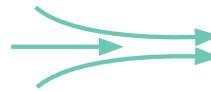
Inhale and exhale

When learning becomes a balanced circle that includes a learner's activity ("exhale") and a more passive observing/reflecting role ("inhale"), the two are well balanced in your methodological planning. Combine methods that encourage active experimentation with those that allow for observation and reflection. After active involvement, participants need relaxation. After input, participants often wish to become active again.



Active experimentation

- Games
- Discussions
- Group work
- Changing locations



Observation, Consumption, Reflection

- Listening to a presentation
- Hearing others' opinions
- Movies
- Reading
- Coffee break

The whole personality

Make sure that participants' whole personalities and a diversity of learning preferences are addressed. The goal is that over larger periods of time (half days or days of a training), trainings encourage a variety of cognitive, emotional and practical learning.



Cognition	Emotion	Practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Understanding → Thinking → Judging → Interpreting → Discussions → Readings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Emotional experiences → Visiting groups → Role models → Social experience in the group → Valuing outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Practice outside the classroom → Learning by doing → Simulation games → Implementing projects → Addressing the sense of motivation

A good method should not:

- x be chosen just because it is attractive and original
- x be overcomplicated – more form than content
- x create space for violence
- x be manipulative – participants do not understand what the method is for, or it has some hidden meaning





Tool: The planning matrix

A planning matrix focuses on the goals of your activity, is flexible enough to include spontaneous innovations, and reflects the participants' needs and those of the facilitators. We recommend planning a meeting using such a goal-

Explanation

Time units	1. Goal	2. Content	3. Method
Divide the program into units of time: days, half days, hours.	<p><i>Go into details.</i></p> <p>Plan different units or didactical steps for the meeting and define their goals.</p> <p>Formulate the goals from the perspective of your participants, using the past tense.</p>	<p><i>Identify the relevant content.</i></p>	<p><i>Choose a method:</i></p> <p>Methods have to correspond to their goals. While you choose from among several possibilities for how to teach a topic, you can ask: Which of the methods is best suited to achieve my goals?</p>
	<p><i>"The participants have learned/experienced/done..."</i></p>	<p><i>Which aspects of the content are important?</i></p> <p><i>What knowledge is relevant?</i></p>	<p><i>How will I achieve the goal and address the topical aspects?</i></p>
Getting to know each other	<p>Participants have learned each other's names.</p> <p>They have learned a little bit about the group.</p> <p>They have gotten to know one another in terms of the topic at hand.</p>	<p>Active icebreakers</p> <p>Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Names · How much do you know about topic X? · Interests... 	<p>Shoe game</p> <p>Each participants takes off one shoe and throws it into the middle;</p> <p>Each participant then takes a shoe out of the "pile of shoes," finds the owner, and they talk in pairs.</p> <p>Sociometric line-up</p> <p>Participants form a line according to their answers to these questions</p>

Example

content-method table, which should cover all relevant information.

First, describe the general issue you are dealing with in the meeting and how it is related to the general, fundamental goals of your activity. Before filling out the matrix define one general goal for the meeting with a maximum of 5 sub-goals. This reduction will help you to gain clarity.

4. Time	5. Who?	6. Material and remarks
<p>Do not forget to take into account the time you need for different units.</p> <p>Try to be realistic, add a <i>buffer of about 20%</i>, and also allow time for breaks. This will be relaxing for you and the group.</p>	<p><i>Who moderates or guides through the step(s)?</i></p> <p>A larger team can include one facilitator and a supporting co-facilitator. If you are running a meeting as a team, it makes sense to agree on goals, while the facilitator responsible for the unit decides on content and methods.</p>	<p>You can also add the <i>necessary material and organizational remarks</i> to the table. This can be helpful during preparation.</p>
<p><i>Time required for implementing the plan.</i></p>	<p><i>Who plans, moderates or guides participants through the step(s)?</i></p>	<p><i>What materials, preparation or specific requirements are needed?</i></p>
<p>30 minutes</p>	<p>Petra Pawel</p>	<p>Requires sufficient space. Mark +/- on the floor for orientation</p>



Tool: Method check

Handbooks with methods and toolboxes enjoy great popularity among teachers and facilitators. A large collection of prepared methods for facilitators can be found at: www.competendo.net/en/Online_Sources.

Take these methods as inspiration. The empowerment concept behind this publication is based on the belief that every conscious facilitator is able to design a good method on their own, taking into account various aspects of learning.

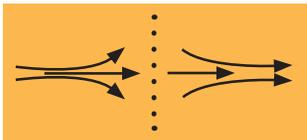
The effectiveness of any given method depends on the specific contexts and circumstances. Some things work with one group, but not necessarily with a similar group. However, a method is likely to be appropriate when it passes the following Method check.

Group: Is the method suited to their learning styles and culture?

Goal: Does the method help to achieve your goal?

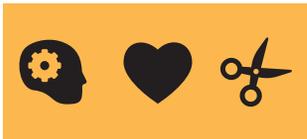
Facilitators capacities: Do you feel strong and experienced enough to moderate the method?

When planning, use a matrix like the one on page 38/39 and fill it out, starting with your goals. Once you've completed it, see if the basic principles are reflected. If not every unit does so, then check to make sure that the neighboring units offer enough variety:



Inhale-exhale

Is there a balance of reflection/observation and active learning?



Cognition-emotion-practice

Does the training address all aspects of the personality?



Balance of counterparts

Do you address the diversity of learning needs by balancing different and/or opposing aspects of learning?

1 Facilitator Handbook #1: Steps toward action, p. 19

2 Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB) K. Hensge, B. Lorig, D. Schreiber: Kompetenzstandards in der Berufsausbildung;

www2.bibb.de/bibbtools/tools/dapro/data/documents/pdf/eb_43201.pdf; accessed July 25th, 2016



Chapter 4

THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF A HOLISTIC APPROACH

In our experience, there are a few basic components that help us reach the goals of holistic learning. A training usually consists of the building blocks described on the next page. One basic building block to be used at the beginning of a learning event is a needs assessment. You can then follow that up with an activity on personalities, expectations, and expertise. Before you begin with more in-depth work, the common principles of cooperation should be clarified together or made transparent. And finally, any phase of acquisition needs time for reflection which provides, in turn, the basis for the next steps towards the learning goals.

Whether you are planning a half day training or a one week seminar, the principle is always the same – it is only the time and space allotted to each section that varies. Without assessing your participants' needs, for example, there is always the danger that your contribution will lose relevance for your audience. In a classroom situation you might spend five minutes discussing expectations, while in a one-week seminar you invest one hour – because a more intensive need assessment gives you detailed information for planning and shaping a good learning atmosphere during the next days.



COMPETENDO

On Competendo you will find more examples of individual tools and methods that might be used within these modules. Since they are just examples, keep in mind that you can easily replace the suggested methods, unless your goal is very similar.

A) Needs

- Of participants
- Of institutions
- Of facilitators
- Expectations regarding the learning process



B) Establishing good working conditions

- Trust and transparency: a basic requirement for a holistic learning space
- All participants and facilitators agree on the rules
- Getting to know each other: name games



C) Personalities, beliefs, and participant expertise

- Learning about existing knowledge and experiences within a group
- Learning about preferred learning styles
- Learning about the participants' learning goals
- Informing participants about the facilitators' educational goals
- Identifying issues for re-arrangement, or negotiating of goals and setting



D) Work on content

- Clarifying goals
- Providing a diversity of learning opportunities
- Mixing methods (cognitive, practical, emotional)
- Transfer: How to apply the content in real life



E) Reflection

- On goals and expectations, group process and well-being, quality of facilitation, contribution of the individual and the learning group
- Feedback
- Awareness of the learning outcome



A) Needs

One crucial question of cooperative learning is how to find out what the current *needs of our participants* are and how to satisfy them in the most suitable way. In every training or session, there are many expectations and needs at play. They are sometimes stated explicitly, but often they are hidden from a facilitator, and sometimes even hidden from the other participants.

All needs are important. Specific interest in a topic or a learning style is one example, but there are very personal needs as well. For example, one participant might want to focus on his place in the group hierarchy, whereas another emphasizes a wish to present her ideas in a group. You can help participants grow more aware of these issues by providing time and space to reflect on their needs and how they might be addressed.

One great opportunity to tailor your seminar to your participants is to *create the program together*. If this is not possible, you might give participants *a chance to review the program* beforehand and to influence the program design.

This style of planning also shows an *appreciative attitude* as a facilitator and helps your participants to feel like *co-owners* of the training. But this all depends on more than just an encouraging attitude. Concrete signals are also required: Respond to comments or ideas and show your willingness to reconsider planning because of the feedback you received. If for some reason you are not including the feedback you've received, you can explain why you chose something different. Be open to negotiation.

In the end this makes your training better attuned to the particular group you are working with. Everybody's satisfaction with the training will increase accordingly.

As facilitators, we not only have to meet the needs of our participants, we also have to think about the *institutional needs* of those who hired us or our places of work. Before you accept a training job you have to verify whether the needs of the institution pair well with your ideas and ideals as a facilitator. Tell your participants about the central needs of the institution. This is important for their understanding and for transparency.

At the same time, as a facilitator you will have certain needs, which influence the learning process as well. Talk about your needs in an open and professional way (e.g. if punctuality is very important to you...)

Example exercise: Dynamic research

A very effective “4-minute questionnaire” for the beginning of a training.



20



paper and pens



20

by Südwind

Goal

The aim is to share expectations for goals, content, and methods before a seminar begins in earnest. This allows you to plan the seminar according to the needs of the participants.

Steps

1. Divide the group into four smaller groups. If you have a large group, you can also make eight groups with two groups, and have working on each question.

2. Each group gets one question to research. Questions might include:

- What has to happen here in order for you to leave this training satisfied?
- What do you think about the question of...?
- How deep is your knowledge of the issue...?
- What do I expect from my trainers?

Make sure that participants understand that they are not only answering this question for themselves. They have to conduct representative research in the whole group.

3. The time is as follows:

- Preparation time for the research: *4 minutes*
- Research: *4 minutes*
- Preparation of results presentations: *4 minutes*
- Presentation of the results: *2 minutes*

As facilitator you are the timekeeper. Depending on the group, it can be longer or shorter. All of the phases happen simultaneously except the last one (presentation of the results), in which one group presents after the other.

Experiences

This is a quick and dynamic method that makes participants work together intensely from the very beginning. Sometimes the results are a bit superficial. In this case, it is your task to ask the right questions after the presentations.

Example exercise: Five fingers – expectations



60



paper and pens



16

by Working Between Cultures

Goal

The aim of this activity is to make transparent the expectations of participants and facilitators regarding content and cooperation. This allows the planning of content, goals, and methods to be need-focused.



Steps

1. Draw the Five fingers model (see the in-depth explanation on page 28) on a pinboard and explain it to your participants
2. Individual work: Participants are asked to note down their needs and expectations regarding the seminar on cards (1-3 keywords only on each card). *[10 minutes]*
3. Plenum: The cards are read aloud and stuck in the appropriate category on the pinboard. Participants are encouraged to ask questions if anything is unclear. *[35 to 45 minutes]*
4. The trainer sums up the participants' expectations and comments, and adds the expectations of the trainers. *[10 minutes]*
5. Discussion and negotiation in the plenum. The aim is to reach a consensus in terms of seminar planning. If necessary, the program should be adjusted to address participants' needs.

Experiences

There is a great deal of flexibility as to how much trainers position themselves at this early stage of the seminar with regard to different comments. When evaluating the seminar, trainers and participants should refer back to their expectations, to check to what extent they have been fulfilled.

Variation

Use an expectation box instead of a plenum: Participants drop their cards inside anonymously. Trainers can then evaluate them later during their planning sessions. Alternatively, small groups of participants can go through the cards and summarize the aspects described.



B) Establishing good working conditions

The more diversity there is within a group, the greater the potential for exchange, inspiration and learning from peers. People however are only willing to activate this potential

if they feel safe and respected. Therefore before engaging more deeply with the content of a seminar, facilitators establish appropriate ground rules based on basic democratic and human principles. When facilitators demonstrate that they take the democratic principles they are promoting seriously through their actions, this raises the feasibility that participants will as well.

Trust

Trust is important because people should feel safe, especially in heterogeneous groups in which participants and facilitators may feel uncertain. In this sense, we define trust as the certainty that at any stage of the shared learning process, everything will happen according to the values of mutual respect, autonomy, and personal responsibility. This necessitates that everyone monitor his or her own goals and needs and decides what to do based on these values.

Transparency

is needed to give orientation and therefore provides the basis for participation: Only those individuals who have all the relevant information can participate in an optimal way. This includes transparency in terms of our motivations and goals as facilitators. The second important aspect of transparency is clarity about conditions and rules. Both facilitators and participants have certain rules in mind, which is fine. But even if as facilitators we think that our rules might be the best for the group, what makes us think that way? Imposing rules on participants leads to an ineffective and dissatisfying cooperation. We should instead share our power and enable participants to discuss their own rules and goals.

Establishing basic rules

Introduce the rules outlined in the table below: discretion, stopping, and disagreement. Let the group discuss and establish their own the seminar rules, reflecting their personal needs and goals. Here the "Code of conduct" or a similar method might help.

Name games: Getting to know each other

You've already learned a lot about your participants by discussing their needs and basic working principles. It is essential to a good working

atmosphere that both the trainer and the participants know everyone's names and the correct pronunciation. The deeper sense behind these name games is that learners may interconnect independently of the teacher, and that they build trust, which is a precondition for deeper experiential learning later on.

Example exercise: Basic rules

Participants and facilitators need rules to rely on in the group, as a sort of internal constitution for the training. As a facilitator, it's your task to introduce some of them and to abide by them.



20



flipchart, pens



12-24

by MitOst

Goal

The group gains familiarity with the basic rules for cooperation.

Introduction

On an individual level, trust is the certainty that things will happen according to our expectations and wishes. On a group level, it is a generally supportive, well-intentioned attitude toward each other. Rules help a group to develop a trusting working culture. Introduce the three basic rules below to your participants.

Discretion rule	Stopping rule	Disagreement rule
<p><i>"What we say here stays in the seminar room."</i></p> <p>This also includes pictures, stories, or videos, which are not allowed to be shared in social networks without explicit permission.</p>	<p><i>"Whenever a participant feels uncomfortable with something that happened or is about to happen, they are allowed to say: STOP!"</i></p> <p>In this event, they do not have to participate and do not need to explain why.</p>	<p><i>"Everybody has the right to agree and to disagree."</i></p> <p>Minority perspectives must be heard and respected, which also means that no one's experience is marginalized or put in relative terms by the majority. The group does not have to agree—but everyone should at least try to increase empathy.</p>

There might be other fundamental needs covered through commonly agreed rule-setting. For identifying and discussing these, a task like “Code of conduct” might follow.¹

Example exercise: Code of conduct

Imagine that the seminar is in island that we are trapped on. Now we have to find our own basic working principles.



60



flipchart, pens



12-24

by MitOst

Goal

The participants agree upon a set of guidelines for life on the island, which will then be transferred to behavior within the seminar.

Steps

1. Participants are divided into small groups of about 5 to 6.
2. Introduction: Each group finds itself on a small and isolated island. The task for each group is to formulate and note down a set of guidelines to define the life on the island. *[20 minutes]*
3. In a plenary session, inhabitants of the island present their rules, followed by group discussion: “What are the rules for our seminar?” *[40 minutes]*

Reflection

- What aspects came up quickly?
- What was easy to agree on and why?
- What was somewhat harder to solve?
- On which of the rules can we all agree for the duration of the training?

Experiences

Please be aware that often rules are *not* necessary in groups. Adults often do not need rules or at least manage to deal with the breaking of “implicit” rules in a proper way. So before making rules, be aware of the group you are working with and ask yourself whether this group really needs rules or not. An option for a longer training is to wait until the end of the second day and then you will recognize if there are certain rules necessary to conduct the training properly.

Example exercise: Name circle



15



16

by Working Between Cultures

Goal

The goal of this activity is for all the group members (participants and facilitators) to learn the correct pronunciation for the names of everybody in the group.

Steps

1. The group stands in a circle. Each participant says their name loudly. The group repeats the name, concentrating on the right pronunciation. The speaker corrects them, if necessary.
2. One person starts. Person A picks one person (B) from the circle and walks quickly to him/her. When he/she arrives in front of person B, person A says his/her own name very loudly, so that the whole circle can hear it. Immediately after that, person B steps out into the circle and walks to a new person (C). Person A takes the place of person B in the circle. After that, person C walks to another target person (D) and so on. This is repeated several times, until everyone has had at least one turn. *[5 minutes]*
3. The above procedure is repeated, only that this time, person A doesn't say his/her own name at arrival, but person B's name. Again, the names need to be said loudly and the pace should be very quick. If person A cannot remember person B's name, person B should help out by saying his/her name. *[5 minutes]*
4. The procedure basically stays the same, only that this time, when person A stands in front of person B, he/she says the name of a third person (C), and person B walks quickly over to person C and repeats the procedure. *[5 minutes]*

Experiences

The game is always a lot of fun and actively involves everybody. If you feel that the group needs more energy, as a trainer can walk out into the circle towards another person, so that 2 or even 3 people are moving in the circle at the same time.



C) Your participants' personalities, beliefs and expertise

Trainers and participants start the seminar with very different expectations and requirements. Therefore, in addition to a needs assessment, it is necessary for everybody involved to share their field expertise, specific interests, and knowledge at the beginning of the training.

It is also important to learn about your group's learning styles and goals. Tools like Democracy Scrabble illuminate on a topic from many different perspectives. They encourage discussion and help cluster words or aspects as a good introduction to work on a complicated topic. The term "democracy" can be replaced by other rich and meaningful terms such as sustainability, mentoring, gender, government...

Example exercise: A wealth of experience

 45- 60 min  flipchart, pens  3-15 by Working Between Cultures

Name and field of work

- Our knowledge about/ experiences in working in teams
- Our experience in intercultural environments
- The expertise we can contribute to our new team

Name and field of work

Name and field of work

Goal

This is an exercise to get to know one another on the level of content and to discover knowledge and expertise within a group.

Steps

Preparation before the seminar:

1. Think of a few questions that allow participants to demonstrate knowledge they have that is relevant for the seminar topic (see the task above which was used in a training about working in international teams) and prepare a flipchart with the task for the group

During the seminar:

1. Explain the task
2. Divide the group into smaller groups [*max. 5 persons per group*]
3. Individual group work [*20-30 minutes*]
4. Presentation of the groups [*we recommend a maximum of 10 minutes per presentation*]

Example exercise: Democracy Scrabble

Students brainstorm their associations for a key word such as “democracy” using a Scrabble board method.

🕒 20-45 min

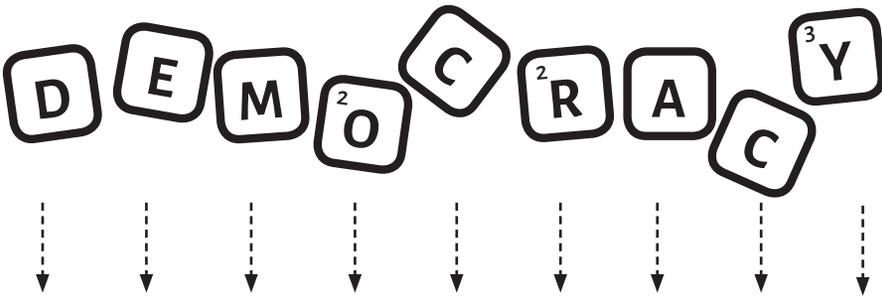


posters, pens



3-30 people

by MitOst



The method gives participants space to make use of their knowledge and to complement one another's pre-existing expertise. At the end the Scrabble board shows a broad range of aspects connected with a topic (here: democracy).

Goal

This method delves into a complex topic and activates participants' existing knowledge. The exercise also helps to illustrate the complexity of a term.

Steps

1. Preparation: Write the word DEMOCRACY (in big capital letters) on a big sheet of paper.
2. Ask participants to note down keywords and terms that they associate with the term “democracy” (a little like brainstorming). They do not need to write down a definition. Associated words are attached to the letters that are already on the board, as in the game “Scrabble.” *[5 minutes]*
3. The participants write their words individually or in groups. *[10 minutes if they work on their own, 15 if they work in groups]*

Reflection

The trainer asks the participants or groups one after another to read their words aloud. He or she notes them down on the flipchart and orders them. He asks if the one presenting agrees with the order. The other participants are asked not to comment on the associations.

Criteria to use as an order (for the trainer):

- rules / laws
- institutions
- values
- people
- performance criterion / goals

"Democracy" is a subjective term. Respect your participants' subjectivity by not judging their contributions.



D) Work on content

It may seem like you have spent a lot of time doing other things before working on the “real content,” but all these steps are necessary elements that will enable you and your participants to foster a good learning experience.

While working on the content, it is important to provide participants with different learning opportunities and to use a mixed variety of methods. Every participant learns in a different way and we have to give everybody the possibility to learn as much as possible.

At the same time, it is important to stay authentic as a facilitator. If you do not feel comfortable with a method, it's better not to use it.

Working on content in a holistic way not only means addressing different learning preferences, but also creating learning experiences that are close to real life. The seminar room is a safe space, but through discussing and debriefing we can always make connections to real life.



E) Reflection

Conducting a workshop or a training is a complex process that requires a facilitator pays attention to many aspects. There are a broad range of issues that should be the subjects of reflection and evaluation.

Focuses of reflection

Competency development and assessment

- Participant's acquisition of competencies
- Participant's development towards feeling and acting self-empowered
- Your acquisition of competencies as a facilitator

Management

- Goal fulfillment: content, individual goals, institutional goals
- Event management
- Logistics and timing
- Process moderation
- Cooperation within the facilitation team

Cooperative learning

- Group dynamics
- Collaboration between learners
- Collaboration between facilitators, other experts, and learners

Personal well-being

- Ability to learn
- Teaching space
- Fulfillment of special needs
- Fulfillment of social needs

Creating and conducting quality trainings requires a lot of time and energy. Yet the reward is worthwhile, it is the magic that can be felt when the program you have planned, the potential of the group, and the coaches' contributions correspond to each other, and everyone feels the joy of the learning process.

Matching methodological approaches to diverse needs

Think about whom you want to ask your questions to – some methods are suitable more for children than for adults, or they are more appropriate for official situations than for an internal questionnaire. Evaluation can (and sometimes should) be carried out anonymously; a public discussion is not always the best approach. It might depend on, for example, how sensitive the issue at hand is, or what the mood in the group is. After taking these into account, you can choose to conduct a public, a half-public, or private evaluation.

Individuals tend to prefer different learning and communication styles, therefore we recommend not focusing on one ideal methodological approach, especially for longer learning processes. Instead, we recommend including a range of methods that covers a host of different and opposing issues. For example: Use a combination of confidential *and* public evaluations. Give space for written *and* spoken evaluations, individual *and* cooperative evaluations.

Mixing methodologies for reflection

Confidentiality

- Anonymous
- Half-public
- Public

Group relations

- In a plenum
- In other types of collaboration
- Individual work

Ways of expression

- Speaking individually or in dialogue
- Writing
- Walking, as in sociographic methods

Style

- Appropriate methods for your target group

Example exercise: Constructive feedback¹

To implement qualitative communication, we have to bear in mind what constructive feedback is.



2-20 people

by MitOst

Feedback is a method that was developed to improve the relevance (giving relevant information) and moral quality (showing interpersonal respect) of interpersonal communication. It is an important skill, and often includes very useful information. In order to learn from this information, participants need to develop the capacity to give and receive feedback.

Goal

Improving the quality of interpersonal communication, getting to know different perspectives on personal communication, work, and behavior.

Steps

Feedback is not simply another word for criticism. It is a constructive tool that reflects each of the following aspects:

- Appreciation: *What I liked...*
- Criticism: *What I didn't like...*
- Inspiration: *What I might propose...*

Rules for giving feedback

- Your feedback should be relevant and useful for the other person
- Represent yourself – Use “I” statements, do not use “we” or “one”
- Separate feelings from observations
- Describe, do not interpret
- Show respect for the whole person
- Keep in mind the position from which you give and receive feedback

Rules for receiving feedback

- If you have a specific question, ask.
- Do not discuss or comment on anything
- Decide silently which aspects or comments you accept
- If you like, you can thank the other person

Examples

Principle	Respectful feedback	Devaluing feedback
Send an I-message.	<i>"I did not understand that point."</i>	<i>"Your presentation was not understandable."</i>
Describe, do not interpret.	<i>"Your hands and your voice wavered and fluttered during the presentation."</i>	<i>"You were agitated and nervous again."</i>
Communicate in an authentic but selective way.	<i>"I am frustrated. I feel the responsibility for the tasks and their coordination isn't working. Well, sometimes it works."</i>	<i>"Our teamwork is a catastrophe."</i>
Show respect for the whole person.	<i>"When you are excited, your voice starts to get louder. That makes me nervous."</i>	<i>"You have an annoying voice when you get excited."</i>

Variation

Present the steps of giving feedback in front of your group: Appreciation-criticism-inspiration. Ask participants to break up in pairs, and let them try out the model. Afterwards, ask them to reflect: What was challenging? What was useful? How was it to give and to receive feedback?

Experiences

Feedback experience requires a trusting or "safe" space. It might as well be applied in other environments - everybody likes to receive appreciation, not just criticism. The humanist roots for this affection towards others can be found in Carl Rogers, in "Theme Centered Interaction" (Ruth Cohn)².

Example exercise: Home zones

Home zones are safe spaces for meeting and reflecting in a mixed small group of facilitators and participants. They remain the same throughout the entire learning event. Home zones are spaces to talk, reflect, and share everything related to the learning event in a relaxed, trusting atmosphere where everyone feels invited to speak. They are also good places to explore participants' and facilitators' views on the content and structure of the meeting and group dynamics.

Working conditions for the home zones:

- Groups are small enough to allow everyone time to speak in about 30-45 minutes
- Participants can decide on their own which group they want to join
- Groups can be moderated, but do not necessarily have to be moderated by the facilitator
- Groups meet every day if possible, at a certain set time and place

Possible topics for group discussion:

- What we have taken from the learning event – insights, learning outcomes, feelings, specific knowledge, experience
- What we wish for the next day – working style, knowledge, training of specific competencies, atmosphere

Validation and identification of the learning outcome

The knowledge, skills, and competencies gained through alternative or informal education deserve better recognition from society. In other words: What participants learn needs to be made visible not only to participants themselves, but also to their social environments. Learning is obviously about more than what we see in most formal educational institutions and programs. We encourage the use of broad understanding, as defined by a study by CEDEFOP:

“ ”

“Learning outcomes are statements of what a learner knows, understands, and is able to do after completion of learning.”³

Although the acquisition of competencies and the growth and development resulting from a training are not easily certified, facilitators can use tools to document processes and personal developments.

Identification, assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Makes the individual's learning visible in a general way → Tends to be less formal
Validation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → <i>“Based on the assessment of the individual's learning outcomes.”</i> → Concretizing learning outcomes in the form of a certificate or diploma. → Identified skills and competencies may provide grounds for validation.

In non-formal education, facilitators and organizations are often able to describe levels of competency and the specific combination of competencies required for concrete tasks. For example, we might imagine designing an ideal job profile, the profile for a specific facilitator position, or recognizing the specific skills of a facilitator or a trainee. Training programs also partially define their intended impact by focusing on their participants' ability to apply what they have learned, instead of following a definition for learning that focuses only knowledge acquisition.

EU tools for assessment and identification

YouthPASS

from: *European Commission*

www.youthpass.eu

Portfolio for youth leaders

from: *Council of Europe*

www.coe.int/en/web/youth-portfolio/

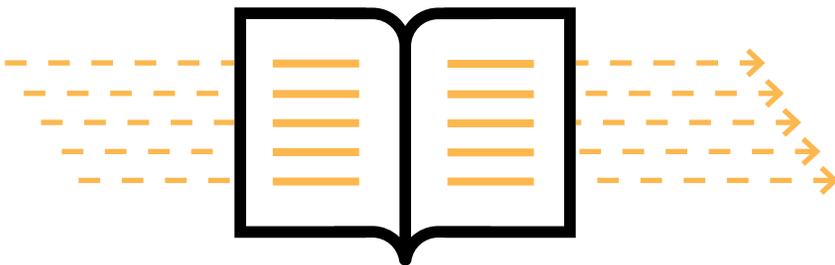
European Skills Passport

from: *European Commission*

<http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/>

Facilitators can encourage learners to use regular assessment tools by keeping their learning outcomes updated and written. Working with YouthPASS primarily helps to reflect consciously on acquired knowledge and skills, and to learn how to describe those skills in a way that other people can understand.

Example exercise: Learning journal



While facilitating or attending a training, one may wonder how much companies that produce notebooks must benefit from the fact that the overwhelming majority of facilitators use training diaries or learning journals.

But what is actually written in these notebooks?

In a notebook you might describe what you are going to do in a session—this may include goals, methods, and even what changes during the session. You can use it to jot down quotes, observations, and—less commonly practiced but very important—you can use it to monitor your own learning. You can use it to record what you did and what you now think about it. In other words, reflections on your professional growth.

A learning journal can be used:

- to monitor learning and find out about your own learning preferences
- to reflect on your progress and identify strengths and weaknesses
- to record your observations, thoughts, and significant experiences
- to collect relevant material and summarize your research
- In short: to discover your personal and professional self

How you do it is up to you – texts, drawings, pictures, tables, glossaries ... feel free to use all forms of media. Whether you enter your thoughts in the journal daily, weekly, or based on different events, it is important to find a rhythm (i.e. every evening during a conference; every weekend...). Learning journal researchers say setting up a framework helps you to keep track – it could be a recurring set of questions you answer frequently, or a specific structure: a description of the situation, then reflection, and finally ideas for further actions and improvement, for example.

You should “harvest” your learning journal: “read it and make notes, put it down and consider what you've written, re-read it without notes, make new notes, match notes up, reconsider, re-read and so on.” Doing so, you might find patterns – how you manage things, how you tend to explain or evade issues, what you appreciate and what you don't like, how concepts or theories you have learned have influence your professional behavior.

Let's start journaling!

Example:

This notebook was published to help European Volunteers organize their learning processes during their service year. It helps people analyze their learning styles and record what they've learned.

- www.salto-youth.net/downloads/toolbox_tool_download-file-1207/evs-learning-notebook.pdf



Checklist: Trainer's daily checklist

Some trainers use checklists to reflect on their own learning outcomes. The checklist is a universal instrument that is easily adjustable to one's own needs.

On-going work with a checklist stimulates self-discipline, but also a steady and responsible attitude towards one's own learning process. The instrument can track the entire learning process, as the facilitator may put in entries from different periods. However, regular work is required to make a detailed analysis.

Below is an example of a daily experience assessment:

Learning event, date	
Successes	<i>What worked well, what I am happy about...</i>
Challenges	<i>What did not work, what I want to improve...</i>
Insights	<i>Thoughts, discoveries...</i>
For the future	<i>New learning goals...</i>

Setting goals for self-development:

Priority directions for my development	<i>For example: Introducing sustainable development into my facilitation style</i>
My learning goals	<i>For example: Focus more on the sustainability of initiatives and projects in my coaching and advising activities</i>



Case study: Exploring needs

By Matthias Haberl, Südwind

When we hold workshops in schools, it makes a big difference whether the students attending our workshop are coming from a class where they just had a big test or if they were just playing soccer in P.E. class. My job as trainer is to build upon whatever “mood” the participants are in, which creates (along with other aspects) a certain atmosphere in a training.

If I am really on point, I might even manage to integrate these aspects into the perfect beginning for a training: I often do trainings about mobile phones and various human rights considerations in their procurement chain. I ask: “Did you see the soccer game yesterday when Robert Lewandowski scored that amazing goal? Did you know he promotes a certain mobile phone company? Yeah, really, and do you know where they come from? Who actually makes Lewandowski's phones?”

So the soccer game can be a smooth and helpful way to introduce an issue. It connects participants' current priorities with my priority and creates a win-win situation that allows us to gain some common ground.

In some situations, we have even more time to plan a shared process. This allows us to conduct deeper research into participants' wishes and needs. An interesting method for doing so is called “Dynamic Research,” which puts the participants “in the driver's seat” and empowers them to do research among themselves. You can combine this with individual work, where participants individually consider what they want to experience and focus on in the training, in addition to the topical aspects. There is then an option to voluntarily share some outcomes of this individual work in the planning sessions, to transparently show the possible spectrum of reflection.



Case study: A wealth of experience

By Elke Heublein, Working Between Cultures

We try to conduct our trainings in a way that reflects our participants' reality as closely as possible and want to make a strong connection between the knowledge provided in the seminar room and the participants' "real world."

We consider participants experts in their (professional) reality and think that only they are able to decide which aspects of the knowledge provided in the training make sense and might be used in their professional life.

A good tool for translating this idea of learning into reality is "the treasure of experience," a tool we have been using for many years now with different groups of participants (students, professors, teams, leaders...)

We always use this tool in the first seminar session. It is a way of getting to know one another, but on a specifically content-oriented level. This tool gives participants a chance to share their knowledge, expertise, and experience.

We strongly recommend working with the "A wealth of experience" for several reasons:

- Individual participants can show a part of their professional selves and their expertise (and of course they get to decide what they want to show);
- Other participants see how much expertise there is in the room, and it is a way to connect easily with one another
- Facilitators get a sense of the group's level of experience. It helps them to value "the wisdom of the group" and to see how they can connect the content they have created with the existing knowledge of the group

How to use the treasure of experience: See method description on page 50.



Case study: Tower of Power – an experiential approach

by Tobias Voss, Metalog

Metalog training tools enable a group to explore a wide range of topics easily by including experiential learning, understood as self-recovery. Removed from the learners' day-to-day reality, they gain an opportunity for self-reflection on their interactions, attitudes, and beliefs. This in turn provides the basis for finding solutions that help participants to transfer what they learn to their lives. As the developer of the Tower of Power, Tobias Voss, states:

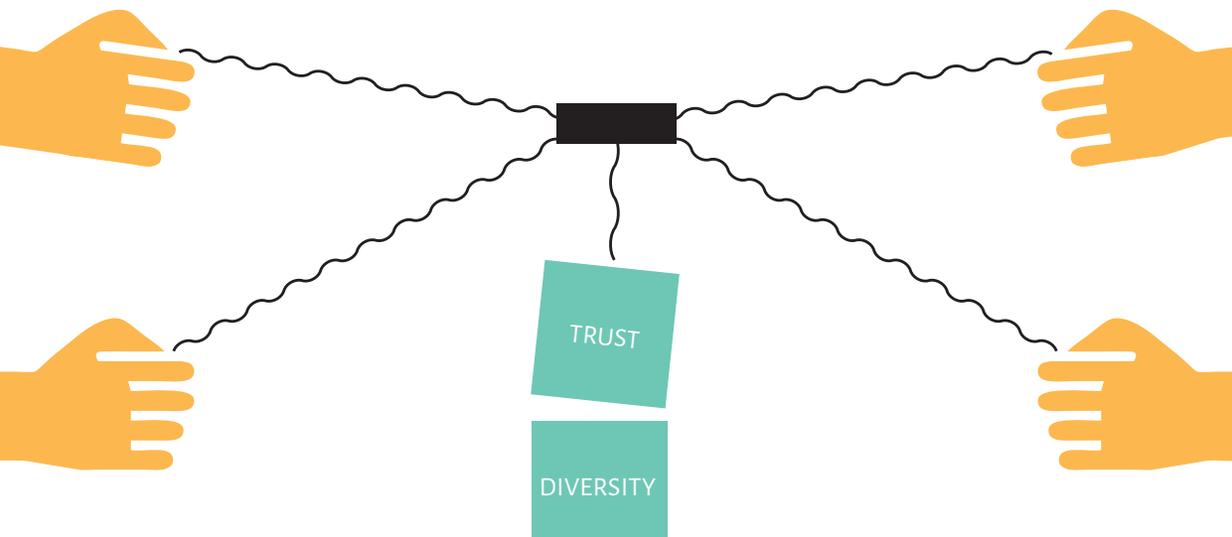


“How learners experience the activity plays an important role in the learning outcome. By placing the focus on the achievement of a task, they allow attention to be directed away from a problem and towards the completion of a task.”

An example of this approach is the method Tower of Power. It can be used in various ways. In this case study, we will show how it supports reflection on fundamental values and beliefs in a diverse group.

A community tower on values

Participants in a group build a community project tower. They receive a crane-like tool used in construction, with one string for each participant. In the middle of the group, there are six wooden blocks lying on the ground. The facilitator has put moderation cards on every block, each with one word: *solidarity, friendship, diversity, creativity, communication, trust*. Participants are asked to assemble the tower collectively, ordering the values by hierarchy of importance - by having the fundamental values on the ground. They can only use the construction crane to move the blocks.



Reflection

The role of the facilitator is to help the group gain a deeper understanding of the topic as well as to discover the “*higher purpose*”. Without a shared reflection phase, completing the task would not be very satisfying.

Participants will better apply what they've learned if reflection on the activity is conducted carefully, and if it covers a range of aspects. The Tower of Power might be reflected on in three stages:

<p>Collection of different perspectives on the process: Understanding what happened in the exercise.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · “How did you feel while building the tower?” · “How happy are you with the results?” “How happy are you with the process?” “Why?” · “Imagine you were to face this challenge again, what would you do differently?” · “What phases would you use to describe this activity?” · “Suppose you were to give these different phases names, what would you call them?”
<p>Transfer: Establish understanding of how the experience reflects everyday issues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · “What typical everyday situations do you think this learning project mirrors?” · “What aspects of the experience remind you of daily life?”
<p>Develop: Independently of the interaction activity, focus on the issues that surfaced. You pave the way for applying the learning outcomes to everyday life.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · “As we have just seen, conflict can sometimes arise quite quickly. So let's look more closely at how this happens and the best way to deal with it.” · “How do the findings help us to improve our teamwork in real life?” · “We have just experienced that it's very helpful to have a common goal. Let's try and work on common goals in your everyday lives”.

The Metalog Method provides a powerful experience-oriented approach to learning. It turns “games” into effective interventions. By consciously combining goals, allowing for deep group experiences and detailed reflection, this method provides both the trainer and the participants with a deep learning experience. You can see the “Tower of Power” and other activities in action here: www.metalogtools.com

For a more detailed description see: Competendo → Tower of Power



Case study: Identifying learning outcomes

By Marta Gawinek-Dagargulia,
Civic engagement workshop

The civic education program for youth from Poland, Ukraine, and Belarus has worked with a portfolio based on EU YouthPASS. In the beginning of the educational year all participants receive access to an Internet platform (maysternya.org) where they enter in all their learning achievements related to specific competencies, as described in EU and OECD documents.

Each participant worked with a tailor-made portfolio that included a description of key competencies with specific examples. During the year, they updated their portfolios. Facilitators assisted in the process of the learning events as did mentors, who supported their projects and learning processes.

At the end of the program, youthpasses were attached to the certificate issued by the program coordinators. Participants then used the certificate and portfolio when looking for a job or another occupation.

1. N. Zimmermann, H. Fahrn, E. Skowron (Ed.): Diversity Dynamics: Activating the Potential of Diversity in Trainings; Berlin 2014

2. R. C. Cohn: Von der Psychoanalyse zur themenzentrierten Interaktion. Von der Behandlung einzelner zu einer Pädagogik für alle; Stuttgart 1975

3 European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training: The shift to learning outcomes; www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/3054_en.pdf The shift to learning outcomes Policies and practices in Europe; accessed July 25th, 2016; p. 15



EPILOGUE: MOVING TOWARD HOLISTIC LEARNING IN OUR CONCRETE PRACTICE

We believe that the holistic approach is not only an approach to learning but to life itself. We hope this book have given you new paths of discovery – both personally and professionally for shaping spaces for inspiring, useful, and deep learning.

As an international team of people that share the values of lifelong learning, but also as a group of people that love exploring new horizons, we are happy to have been able to reach out to you - another person from our extended community of learners and explorers – who is engaged in developing yourself and others.

Method versus goal

With regard to planning, we introduced an approach that prioritizes the goals of a learning event. In our opinion, facilitating is not only a combination of performing and convincing, it is also about filling out tables like the planning matrix. Sometimes we have to make decisions against methods, even those we like or want to try out. However, by setting priorities, we create more flexibility for interaction and more certainty that we will meet our own expectations, as well as those of the institution and the participants. In this sense we want to encourage you to understand that although they are important, the methods discussed are not the essential part of the learning process.

Dynamic interaction

Holistic learning requires a heightened awareness of needs, the development of processes, reflection on different levels, and negotiation with your participants. In this sense, facilitators that try to balance all these aspects should be well respected. They open themselves to more uncertainty than they would in ordinary “teaching” settings, where usually everything is planned and controlled well in advance. They need to legitimize and explain

themselves more often, and need more time for continuous (re-)planning. In other words: they are exposing their students to the learning and planning processes.

In the long run however, holistic facilitators gain a better understanding of their work, they develop better communication in and with a group. They help people to develop a greater passion and their participants will find greater relevance for what they're learning when they feel that they can apply it in their everyday lives.

It's worth trying this, and then sharing your experience with us and other like-minded people.

Sincerely,

The editors
on behalf of

Ideas Factory, MitOst, SKORO, Südwind, Working Between Cultures

The Handbooks for Facilitators series seeks to assist teachers and facilitators in strengthening individuals' key competencies by highlighting best practices from education and learning. A key issue for us is empowering people with different social background to act as responsible and active citizens.

Competencies are shaped best through processes that include a broad range of learning opportunities, such as incorporating knowledge, learning by doing, reflecting on specific actions, and cooperative learning. This allows for a conversation between self-driven activities and methods of facilitation that include participants and groups and all their diverse needs, experiences, and expertise.

In the series we introduce a planning approach and the building blocks for such a holistic learning experience, and explore how “facilitation” adopts a different attitude from a classical model of teaching.

