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Virtual Assistant Skills and Entrepreneurship

A Curriculum for **VET** to **Empower Unemployed Youth**

CURRICULUM

Virtual Assistant Skills and Entrepreneurship
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PROJECT
FIGHTing Youth Unemployment through Digital Skills and Interactive Education

PROJECT PARTNERS
Youth Power Germany e.V. (Germany)
Pannonia Consulting doo (Croatia)
Learning Library OÜ (Estonia)

PUBLISHER
Youth Power Germany e.V.

AUTHORS
Amar Hamzic
Nedim Micijevic
Josip Brozovic
Franjo Brkan

GRAPHIC DESIGN
Helio Lima

EDITOR
Daniel Almeida

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Summary of the project

FIGHT-DIGIT: FIGHTing Youth Unemployment through Digital Skills and Interactive Education is a transnational initiative developed in response to the growing mismatch between the skills offered by traditional VET programs and the demands of today's rapidly evolving digital economy. Funded under the Erasmus+ KA210-VET program, the project aims to tackle youth unemployment by equipping VET educators and providers with tools and methods to train unemployed young people for digital self-employment—specifically in the field of virtual assistance.

Objectives and main results

The project pursues several key objectives:

- Raise capacities of partners for empowering unemployed young people's employability and entrepreneurial skills, through active participation in development of new educational materials, and through organising local level training courses for VET educators of partners.
- Develop a comprehensive curriculum for educators and VET providers for enhancing entrepreneurial and self employment skills of unemployed young people; containing plan of learning for educators and workshops for organising trainings.
- Raise knowledge and skills of 45 VET educators for using the educational curriculum to empower unemployed young people's employability and entrepreneurial skills; through 3 local trainings organised in each of the participating countries.
- Develop 2 interactive gamified online learning courses for unemployed young people, empowering their employability and entrepreneurial skills and their knowledge and skills for work as virtual assistants and finding entry level jobs in the field.
- Present project outputs to wider audience of VET educators and VET providers in local communities of partners, and ensure further use of the educational materials; through 3 local multiplier conferences

Main project results include:

1. A comprehensive curriculum focused on virtual assistance and digital tools developed, enriching the skillset of partner VET educators.
2. Over 45 VET educators across participating countries trained in employing the new curriculum for enhancing youth employability.
3. Two interactive, gamified online courses on virtual assistance and digital tools successfully launched, targeting unemployed young people.
4. Enhanced employability and entrepreneurial skills in 200+ young individuals through active participation in the developed courses and workshops.
5. Widespread dissemination of project outcomes achieved through three local multiplier conferences, reaching an extensive network of VET educators and providers.

The project targets:

- VET educators and trainers working directly with young people.
- VET institutions and local employment stakeholders.
- Unemployed and NEET youth, especially those seeking flexible, accessible digital work opportunities.

Strategic value

FIGHT-DIGIT brings European added value by building digital and entrepreneurial capacity in VET, while creating educational resources that can be reused and adapted beyond national borders. Through collaborative work between partners from Germany (Youth Power Germany), Croatia (Pannonia Consulting), and Estonia (Learning Library), the project also contributes to the EU's broader skills and employability targets under the European Year of Skills 2023–2027.

All curriculum modules and project outputs will be made freely available online, in multiple languages for most key documents, to ensure wide accessibility and long-term impact.

Background of the curriculum, and how to use it

The curriculum is designed as a 10-day intensive educational training program for VET educators. This program aims to equip educators with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively teach and empower unemployed young individuals in the field of Virtual Assistance, alongside fostering their entrepreneurial and self-employment capabilities.

The program is presented in form of prepared sessions, combining theoretical knowledge with practical exercises, ensuring that participants can apply learned concepts in real-world settings.

Structure of curriculum is organized into three chapters:

CHAPTER 1

Foundations of virtual assistance and entrepreneurship
We introduce the fundamentals of entrepreneurship with a special emphasis on the virtual assistance industry. This includes understanding the role of a virtual assistant, essential digital skills, and the mindset required for success in self-employment and entrepreneurial ventures.

CHAPTER 2

Development and operation of a virtual assistance business

In this chapter we cover the practical aspects of starting and operating a virtual assistance business. This encompasses business idea generation and validation, market research and analysis, business planning and strategy, financial management, legal and regulatory requirements, and marketing strategies tailored for the digital world.

CHAPTER 3

Growth, innovation, and sustainability

Chapter 3 focuses on strategies for business growth, scaling, and innovation in the virtual assistance sector. Topics include adaptation to market trends and technologies, ethical and sustainable entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship, and building a supportive network through professional relationships.

CHAPTER 4

Introduction, teambuilding, and closing the residential and/or long-term training

Last chapter brings us with 2 sessions that we recommend you use for opening and closing of the training based on this manual.

- Chapters 1-3 each contain 6 sessions/workshops, each in duration of 180 hours.
- Chapter 4 contains 2 sessions/workshops, in the same proposed duration.
- Ideally, the curriculum is planned to be used for organising 10 days long training, with each working day of 6 hours of workshops.
- The curriculum sessions can also be used individually, regardless of other sessions. Although each individual session has recommended durations, this curriculum is flexible, allowing future users to adapt it to their own needs. The curriculum is intended for all interested parties who believe they can implement it in their work with young people, especially unemployed young people.
- This curriculum is the result of collaborative work among partners of this project (Youth Power Germany, Pannonia Consulting, and Learning Library), and has been tested in their countries.
- It is available in four languages: English, Croatian, German, and Estonian. The curriculum is available on the websites of partners.

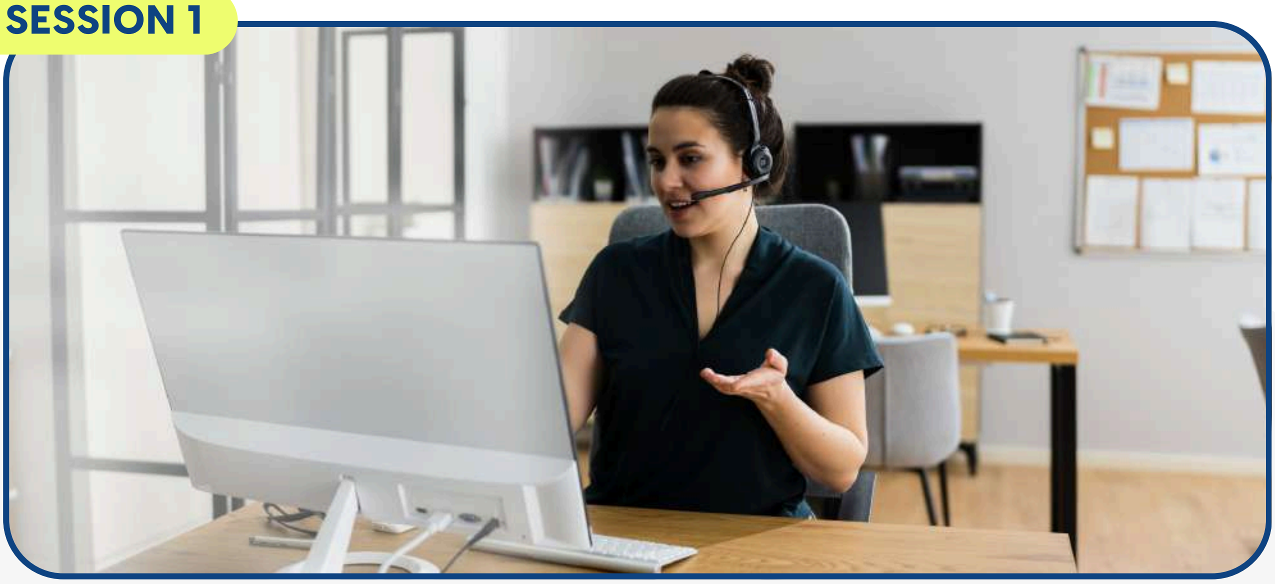
01

Foundations of virtual assistance and entrepreneurship

This chapter brings us with 6 sessions for introducing VET educators to the core concepts and practical foundations of virtual assistance as a growing field of digital employment. Through a series of interactive sessions, participants will explore the relevance of virtual work in today's economy, understand the evolution of gig-based opportunities, and learn how to inspire entrepreneurial thinking among VET learners.

The chapter also focuses on developing essential communication and collaboration skills for remote work, along with familiarization with digital tools that support productivity and teamwork. Designed for VET educators with existing educational experience, workshops from this chapter plan to equip them to integrate digital career pathways and entrepreneurial mindset development into their own educational practice.

SESSION 1



Understanding virtual assistance and its relevance for VET learners

DURATION
180 minutes

OBJECTIVES OF SESSION
- To introduce the concept of virtual assistance and its role in the digital economy.
- To explore different types of virtual assistant services and the skillsets they require.
- To support educators in presenting virtual assistance as a viable and attractive opportunity for unemployed youth.
- To identify real-world examples and job market trends that can be used in teaching.
- To reflect on how to integrate virtual assistance into existing VET programs and non-formal learning paths.

SESSION FLOW: (STEP BY STEP DESCRIPTION)

ENERGISER – "DIGITAL WORLD SHUFFLE" (10 MINUTES)

Trainer leads a quick energiser where participants move around the room and form groups based on statements such as:
- Find others who have worked remotely
- Find someone who has used a freelance platform
- Find someone who has taken an online course recently

When each group is formatted, trainers give some time for people to exchange their experiences. In the same time, this energiser provides an introduction to the topic of the session.

INTRO TO THE SESSION – WHO ARE THE VIRTUAL ASSISTANTS (15 MINUTES)

Participants are asked to write one word on a sticky note that comes to mind when they hear “virtual assistant” and post it on the board.

After all participants had a chance to contribute, trainer clusters the words and briefly reflects on common associations, myths, and knowledge/understanding gaps that might exist within the group. As a conclusion of this step, trainer introduces the aim of the session and the relevance of virtual assistance in today’s job landscape.

INPUT ON VIRTUAL ASSISTANTS - PRESENTATION – 20 MIN

Trainer delivers an interactive presentation that covers:

- Definition and scope of virtual assistance
- Examples of services provided (e.g., admin support, email management, calendar scheduling, social media assistance, data entry, etc.)
- Freelancer vs. virtual assistant
- Part-time/full-time vs. agency model

Participants are encouraged to ask questions and add examples from their own knowledge or experiences.

MAPPING THE JOB MARKET OPPORTUNITIES FOR VIRTUAL ASSISTANTS – 90 MIN

Participants are divided into small groups and assigned different tasks to research:

- Group 1: Research freelance platforms (e.g. Upwork, Fiverr, PeoplePerHour) – What kinds of VA jobs are posted? What are the typical rates and requirements?
- Group 2: Identify current trends and statistics in digital employment (focus on youth, remote work, virtual services).
- Group 3: Case studies of successful virtual assistants (e.g. YouTube, blogs, LinkedIn articles) – What skills did they build, and how did they start?

Each group prepares a short visual summary on flipcharts and presents key findings to the rest of the participants. 60 minutes are given for the research, and 10 minutes per group for the presentations.

In conclusion of this step, trainer provides additional inputs; if necessary.

DISCUSSION ON CONNECTING VET EDUCATION WITH VIRTUAL ASSISTANTS’ WORK (30 MINUTES)

In plenary, participants reflect on the following questions:

1. What makes virtual assistance a good opportunity for unemployed youth?
2. What challenges might VET learners face in this field?
3. How can we present VA as both an income opportunity and a skill-building path?
4. What educational opportunities we can offer when it comes to educating VET learners for the VA calling?

Trainer facilitates discussion and encourages concrete ideas for integrating this topic into existing training frameworks, and work of VET educators. In conclusion of the discussion, if the time frame allows it; each participant drafts a short pitch (max 150 words) they could use to introduce the concept of virtual assistance to their learners.

This can be in written or visual format (e.g., elevator pitch, mini poster, short speech).

Volunteers are invited to share some of the examples in plenary.

REFLECTION IN PLENARY AND CONCLUSION OF THE SESSION (15 MINUTES)

Trainer invites participants to reflect on the session in plenary, using the following structure:

- One insight I gained about virtual assistance...
- One way I can use this session with my learners...
- One thing I want to explore further...

MATERIALS

- Sticky notes, markers, flipcharts
- Internet access (phones/laptops for group research)
- Projector and presentation slides

OUTCOMES

- Participants understand the concept and variety of virtual assistant roles.
- Educators are aware of real-world trends and platforms connected to virtual assistance.
- Participants leave with ideas and concrete examples to use in their own VET settings.
- A foundation is laid for deeper exploration of entrepreneurial and digital career pathways.

SESSION 2

Fostering an entrepreneurial mindset among VET learners

DURATION
180 minutes

OBJECTIVES OF SESSION
- To introduce the concept of an entrepreneurial mindset within the context of the EntreComp framework.
- To explore how entrepreneurial attitudes and behaviours can be fostered in VET learners.
- To support educators in embedding EntreComp competences into their teaching practices.
- To reflect on how attitudes like curiosity, self-awareness, and proactivity can drive learners toward entrepreneurial self-development.
- To design learning activities that foster idea generation, initiative-taking, and perseverance.

SESSION FLOW: (STEP BY STEP DESCRIPTION)
ENERGISER – "IF I HAD MY DIGITAL COMPANY" (10 MINUTES)

Participants sit in pairs or small groups. Each person completes the sentence:
"If I had my own company, it would…"

They should share ideas for the type of business, product/service, and what problem it solves.

This sets the tone for entrepreneurial thinking and creativity.

INTRODUCTION TO THE ENTREPRENEURIAL MINDSET AND ENTRECOMP FRAMEWORK (20 MINUTES)

Trainer introduces the concept of “entrepreneurial mindset” as not only starting a business, but a way of thinking and acting that can be applied in any context.

The EntreComp framework is presented, with a focus on three competence areas:

1. Ideas & Opportunities
2. Resources
3. Into Action

After the introduction, participants are divided into pairs and reflect briefly in pairs:

1. What does “being entrepreneurial” mean for you as an educator?
2. How is this relevant for VET learners?

Trainer shares 2–3 examples of how EntreComp has been used in youth and VET education, referring to real examples from the Pocket Book and youth work practice.

Pocket Book resource (available only in English): https://entrecompeurope.eu/wp-content/uploads/EntreComp-Europe-Pocket-Book-for-Aspiring-Entrepreneurs.pdf

ENTREPRENEURIAL VALUES DISCUSSION – 30 MIN

Trainer presents 5 key attitudes and behaviours connected to the entrepreneurial mindset:

1. Curiosity
2. Self-awareness
3. Perseverance
4. Proactivity
5. Valuing ideas

Participants work in small groups. Each group receives cards with mini-case studies (short situations of VET learners or projects). Tasks for each group are following:

- Identify which attitude(s) the person in the case shows or lacks
- Propose how this person can further develop that competence

Examples:

- A learner gives up after the first failed job application – which attitude is lacking?
- A learner starts a handmade crafts IG page but doesn't post regularly – what’s missing?

Each group presents one case and their conclusions in plenary.

Note for the trainer: In preparation for the session, trainer needs to create/prepare realistic examples that will be in line with the expertise/previous experience of the group.

ENTRECOMP GALLERY WALK – MAPPING THE COMPETENCES – 40 MIN

The 15 EntreComp competences are printed on A3 sheets and placed around the room.

Participants walk around in pairs, reading the competences and discussing:

1. Which ones are most relevant for my learners?
2. Which ones are hardest to develop?
3. Which ones do we already foster in our educational work?

Each pair uses 3 sticky notes:
Green I already teach this
Orange I want to start integrating this
Red I need support with this one

30 minutes are given for the walk and discussion, after which trainer leads a short debrief based on the patterns seen in the gallery.

ACTIVITY IDEAS FOR WORK WITH VET LEARNERS ON SPECIFIC ENTREPRENEURIAL COMPETENCES (45 MINUTES)

Participants work in small groups to co-design an activity for VET learners that focuses on developing one entrepreneurial mindset competence (e.g. taking initiative, coping with ambiguity, working with others).

Groups are formatted based on the similarities of the competences that individual participants are most interested in.

Structure of work for the groups:

- Choose 1 EntreComp competence
- Identify a target VET learner profile (age, background)
- Develop a short learning activity (30–45 min) to foster that competence
- Prepare a short pitch of the activity to the rest of the group

Groups present their ideas briefly in plenary. Trainer gives feedback and encourages peer exchange.

REFLECTION IN PLENARY AND CONCLUSION OF THE SESSION (15 MINUTES)

Trainer invites participants to reflect on the session in plenary, using the following questions:

1. Which EntreComp competence do you feel most confident in fostering among your learners, and why?
2. What challenges do you foresee when trying to nurture an entrepreneurial mindset in your VET educational activities?
3. How can we support learners in embracing failure and uncertainty as part of their growth?
4. What’s one practical step you’ll take to make your educational activities more entrepreneurial after this training?
5. How can the EntreComp framework help you design more meaningful learning experiences for your learners?

MATERIALS

- Flipcharts, markers
- A3 printed EntreComp competences
- Sticky notes in three colours (green, orange, red)
- Mini-case study cards, with case studies prepared in advance
- Template for activity design (printed or projected)
- Projector and slides introducing EntreComp

OUTCOMES

- Participants understand what an entrepreneurial mindset is and why it matters for VET learners
- Educators can recognize and reflect on key attitudes from the EntreComp framework
- Participants gain tools and ideas to foster entrepreneurial behaviours in their educational practice

SESSION 3

The evolution of virtual work and opportunities in the gig economy

DURATION

180 minutes

OBJECTIVES OF SESSION

- To explore the historical development and current trends of virtual work and the gig economy.
- To familiarise VET educators with popular freelancing platforms and remote work opportunities.
- To support educators in presenting gig economy realities in an engaging and learner-accessible way.
- To reflect on both opportunities and challenges of gig work for VET learners.

SESSION FLOW: (STEP BY STEP DESCRIPTION)

ENERGISER – "THIS OR THAT" (10 MINUTES)

Trainer reads out pairs of choices related to virtual work, and participants move to one side of the room depending on their preference:

Choices:

1. Remote work or office work?
2. Freelance or full-time contract?
3. Zoom or email?
4. Digital nomad or home-based worker?

This light-hearted energiser leads into the topic and encourages reflection on personal preferences around work styles. After each of the choices, trainer asks participants to reflect on their standing point.

VIRTUAL WORK AND GIG ECONOMY - INPUT (25 MINUTES)

Trainer delivers a short interactive input covering:

- Evolution from traditional work to remote work
- Definition of virtual work and the gig economy
- Types of virtual jobs (project-based, retainer-based, task-based)
- Key drivers: technology, flexibility, digital platforms
- Challenges and critiques (e.g., precarity, isolation, lack of benefits)

After the initial input, participants are divided into pairs and given task to discuss the following questions in pairs:

1. What surprised you from the presentation?
2. What are the pros and cons of virtual work for VET learners we work with?

Short debrief follows in plenary.

EXPLORING THE GIG ECONOMY ON DIFFERENT PLATFORMS – 100 MIN

Participants are divided into 4 smaller groups and assigned 2 platforms to explore, using laptops or phones. Platforms to be shared for exploring in groups:

1. Upwork
2. Fiverr
3. Freelancer.com
4. PeoplePerHour
5. Toptal
6. Remote OK
7. TaskRabbit
8. Guru

Each group receives following questions to answer while exploring:

1. What kind of jobs are available?
2. What skills are most in demand?
3. What are typical earnings and expectations?
4. Is there a rating or feedback system?
5. What does the registration process involve?

Groups prepare a visual presentation in format of a poster for each of the platforms. 60 minutes are given for exploring and developing the posters, and each group has 10 minutes for presentation part.

Trainer concludes this step with additional input(s), if necessary.

OPPORTUNITIES AND RISKS OF GIG ECONOMY FOR VET LEARNERS WE WORK WITH – 30 MIN

Participants stay in the groups from the previous task, and are now given a case study of a young unemployed person (e.g., recent VET graduate, single parent, rural resident, migrant, etc.).

Trainer can decide whether to prepare the case studies, or to give freedom to participants, for each group, to decide on the profile of learner based on the profiles of VET learners they work with on day-to-day basis.

Questions to explore concerning the opportunities and risks of gig economy for VET learners we work with:

1. What kind of virtual/gig jobs would be suitable for the specific profile?
2. What are the main benefits and risks for this person?
3. How would you present these opportunities to them in a realistic and motivational way?
4. How can we support them and provide them educational activities?

Groups present in plenary (max 5 min per group). Trainer supports with questions and wrap-up reflections.

REFLECTION IN PLENARY AND CONCLUSION OF THE SESSION (15 MINUTES)

Trainer facilitates a closing discussion using the following questions:

1. What was the most eye-opening fact you discovered about the gig economy today?
2. How can we prepare learners for both the flexibility and precarity of this work style?
3. What can we do to ensure VET learners we work with are protected, informed, and empowered as they enter this space?
4. What is one gig platform you would now feel confident explaining to your learners?
5. What's your takeaway about how to teach this topic effectively in VET education?

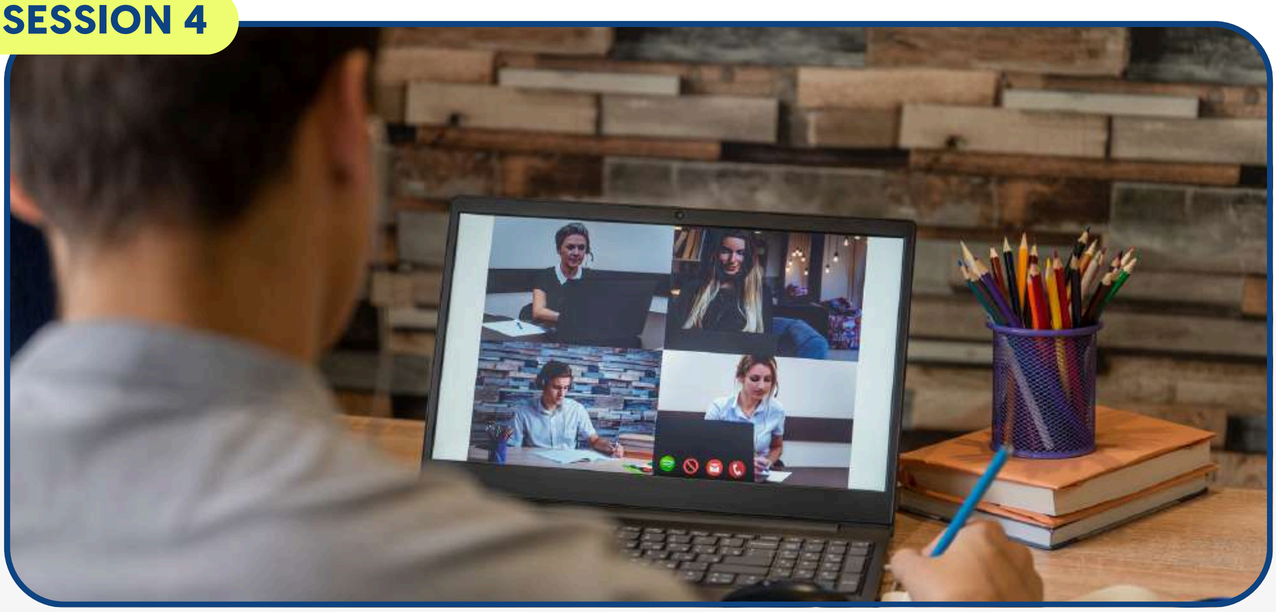
MATERIALS

- Flipcharts, markers
- Internet access (laptops or smartphones)
- Case study profiles for small group work
- Printed or projected slide with gig platform names

OUTCOMES

- Educators understand the evolution and structure of virtual work and the gig economy
- Participants gain familiarity with popular gig platforms and their features
- Critical awareness is raised around opportunities and vulnerabilities in gig-based employment for different profiles of VET learners participants work with

SESSION 4



Teaching communication and collaboration for remote work

DURATION
180 minutes

OBJECTIVES OF SESSION
- To understand the importance of communication in remote work and its challenges.
- To develop effective written and verbal communication strategies for online collaboration.
- To practice problem-solving in a digital work environment using real-world remote work scenarios.
- To explore and experiment with digital tools for effective communication and teamwork.

SESSION FLOW: (STEP BY STEP DESCRIPTION)
ENERGISER – "LOST IN TRANSLATION" (10 MINUTES)

Trainer divides participants into pairs. One person describes an image or concept in text chat (previously created Whatsapp group with all participants) while the other tries to recreate it through drawing or writing.

After energiser is done, trainer ask short reflection question: How did the lack of tone or gestures impact understanding?

This energiser is choosen specifically as it shows common issues in online communication and therefore already introduces the session topic.

WHY COMMUNICATION MATTERS IN REMOTE WORK? – GROUP DISCUSSION (15 MINUTES)
Trainer starts the discussion with the question: "What makes online communication different from face-to-face interaction?"

Participants are invited to share their previous experiences with communication in remote work and highlight why communication is crucial for successful work in remote environment. Participants write their answers in the form of key words on sticky notes and place them on a board. Trainer clusters responses and highlights key themes (for example clarity, tone, delays, cultural differences). Participants are invited to share their experiences in front of the rest of the group if they want to.

NAVIGATING COMMUNICATION IN A REMOTE WORKPLACE – 110 MINUTES
The trainer introduces the task in plenary and posts instructions in a shared online space (Whatsapp group, Google Drive etc).

Trainer share the following statement to the participants:
"Your company has been operating remotely for six months. Everything is going well, and you've been invited to a major online business forum, "Future of Work: Digital Teams in Action." Your company must prepare a compelling 5-minute digital presentation about your product or service." However, your team is fully remote, working from different locations, and you can only communicate digitally.

Participants are given the following tasks:
1. Create a digital presentation (max 5 minutes) introducing your company, its product/service, and how you work together remotely
2. Collaboration must be 100% virtual—no face-to-face interaction is allowed
3. Timeframe: 100 minutes (followed by a live forum where you'll present)

Participants should decide on the aim of their presentation, what platforms/apps they will use for communication and creating the presentation, and organise their roles.

To mimic real-world workplace challenges, the trainer can introduce unexpected hurdles such as:
- A sudden change in deadline (reducing the work time).
- A miscommunication scenario where a key piece of information is altered.
- A team member goes "offline" (one person is temporarily unavailable).

Presentations and feedback (25 minutes)
After the collaboration phase, teams return to plenary and present their 5-minute digital presentations to the group. After each presentation there is short time for questions from the other participants.

Reflection in plenary and conclusion of the session (20 minutes)
Trainer leads the final reflection with the following questions:
- What communication strategies worked best?
- Did any misunderstandings or challenges arise? How did you handle them?
- Which digital tools were most effective for collaboration?
- What would you improve if you had to work remotely on a similar project again?

MATERIALS

- Sticky notes and markers (for clustering ideas during discussions)
- WhatsApp group or another digital communication tool (for text-based activities)
- Laptops/tablets with internet access (for remote collaboration exercises)

OUTCOMES

- Participants can identify key differences between online and face-to-face communication
- Participants improve their ability to communicate clearly and effectively in a remote setting.
- Participants experience the challenges of digital teamwork and develop strategies to overcome them.
- Participants gain hands-on experience using digital collaboration tools for remote work.
- Participants reflect on their learning and identify best practices for online communication in a professional setting.

SESSION 5

Designing group work and simulations for virtual teamwork

DURATION

180 minutes

OBJECTIVES OF SESSION

- To introduce and engage participants in the concept of virtual teamwork and its importance in modern education and the workplace
- To help educators understand the essential principles of effective virtual collaboration, including communication tools, task management, and clear goal-setting
- To provide participants with practical strategies and tips for enhancing virtual teamwork skills, which can be integrated into their own VET practices
- To encourage peer learning and sharing of best practices related to virtual teamwork

SESSION FLOW: (STEP BY STEP DESCRIPTION)

ENERGISER – HUMAN MACHINE (15 MINUTES)

Trainer begins by explaining the objective: participants will create a human "machine" where each person represents a different part, and the group will synchronize their movements and sounds to bring it to life. The trainer should divide participants into small groups, allowing them to assign roles and develop their machine. After giving the groups 10 minutes to design and practice their machines, each group will present their creation, and the rest of the participants can guess what the machine represents. This segment should be fun and dynamic, with each group working together to ensure their machine operates smoothly. To wrap up, hold a brief debriefing session, asking participants to reflect on the challenges of coordination, the importance of communication, and the creative elements of their machines.

IMPORTANCE OF VIRTUAL TEAMWORK IN EDUCATION (20 MINUTES)

The trainer leads a plenary discussion on the significance of virtual teamwork in today's educational and professional landscapes, in order for educators to understand the role of virtual teamwork in enhancing collaboration and communication skills in a digital context. Trainer can use the following key points to discuss:

- What makes virtual teamwork different from in-person teamwork?
- What are the essential skills for successful virtual collaboration?
- Why is it crucial for VET learners to develop these skills?

INPUT: PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE VIRTUAL TEAMWORK (25 MINUTES)

Trainer presents core principles of designing effective group work and simulations for virtual teams, including:

- Clear goals and roles: fefining tasks and responsibilities
- Communication tools: rnsuring the right tools for virtual communication (Slack, Trello, Zoom, etc.)
- Task management: how to divide tasks and track progress remotely
- Support structures: providing support for teams, especially in virtual environments.

Trainer then asks participants to reflect on how these principles could be applied in their VET education settings and how to incorporate them into group projects or simulations.

WALK AND TALK EXERCISE (60 MINUTES)

The trainer invites participants to engage in a "walk and talk" exercise, where they will rotate through different pairs every 10 minutes. In each pair, participants will share and discuss practical virtual teamwork tips. Each pair will also focus on a different question related to virtual teamwork.

Participants will first pair up with someone they haven't worked with yet.
In each 10-minute round, they will:

1. Share their best virtual teamwork tip: each participant has 5 minutes to share a tip or strategy they have used to enhance virtual collaboration (tools for communication, strategies for overcoming challenges, managing virtual team dynamics).
2. Discuss the integration: after sharing, they will briefly reflect on how they could integrate the shared tips into their teaching or future virtual projects. This ensures both participants gain insights from each other.

Rotation and new question (10 minutes per pair):

After each round, participants will rotate and pair up with someone new. Each new pair will discuss a different question related to virtual teamwork (trainer will provide the questions). Here are the questions:
Round 1: What tools do you use for virtual collaboration, and why?
Round 2: What strategies have worked for managing team roles in virtual settings?
Round 3: How do you maintain engagement and motivation in virtual teams?
Round 4: How do you handle conflict or misunderstandings in a remote environment?

Continue rotating through pairs and discussing the new question in each round for a total of 4 rounds (10 minutes per round).

After the rotations, participants will return to the group and briefly share one key tip or insight that stood out to them during the exercise. The trainer facilitate the reflection by asking participants to highlight a tip they plan to implement in their own virtual teamwork practices.

Exploring digital tools (45 minutes)
The trainer prepares a list of virtual tools, each related to a specific aspect of virtual teamwork (communication, task management, document sharing). Participants are divided into groups, and each group is tasked with "hunting" for the tools they believe are best suited for the tasks provided. They search online and explore available tools or platforms that meet the specified needs (Zoom for meetings, Google Docs for collaboration). Once a tool is found, they explain why it fits the task and share it with the rest of the group.

After 30 minutes, each group shares their findings with the entire class, and the trainer facilitates a short debrief on the strengths of different tools for virtual teamwork.

Reflection in plenary and conclusion of the session (15 minutes)
Trainer leads the final reflection through the following reflection questions:
- What did you learn about designing group work for virtual environments that you didn't know before?
- Which activity or tool do you think will be most useful in your VET practice?
- How do you plan to implement virtual teamwork strategies in your own teaching?

MATERIALS
- Flipcharts/whiteboard and markers
- Timer or stopwatch
- Sticky notes
- Internet-enabled devices (for tool hunting activity)
- Handouts or slides with core principles of effective virtual teamwork

OUTCOMES
- Participants understand the key principles of designing effective virtual teamwork and collaboration, and how to apply them in educational settings
- Participants can identify and use digital tools that support communication, task management, and document sharing in virtual teamwork
- Participants gained practical, real-world strategies for improving virtual team dynamics, including how to overcome common challenges, manage roles, and keep teams motivated
- Participants collaborated with peers to share insights and tips on virtual teamwork and integrate these ideas into their own teaching practices

SESSION 6

Integrating essential digital tools into VET education

DURATION
180 minutes

OBJECTIVES OF SESSION
- To introduce essential digital tools commonly used by virtual assistants and remote professionals.
- To provide hands-on experience with different digital tools through interactive, peer-led discussions.
- To explore how to integrate digital tools into VET teaching to enhance learners' digital competencies.
- To foster critical thinking on tool selection based on different work scenarios and needs.

SESSION FLOW: (STEP BY STEP DESCRIPTION)
ENERGISER – "PAPER, SCISSORS, ROCK" (10 MINUTES)

The group is split into pairs, and each pair plays the classic game of Paper, Scissors, Rock (you know the rules! Paper beats rock, rock beats scissors, and scissors beats paper). The twist is that each pair has to keep playing until they win or lose against each other. Winners stay in their spot, while losers move to a new partner. The game continues, and the goal is to keep moving, staying active, and interacting with as many people as possible.

WORLD CAFÉ: EXPLORING DIGITAL TOOLS (140 MINUTES – 4 ROUNDS, 30 MINUTES PER TOOL, 20 MINUTES BREAK IN BETWEEN)

Participants rotate through four different tables, each focusing on a key digital tool used by virtual assistants. Each table is facilitated by either the trainer or a participant with prior knowledge of the tool.

World Café rules are the following:

- Participants move in small groups from table to table.
- Each round lasts 30 minutes:
- 10 min: Tool introduction (demonstration, examples, key features).
- 10 min: Hands-on practice (participants explore the tool on their devices).
- 10 min: Group discussion (how to integrate it into VET education, challenges, best practices).

After each round, participants switch tables and explore a new tool.

Table 1: Trello (or any other project management tool)

1. Those tools help virtual teams manage tasks, projects, and deadlines visually.
2. Hands-on activity: participants create a sample VET course planning board with tasks for teachers and students.
3. Discussion focus: How can Trello be used for organizing VET projects and student tasks?

Table 2: Canva – (or any other tool for creating engaging visual content)

1. Those tools enable quick and professional content creation for social media, presentations, and documents.
2. Hands-on activity: participants create a promotional flyer for a VET course using Canva.
3. Discussion focus: How can Canva help VET learners develop digital content skills?

Table 3: Zoom (or any other tool for effective online meetings and training)

1. Those tools enable seamless video conferencing, screen sharing, breakout rooms, and recordings.
2. Hands-on activity: participants practice hosting a mini training session with breakout rooms.
3. Discussion focus: How can Zoom be used for virtual training and student engagement?

Table 4: Miro (or any other tool for visual collaboration and brainstorming)

1. Those tools allows remote teams to brainstorm, plan, and collaborate visually in real time.
2. Hands-on activity: participants use Miro to create a lesson plan mind map or an interactive brainstorming board.
3. Discussion focus: How can Miro be integrated into VET education for interactive learning and teamwork?

Reflection in plenary and conclusion of the session (30 minutes)

Trainer brings participants back to plenary and facilitates a structured reflection using these questions:

- Which tool do you see as the most useful for your VET learners? Why?
- What challenges might arise when integrating digital tools into teaching?
- How can we ensure that digital tools enhance learning rather than becoming a distraction?
- What next steps can you take to start implementing these tools in your work?

MATERIALS

- Laptops, tablets, or smartphones (for hands-on tool exploration)
- Printed guides or digital handouts for each tool
- Internet access

OUTCOMES

- Participants gain hands-on experience with essential digital tools for remote work.
- They develop strategies for integrating digital tools into their teaching.
- They understand the strengths and limitations of different tools.
- They leave with a practical action plan for using digital tools in VET education.

02

Development and **operation** of a virtual assistance business

Second chapter provides VET educators with the tools and methods necessary to guide learners through the practical journey of starting and operating a virtual assistance business. Building on the foundational knowledge from Chapter 1, these sessions move from "understanding" to "doing." Through a hands-on, learner-centered approach, educators will explore how to support young people in developing viable business ideas, conducting market research, and translating those insights into structured business models. Sessions also cover the often-intimidating areas of legal, financial, and compliance topics, breaking them down into accessible and engaging educational activities. The chapter introduces personal branding and marketing as essential components for building an online presence, and focuses on client acquisition and service delivery as real-world entrepreneurial skills. Designed to support both aspiring freelancers and educators new to business education, this chapter equips VET professionals to help learners transform abstract ideas into actionable, self-employment pathways.

SESSION 1

Guiding learners in generating and refining digital business ideas

DURATION
180 minutes

OBJECTIVES OF SESSION
- To introduce creative and inclusive methods for business idea generation tailored to virtual assistance.
- To support educators in helping learners identify their strengths, passions, and opportunities in the virtual assistant's sector.
- To explore effective facilitation tools for idea selection and refinement in group and individual settings.
- To create a safe environment where learners can brainstorm, test, and shape realistic and relevant business concepts.
- To encourage peer feedback and iterative thinking in entrepreneurial development.

SESSION FLOW: (STEP BY STEP DESCRIPTION)
ENERGISER (15 MINUTES)

Participants stand in a circle. One person starts by making a sound (e.g., clap, whistle, word), and the next builds on it with a new sound. The goal is to "storm" a unique sound sequence together.

The purpose of this energiser at the beginning of the session is to spark creativity.

MY DIGITAL SKILLS – IDENTIFYING AND SHARING (45 MINUTES)

Trainer lays out cards on the floor representing different roles, skills, tools, interests, values, and virtual services (e.g., “organiser,” “problem-solver,” “designer,” “social media,” “efficiency,” “creativity,” “video editing,” etc.).

Participants are given a task to walk around and pick five cards that best describe the digital skills they possess, tools they know how to use etc. Once everyone has their 5 cars, participants are invited to form small groups or pairs, and within the groups/pairs to share their choices and discuss following:

- Which of these do I enjoy most?
- Which do I want to develop?
- What kind of services or projects could grow from these traits?

Trainer facilitates a brief plenary reflection and notes common themes, after everyone had a chance to share in small groups/pairs. In preparation for the session, trainer needs to develop and print the cards for participants to choose. Below are set of the key topics in each of the 5 fields, that can be used for creating the cards.

- **Virtual services (10 cards) ideas:** Social media scheduling, online course support, blog post writing, creating infographics, customer service chatbot setup, booking travel and meetings, Etsy or online shop assistance, YouTube content support, online community moderation, resume/CV editing and formatting.
- **Roles (10 cards) ideas**: Organizer, creative thinker, tech-savvy doer, problem-solver, communicator, detail-oriented planner, visual storyteller, empathetic listener, self-starter, network builder.
- **Skills (10 cards) ideas**: Writing and editing, graphic design, social media management, data entry, email and calendar handling, research and analysis, translation, customer support, spreadsheet management, audio/video editing.
- **Tools (10 cards) ideas**: Canva, Trello, Google Workspace, Zoom, WordPress, Slack, Notion, ChatGPT, Mailchimp, Miro.
- **Interests (10 cards) ideas**: Health and wellness, fashion and style, gaming, environment and sustainability, personal development, travel, art and design, technology, education and tutoring, community activism.
- **Values (10 cards) ideas**: Freedom and flexibility, continuous learning, creativity, helping others, sustainability, integrity, inclusivity, curiosity, precision, innovation.

BUSINESS BINGO FOR BUSINESS IDEAS GENERATION (45 MINUTES)

Each participant receives a Bingo card handout with prompts in each square. Task is to try to fill out the whole sheet, with at most 2 answers collected from the same person in the group. Participants are given this instruction, and then trainer lets them go talking to each other trying to find suitable ideas for each field on the bingo card.

The first person who gets the card filled out wins a small prize. At this point, trainer can let other participants play until there is 2nd, 3rd, 4th, etc placed or until everyone finalises their Bingo card; if there is enough time left.

After the activity, each person selects 2–3 ideas to share with the group. The trainer writes recurring ideas on a flipchart:

ANALYSING THE IDEAS AND ALREADY EXISTING SOLUTIONS (25 MINUTES)
Trainer asks each participant to take 1 of the ideas they collected during the Bingo exercise, and to use 3–5 minutes to Google one similar service or competitor online. They should write down:

- What do I like about it?
- What could I do differently?
- Is there space for my idea?

A quick share in plenary follows, after everyone had time to research at least one of the ideas they collected.

IDEA SPEED DATING (35 MINUTES)
Participants form two lines facing each other. One row shares a chosen business idea, while the partner listens and gives quick feedback:

- "I like the part where you…"
- "You could improve it by…"
- "Have you thought about targeting…?"

After 3 minutes, one line rotates. Exercise is repeated for at least 3-4 rounds so each idea gets tested multiple times.

Trainer debriefs by asking:

- What kind of feedback was most useful?
- Did your idea change or evolve?

Based on the time frame, and the energy in the group, for this exercise new ideas can be used, or the ones developed/collected during the Bingo exercise.

REFLECTION IN PLENARY AND CONCLUSION OF THE SESSION (15 MINUTES)
Trainer facilitates a closing discussion using the following questions:

- What's one insight you had about your own potential business ideas?
- What felt challenging during the idea generation process?
- Which of these exercises you find applicable for work with your VET learners?
- What will help learners feel confident exploring their own ideas? How can we further support them?

MATERIALS

- Prepared and printed cards for the "My digital skills" activity
- Printed Bingo handout cards
- Sticky notes, markers, flipcharts
- Enough pens/pencils for the whole group
- Internet access (phone/laptop for quick search)
- Timer or bell for speed dating rounds - optional

OUTCOMES

- Educators gain creative tools for facilitating idea generation among VET learners.
- Participants experience peer feedback and simple validation methods.
- The session models inclusive and fun idea-generation activities suitable for unemployed youth.

HANDOUT: BUSINESS IDEA BINGO CARD

A product for freelancers	Something you'd sell online	An idea using your phone only	A service you could automate	Inspired by a personal frustration
Something eco-friendly	A niche service for parents	A tool for digital nomads	An idea involving Canva	Inspired by your favorite app
A business for your local area	Something you could teach	Helps solve time management	A service NGOs might need	Based on a common social media task
A product for content creators	A subscription-based idea	A one-person service business	Something that uses AI	A service for elderly users
A virtual assistant task you enjoy	An idea based on your hobby	A solution to online clutter	A service for language learners	Something you could offer globally

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS:

- In each field you need to write down the name of the idea and the name of the person who you got it from.
- Try to fill as many boxes as possible with a relevant idea coming from other participants in the group.
- 1 person can give you maximum of 2 ideas.
- Work in pairs or trios to brainstorm together.
- The first person to get all fields filled out, wins a prize.
- At the end, choose 2–3 favourite ideas to share with the group.

SESSION 2

Introducing market research and needs analysis to VET learners

DURATION
180 minutes

OBJECTIVES OF SESSION
- To introduce the concepts of market research and needs analysis in an accessible, hands-on way.
- To equip educators with participatory methods for educating VET learners how to understand their target audiences.
- To explore how data can be collected and interpreted with simple tools.
- To build confidence in using market insights to shape business ideas and services in the virtual assistant field.
- To promote creative, inclusive, and ethical approaches to understanding customer needs.

SESSION FLOW: (STEP BY STEP DESCRIPTION)
ENERGISER: TARGETING IDEAL CUSTOMER (15 MINUTES)

Trainer asks participants to quickly write down a fictional service they might offer as a virtual assistant, on a post it paper (i.e. "I create Canva designs for small businesses").

They then walk around the room trying to find someone who would be their "ideal customer." When they find someone, they do a 1-minute pitch to test if their match sees value in the offer.

Trainer wraps up with a short reflection: How hard was it to find a match? What questions did people ask? How were the services your offered linked to the services you acquired from someone else?

INPUTS ON MARKET RESEARCH AND WHY IT MATTERS (15 MINUTES)

Trainer delivers a short, visual input using a visual flipchart, covering the following topics:

- What is market research?
- What is needs analysis?
- Primary vs. secondary research
- How market insights help shape services we offer
- Real-life examples from the virtual assistants world (2-3 cases)

MYSTERY CLIENT SIMULATION (45 MINUTES)

Participants are divided into small groups (3–4 people per group). Each group receives a sealed envelope or printed instruction sheet describing a Mystery client, including:

- Type of business or NGO
- Age, goals, frustrations
- What they're looking for in a virtual assistant
- Sample quote or email

Groups must "investigate" the client's needs by:

- Brainstorming what additional information they'd want to know
- Formulating interview questions
- Mapping key needs into categories (administrative, creative, customer-facing, etc.)

30 minutes are given for the group work, while last 15 minutes are used for presentations of the groups' works.

Trainer wraps up by linking this simulation to needs analysis in entrepreneurship.

Note: In preparation for the session, trainer needs to develop Mystery client instruction sheets, in line with the realities of the VET educators group they are implementing the activity with.

QUICK MARKET RESEARCH EXERCISE (45 MINUTES)

Trainer prepares a simple 3-question digital or paper survey focused on common VA services (e.g., "What would you outsource as a solopreneur?").

Participants are divided into pairs or trios and sent to collect 5–10 responses each—either:
from passers-by (if held in a location with others around), or
from other participants posing as "mock target clients," or
by using short polls in a shared WhatsApp/Telegram group or Google Form.
They return with real or simulated data and present:
One surprising finding
One thing they'd do differently next time
One way they'd use this info to shape a service idea
In conclusion of this exercise, trainer provides tips on interpreting results and visualising basic findings (e.g., pie chart, top-3 client needs list).

EMPATHY MAPS OF POSSIBLE CUSTOMERS (45 MINUTES)

Trainer divides participants into 3-4 smaller groups. Each group chooses a target client persona for their virtual assistant work idea (e.g., a coach, NGO, Etsy seller, busy parent).

They draw a large empathy map on flipchart paper, divided into quadrants:

1. What do they see?
2. What do they say and do?
3. What do they hear?
4. What do they think and feel?

Additionally, if there is enough time trainer can add the following questions for each group: “What frustrates them?” and “What do they need help with?”

Participants complete their maps and draw insights about what their specific client really needs from a virtual assistant.

REFLECTION IN PLENARY AND CONCLUSION OF THE SESSION (15 MINUTES)

Trainer concludes the session with discussion in plenary, lead with the questions below:

1. What surprised you about how people think vs. what they say they need?
2. How can you help VET learners become more empathetic researchers?
3. What low-cost tools or methods can VET learners use to get started with market research?
4. What will you take away from this session into your educational work?

MATERIALS

- Prepared and printed Mystery client cards/descriptions
- Flipcharts, markers, sticky notes
- Internet access (optional for survey/poll tools)

OUTCOMES

- Educators understand and can explain basic concepts of market research and needs analysis.
- Participants explore new, experiential tools to make research engaging for learners.
- Participants gain confidence in facilitating empathy-based discovery with youth.

SESSION 3

Supporting learners in developing a basic business plan

DURATION

180 minutes

OBJECTIVES OF SESSION

- To support educators in guiding VET learners to transform business ideas into structured business models.
- To introduce the Business Model Canvas as a practical tool for planning digital service businesses.
- To encourage collaborative idea development and peer feedback using non-formal education methods.
- To build educator confidence in mentoring youth through basic entrepreneurial planning.

SESSION FLOW: (STEP BY STEP DESCRIPTION)

ENERGISER: BANANA PITCH (15 MINUTES)

Trainer invites participants into a marketing challenge. In pairs, each person receives an everyday object (real or imagined—i.e., a banana, paperclip, umbrella, shoelace). Their task: sell it to their partner in 1 minute, making it sound like the best product in the world.

After a few rounds, trainer debriefs:

- What strategies did you use to make something ordinary sound appealing?
- How can we encourage creativity in pitching ideas?

This energiser introduces the importance of clarity, creativity, and understanding value—core elements of business planning.

BRAINSTORMING VIRTUAL ASSISTANTS BUSINESS IDEAS (20 MINUTES)
Participants are given a few minutes to individually brainstorm 1–3 digital business ideas they could imagine VET learners developing as virtual assistants. They are encouraged to think of:

- Services based on existing skills
- Real client needs (NGOs, solopreneurs, online creators)
- Trends in digital freelancing

After 10 minutes, they share ideas in small groups and note common themes or service areas (e.g., content creation, admin support, technical help, etc.).

FORMING GROUPS BASED ON THE SIMILAR IDEAS (10 MINUTES)
Trainer invites participants to group themselves based on the similarity of business ideas or types of services. Suggested thematic clusters can be:

- Social media / content support
- Admin & organizational services
- Creative & design-based services
- Tech or automation-focused assistance
- Training / education / community support

Participants will stay in these groups until the end of the session. In case of the unique ideas, participants can be given a choice to work individually on their ideas.

DEVELOPING A CANVASS BUSINESS PLAN (85 MINUTES)
Trainer introduces the business model canvas using a short 10-minute explanation or printed example, and provides links or templates like this one: https://www.canva.com/graphs/business-model-canvas/

Canvas can be given to participants either in the digital format, or printed – based on the devices that participants have to use or preferences of participants.

Each group works on filling out a full business model canvas for their ideas.

Trainers circulate to support each team, clarify terms, and guide reflection.

Presenting the canvases and giving feedback to each other (35 minutes)
Each group presents their business model canvas to the rest of the participants (max 3–4 minutes per team).

Then the rest of the group is asked to give the feedback to the team who presented their business plan.

The feedback is structured using the sandwich method:

- Something positive
- One constructive suggestion
- Another positive comment

Trainer moderates the exchange and ensures all teams receive feedback from at least two other participants.

REFLECTION IN PLENARY AND CONCLUSION OF THE SESSION (15 MINUTES)

Trainer wraps up the session with a short facilitated discussion:

1. What part of the business planning process was easiest/hardest to explain or guide?
2. How can we simplify the business model canvas for beginner-level learners?
3. How could this be adapted for learners with different backgrounds, skills, or goals?
4. What tools or supports would make this easier to deliver in our local context?
5. How will you use it with your VET learners?

MATERIALS

- Printed or digital business model canvas templates: https://www.canva.com/graphs/business-model-canvas/
- Flipcharts, sticky notes, markers
- Laptops/tablets for Canva or online collaboration (optional)

OUTCOMES

- Educators become confident in introducing and using the business model canvas
- Participants co-create concrete and realistic business models
- Educators gain practical strategies for structuring learner-led business planning sessions

SESSION 4

Demystifying legal, financial and compliance topics

DURATION
180 minutes

OBJECTIVES OF SESSION
- To increase educators' understanding of basic legal, financial, and compliance concepts relevant to teaching.
- To help participants feel confident in making these topics accessible to learners.
- To share creative and practical strategies for incorporating GDPR, contracts, and budgeting into VET education.

SESSION FLOW: (STEP BY STEP DESCRIPTION)
ENERGISER – "KILLER WINK" (15 MINUTES)

Before the game starts, ask someone to be the 'the killer' and ask them to keep their identity a secret. Explain that one person among the group is the killer and they can kill people by winking at them. Everyone then walks around the room in different directions, keeping eye contact with everyone they pass. If the killer winks at you, you have to play dead. Everyone has to try and guess who the killer is.

INTRODUCTION – CARD SORTING ACTIVITY (30 MINUTES)

Participants are split into small groups and given a set of pre-made cards with jargon-heavy terms (such as "data controller," "profit & loss," "contractual obligation").

Their task is to sort terms into three piles: "I understand well," "I'm unsure," and "No clue."

Groups take then 3-4 cards from the “unsure/no clue” pile and create simple learner-friendly definitions. At the end, they share the terms with the rest of the group and trainer lead the discussion.

List of the terms that can be used are following:

- **Legal terms**: GDPR, consent, personal data, data controller, data subject, privacy policy, intellectual property, copyright, contract terms and conditions, liability, non-disclosure agreement
- **Financial terms:** Budget, income, expenses, fixed costs, variable costs, cash flow, invoice, financial forecast, break-even point, funding, tax, VAT, reimbursement
- **Compliance and workplace terms**: Compliance, risk assessment, code of conduct, transparency, whistleblowing, conflict of interest, occupational health and safety, equal opportunity, discrimination, harassment, employment contract, probation period, workers' rights

THREE CORNERS OF THE ROOM (45 MINUTES)
Trainer sets up three “topic stations” around the room:
Station 1: GDPR in real life
Station 2: Budgeting for school projects
Station 3: Understanding youth contracts

At each station, participants read a short introduction prepared by the trainer, together brainstorm ways this could be turned into a class educational activity and write one key challenge and one teaching idea on the flipchart.

After 10 minutes, groups rotate to the next station (3 rounds total).

A volunteer stays behind each time to briefly explain what the previous group discussed. When all rotations are finished, each group prepares short presention on the corner from where they started, combining all the answers that have been written there.

FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE (70 MINUTES)
This final session segment combines elements of creativity, collaboration, and applied pedagogy. The goal is to empower participants not only to understand legal, financial, and compliance topics but also to feel confident in translating these complex areas into accessible, engaging learning activities for their students.

To begin, the trainer divides participants into small working groups of 3 to 4 people. Each group selects a core topic related to the session themes—such as GDPR, budgeting, understanding contracts, or workplace rights—from a prepared list.

These topics represent concepts that are often seen as intimidating or overly technical by learners in vocational education and training (VET). The challenge for participants is to reimagine these topics in a learner-friendly way.

Groups are then asked to design a short interactive activity—no longer than 10–15 minutes—that would help students understand the chosen topic. Participants are encouraged to think beyond lectures and embrace engaging formats such as games, peer learning exercises, storytelling, visuals, or even simple analogies. The trainer supports this brainstorming phase by circulating among the groups, offering guidance, providing examples of participatory methods, and displaying key pedagogical prompts or frameworks (such as "Explain – Explore – Reflect") to inspire creativity.

Once each group has outlined their activity, they move into the peer exchange phase. Each group is paired with another and takes turns presenting their mini-teaching idea or facilitating a short demonstration. This allows them to test out their approach in a safe space and gather constructive feedback. The groups are invited to reflect on clarity, learner engagement, and adaptability of the method shared.

REFLECTION IN PLENARY AND CONCLUSION OF THE SESSION (20 MINUTES)

Trainer guides a short reflection using questions like:

- What's one concept you now feel more confident in explaining?
- What method will you try out in your next class?
- What makes these topics more accessible and engaging for learners?

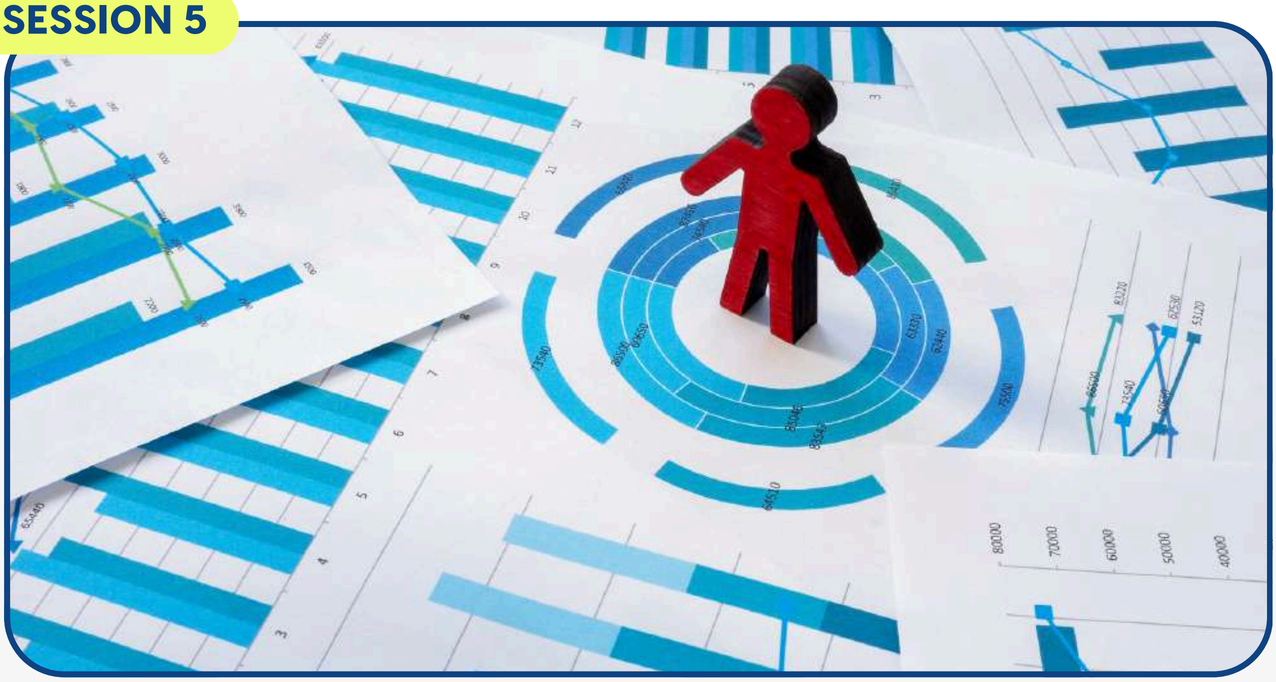
MATERIALS

- Flipchart paper, markers
- Pre-made cards with terms (GDPR terms, financial terms, compliance-related concepts)
- Sticky notes (in 3 colors)
- Timer, projector, speakers
- Three corner station signs and printed instructions

OUTCOMES

- Participants are able to explain core legal, financial, and compliance terms in simple language
- Participants are able to identify common challenges learners face with these topics.
- Participants can use learner-friendly approaches to teach GDPR, contracts, and budgeting
- Participants are ready to integrate creative and accessible strategies in their lesson plans

SESSION 5



Helping learners build their personal brand and marketing approach

DURATION
180 minutes

OBJECTIVES OF SESSION
- To understand the core components of personal branding for learners
- To explore creative and learner-centered ways to guide students in developing their brand identity
- To learn how to support learners in building simple, authentic marketing materials (e.g., bios, social media profiles, CVs)
- To practice engaging tools for helping learners define their voice, values, and unique qualities

SESSION FLOW: (STEP BY STEP DESCRIPTION)
Energiser – "Dancing on paper" (15 minutes)

Trainer prepares equal sized sheets of newspaper or cloth. Participants split into pairs. Each pair is given either a piece of newspaper or cloth. They dance while the trainer plays music or claps. When the music or clapping stops, each pair must stand on their sheet of newspaper or cloth. The next time the music or clapping stops, the pair has to fold their paper or cloth in half before standing on it. After several rounds, the paper or cloth becomes very small by being folded again and again. It is increasingly difficult for two people to stan on. Pairs that have any part of their body on the floor are 'out' of the game. The game continues until there is a winning pair.

WHAT IS PERSONAL BRAND? (20 MINUTES)

The trainer begins by asking the group, "When you hear the word brand, what comes to mind?" This question encourages free association, leading participants to mention well-known brands like Nike or Apple, as well as concepts like reputation, logo, or identity.

Responses are recorded on a flipchart, helping participants realize that a brand is not just about logos but also reputation and identity. This sets the stage for thinking about how branding applies to individuals, not just companies.

Once the brainstorming is complete, the trainer asks, "What makes a personal brand?" This directs the conversation toward personal branding and encourages participants to think about how individuals—whether students, professionals, or entrepreneurs—present themselves. Ideas may include personality, online presence, communication style, values, and personal achievements. These ideas are recorded separately to differentiate personal branding from broader brand concepts.

The trainer then provides a mini-input session, explaining that personal branding is about managing how others perceive you, particularly in professional settings. A personal brand is the story people tell about you when you're not around, shaped by how you present yourself online, on resumes, and in person.

WHO ARE WE TEACHING? – PERSONA CREATION (50 MINUTES)

Participants are divided into groups and receive a learner persona card (for example a 17-year-old art student; a 22-year-old job seeker in IT; a 19-year-old in vocational hospitality training). Using prompts on flipcharts, they define this learner's potential brand:

- What are their key strengths?
- What are their values and passions?
- Who is their audience (employers, clients, collaborators)?
- What tone or style fits their personality?

Each group sketches a basic brand profile for their learner and groups share briefly in the plenary. Learner persona cards should be adjusted depending on backgrounds of involved VET educators, and group of learners they are working with on a daily basis in order to be more effective and adjusted to their needs.

PERSONAL BRANDING AND MARKETING – ROTATING POSTERS (70 MINUTES)

The trainer sets up four stations, each focused on a different aspect of personal branding and marketing. These stations are designed to give participants hands-on experience in creating various components of a personal brand. The four stations are:

- **Elevator pitch**: a brief verbal introduction (around 30 seconds to 1 minute) that conveys who the person is and what they do.
- **CV/Portfolio bio**: a written summary of the person's professional identity, highlighting key skills, experiences, and achievements.
- **Instagram/TikTok bio**: a very short and creative bio tailored for social media platforms, focusing on how to present oneself in a limited space while capturing attention.

- **Logo or visual moodboard**: a visual representation of the person's brand, including style, fonts, colors, and design elements that reflect their personality or professional identity.

The activity is divided into several rounds. Participants work in small groups, rotating between each of the stations. At each station, the group chooses a learner profile from an earlier activity, such as a hypothetical student or professional, and tries to create or draft the relevant branding piece. For example, at the "Elevator Pitch" station, the group would write a short verbal introduction for the learner based on their profile, while at the "Logo or Visual Moodboard" station, they would draft a visual style that matches the learner's identity.

Once the group has completed a station, they leave their draft on the wall for the next group to review. After all rounds are completed, participants engage in a gallery walk, where they walk around the room and view the drafts created by other groups. Participants then leave feedback on the drafts using stickers or sticky notes, providing constructive comments on what stood out, what they liked, and what could be improved.

REFLECTION IN PLENARY AND CONCLUSION OF THE SESSION (25 MINUTES)
Participants reflect individually: "How can I support learners in branding themselves? They write 3 ideas or steps they'll try in their own practice. Then they share in small groups and discuss implementation tips.
Trainer is leading the final reflection with the following questions:

- What new ideas or tools are you taking with you?
- How can branding help learners beyond getting a job?
- What's one small branding activity you could integrate into your next course?

MATERIALS

- A4 papers, pens, markers
- Printed persona prompt cards
- Flipcharts and sticky notes
- Timer or stopwatch for rotations
- Digital device access (optional for final task)
- Small printed cards with sample social media bios, CV sections, headlines, etc.

OUTCOMES

- Participants are able to support learners in identifying and articulating their personal brand elements
- Participants can cacilitate creative exercises that help define learners' strengths, values, and target audiences
- Participants are able to provide guidance on how learners can build simple marketing content like bios, elevator pitches, or social media presence
- Participants can adapt the branding process to different learner profiles and vocational contexts

SESSION 6

Training learners in client acquisition and service delivery

DURATION
180 minutes

OBJECTIVES OF SESSION
- To understand core principles of client acquisition and service delivery
- To facilitate discussions on how to acquire clients and deliver services effectively
- To teach proposal writing and client onboarding processes in an accessible way for beginners
- To foster communication skills for client interactions.

SESSION FLOW: (STEP BY STEP DESCRIPTION)

ENERGISER – "MIME A LIE" (15 MINUTES)

Everyone stands in a circle. The trainer starts by miming an action. When the person on their right says their name and asks "What are you doing?", they reply that they are doing something completely different; for example, the trainer mimes swimming and says "I am washing my hair." The person to the facilitator's right then has to mime what the facilitator said that they were doing (washing their hair), while saying that they are doing something completely different. Go around the circle in this way until everyone has had a turn.

UNDERSTANDING CLIENT ACQUISITION AND SERVICE DELIVERY (20 MINUTES)

The trainer leads a group discussion, asking participants to reflect on and share their experiences with client acquisition and service delivery. The following guiding questions help structure the conversation:

- How do you currently acquire clients in your professional environment?
- What challenges do you face when onboarding clients?
- How do you ensure effective service delivery and long-term relationships?

Following the discussion, the trainer provides a mini-input on client acquisition strategies, including:

- Identifying the target audience
- Building trust and rapport
- Effective communication channels
- Service delivery and customer satisfaction

PROPOSAL WRITING (40 MINUTES)

Participants are given a brief, simple client proposal template that includes basic elements such as an introduction, project scope, deliverables, pricing, and timelines. The task is for each participant to work in pairs and draft a proposal for a hypothetical client, using the template provided. After 20 minutes of writing, they swap their proposals with another pair for feedback.

Participants should concentrate on the following aspects:

- Clarity of writing and structure
- Appropriateness of the proposed services and pricing
- Professional tone and presentation

Once feedback is exchanged, the pairs make revisions to their proposals based on the feedback received. The trainer should facilitate the process by walking around, answering questions, and providing guidance on best practices.

CLIENT ONBOARDING SIMULATION (50 MINUTES)

The trainer introduces the concept of client onboarding and explains that this process is essential for establishing a strong relationship with clients from the outset. Participants are divided into small groups and given a client persona (a new client in need of a specific service).

In this simulation:

One participant plays the role of the client. One participant plays the role of the service provider (educator or learner). The rest of the group observes and takes notes. The service provider must guide the client through the onboarding process, which includes:

- Explaining the service offerings
- Setting clear expectations
- Asking questions to clarify the client's needs
- Discussing timelines and deliverables

After each simulation, the group provides feedback on how well the onboarding process was handled, including strengths and areas for improvement. The trainer can offer additional insights on effective onboarding techniques.

Active listening and effective feedback (40 minutes)

For this activity, trainers will use methodology of fishbowl discussion. The group discusses various communication skills, such as:

- **Active listening**: how do you ensure that you fully understand the client's needs and concerns?
- **Asking open-ended questions:** what types of questions can you ask to encourage more detailed responses from clients?
- **Giving and receiving constructive feedback**: how can you deliver feedback to clients in a way that is clear, helpful, and respectful? How do you receive feedback from clients effectively?

As the group discusses these topics, the trainer guides the conversation to ensure that all key aspects of communication are covered. Participants reflect on their own experiences and share insights on how they maintain professionalism and empathy during client interactions.

After the discussion, the group reflects collectively on the following points:

- What communication strategies work best for building rapport and trust with clients?
- How can you use these strategies to help learners engage in meaningful client interactions?

REFLECTION IN PLENARY AND CONCLUSION OF THE SESSION (15 MINUTES)

In the final part of the session, participants reflect on the key takeaways from the day. They are asked to answer the following questions in writing:

- What are the most important client acquisition strategies you plan to teach your learners?
- Which client onboarding techniques do you think will be most useful for your learners?
- How will you integrate communication skills (e.g., active listening, feedback) into your teaching practice?

After the individual reflection, participants are invited to share their thoughts with a partner or in a small group.

MATERIALS

- Flipchart or whiteboard and markers
- Printed templates for proposal writing
- Sticky notes and pens

OUTCOMES

- Participants understand key techniques for client acquisition, including networking and proposal writing
- Educators gain strategies for teaching client communication a onboarding in VET settings
- Participants enhance their skills in active listening, feedback, professional client interactions
- Educators are equipped to teach beginner learners effecti communication and service delivery methods.

03

Growth, innovation and **sustainability**

In this final chapter, the focus shifts toward empowering learners to think beyond starting up — toward growing, adapting, and sustaining their virtual assistance ventures over time. These sessions provide VET educators with tools to guide advanced learners through key topics such as business scaling, innovation tracking, ethical entrepreneurship, marketing strategy, financial planning, and long-term personal development. Through hands-on, forward-thinking activities, educators will explore how to help learners respond to evolving trends like AI and automation, make informed business decisions, and build ethical and resilient freelance careers. The chapter supports educators in embedding both hard and soft skills — from digital marketing and budgeting to lifelong learning and self-reflection — ensuring that entrepreneurship education remains not only relevant, but also sustainable and values-driven. Each session in this chapter promotes a balance of growth and responsibility, enabling learners to build businesses that are adaptable, ethical, and personally meaningful.

SESSION 1

Teaching learners how to scale a virtual assistance business

DURATION
180 minutes

OBJECTIVES OF SESSION
- To introduce VET educators to the concept of business scaling within the virtual assistance field.
- To explore realistic and diverse growth pathways for solo VAs, including outsourcing, delegation, and agency models.
- To support educators in helping advanced learners envision sustainable and scalable service models.
- To equip educators with tools to guide reflection on personal growth goals, team-building, and time/value management.

SESSION FLOW: (STEP BY STEP DESCRIPTION)
ENERGISER – SUGGESTED BY THE GROUP (10 MINUTES)

For the opening of the session, trainer offers to group to suggest one or two energisers to use in the beginning of the session.

FROM SOLO TO SCALING UP (40 MINUTES)

Trainer creates a large timeline across the room titled "Growth journey of a virtual assistant"

At marked points (Start Skill-building First clients Fully booked Delegation Agency), participants rotate and brainstorm:
- What's happening at this stage?
- What are the new challenges?
- What support does the virtual assistant need?

5 minutes are given to each group stepping on each of the 6 steps. Each group writes keywords on flipchart sheets posted at each station.

Once all groups had a chance to visit all of the steps, trainer debriefs with a walkthrough of typical virtual assistants growth stages and transitions, drawing from real examples or case studies.

ROUND TABLES OF SCALING PATHWAYS (90 MINUTES)

Participants are divided into 3 groups. Each group rotates through three "expert tables" with fictional mini-case studies:

1. Outsourcing tasks – When and how to delegate tasks to freelancers (e.g., hiring someone for graphic design or copywriting).
2. Creating a VA team – Shifting from solo work to small team coordination.
3. Building an agency model – Managing multiple clients with a structured service team.

Each table includes:

- A short brief (scenario, goal, pain points) – see the handout
- Guiding discussion questions (e.g., What are the pros and cons? What might go wrong? How would you explain this to learners?)
- Flipchart space to write key insights

After rotating through all three tables, participants return to plenary and the trainer facilitates a discussion and debrief on this step of the session. During the discussion, different approaches and answers to the 3 scenarios are share and further analysed.

25 minutes are given for each rotation, with 15 minutes left for the final presentations and discussion.

PRIORITISING AND SCALING (30 MINUTES)

Participants are divided into 3 groups, and each group is given a business scenario that is fully booked with demanding clients. They are presented with 12 “growth decisions” printed on cards, such as:

1. Raise prices
2. Hire help for admin work
3. Drop a client
4. Automate email responses
5. Invest in software
6. Build a website
7. Create a digital product
8. Hire a coach
9. Offer a course
10. Collaborate with another VA
11. Take a break
12. Say no to new work

Each group needs to discuss and select top 5 strategies for sustainable scaling.
They must justify their choices based on time, money, values, and goals.

After 20 minutes given for agreeing on the best approach, groups present and discuss their point of view on the best solution for their specific scenario.

Step is concluded with debriefing.

- **Scenario 1: The overwhelmed multitasker**

Lina is a solo VA working full-time with 3 clients in social media scheduling, inbox management, and customer support. She's earning enough but working 50+ hours a week, skipping weekends, and feeling exhausted. She loves her clients but knows something has to change.

- **Scenario 2: The growth-oriented planner**

David is a tech-savvy VA managing 3 e-commerce clients. He's fully booked and loves the work—but he's ambitious. He wants to grow professionally, earn more, and eventually build his own brand. He's hesitant to lose the flexibility of freelancing.

- **Scenario 3: The heart-led helper**

Rita is a VA focused on helping NGOs and activists. She manages social media, donation campaigns, and newsletter content. She is fully booked but charges modest rates to remain affordable. She wants to grow but doesn't want to abandon her mission-driven clients.

REFLECTION IN PLENARY AND CONCLUSION OF THE SESSION (10 MINUTES)

In the final part of the session, participants reflect on the key takeaways from the day. They are asked to answer the following questions in plenary:

- What's the biggest challenge when helping learners think beyond solo freelancing?
- What risks should we teach learners to watch out for when scaling?
- What's one method you'll definitely try with your learners?

MATERIALS

- Timeline posters or flipcharts across the room
- Handouts for the round tables
- Markers, sticky notes, flipcharts

OUTCOMES

- Educators understand different pathways and models for scaling a VA business
- Participants explore potential challenges and decisions involved in business growth
- Participants learn peer-led and scenario-based strategies to present scaling concepts to learners
- Educators leave with tools and creative session ideas they can adapt for various learner levels

HANDOUT: SCENARIOS FOR ROUND TABLES

TABLE 1 – OUTSOURCING TASKS

Scenario:

Lea is a virtual assistant who specializes in content scheduling, email management, and online research. She has recently taken on a third client and is starting to feel overwhelmed. She's spending too much time creating social media graphics, which isn't her strong suit. She's thinking about hiring a freelancer from Fiverr to help her with visual content.

Goal:

To delegate time-consuming tasks so she can focus on her core services and client relationships.

Pain points:

- She's unsure how to give clear instructions
- She worries about quality and missed deadlines
- She's not sure how to budget for this
- She fears clients might not like someone else doing part of the work

Guiding questions:

- What are the benefits and risks of outsourcing for someone like Lea?
- How can she prepare to delegate tasks effectively?
- How would you guide a learner to start with outsourcing safely?
- What tools or strategies can make this process easier?

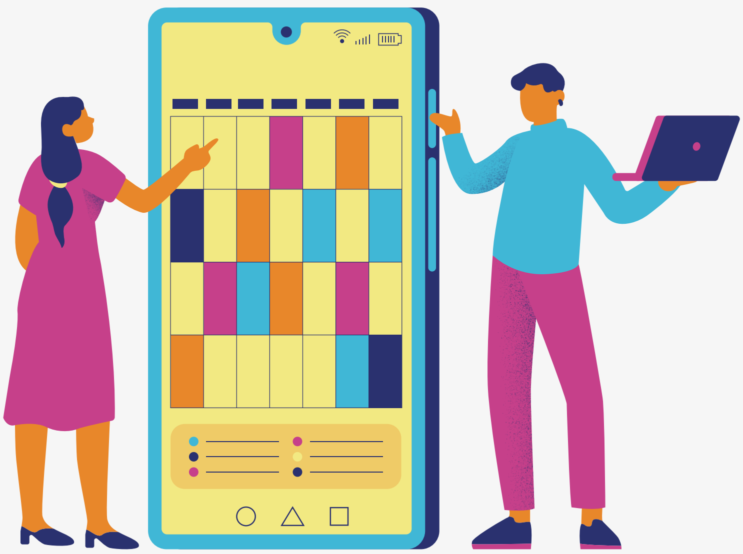


TABLE 2 – CREATING A VA TEAM

Scenario:

Matej has been working as a VA for two years. He is great with admin, CRM management, and creating email newsletters. He's getting more client requests than he can handle. He's considering inviting two other freelancers he knows to collaborate as a team — each focusing on a different service area. But he's never managed others before.

Goal:

To grow his capacity and offer more complete packages to clients.

Pain points:

- He's unsure how to split tasks and responsibilities
- He doesn't know how to handle payments or contracts within a team
- He's worried about communication breakdowns
- He's concerned about losing control over quality

Guiding questions:

- What should Matej clarify before forming a team?
- How would you support learners in understanding teamwork in a freelance model?
- What systems or habits could help manage this kind of collaboration?

TABLE 3 – BUILDING AN AGENCY MODEL

Scenario:

Sara has been running a successful VA business for three years and regularly manages five clients. She's hired freelancers for years but is now thinking about turning her operation into a proper online agency with a name, branding, and a team of contracted service providers. She wants to offer services like social media management, customer support, and tech VA assistance as bundled offers.

Goal:

To formalize her business, increase revenue, and expand her client base with a clear structure.

Pain points:

- She's worried about the legal and financial implications
- She doesn't know how to attract and retain good team members
- She has no experience in leadership or company branding
- She fears losing the personal touch that made her business successful

Guiding questions:

- What are the differences between freelancing and running an agency?
- What key challenges should learners be aware of before considering this step?
- How can we help learners assess if this is a realistic path for them?

SESSION 2

Keeping up with trends and digital innovation in VET education

DURATION
180 minutes

OBJECTIVES OF SESSION
- To familiarize educators with current and emerging trends relevant to virtual assistance and digital work.
- To build capacity for identifying and integrating digital innovations into VET teaching practices.
- To promote reflective and forward-thinking approaches to curriculum design and youth empowerment.
- To explore tools and strategies for making VET education responsive to fast-changing technologies like AI, automation, and niche online services.

SESSION FLOW: (STEP BY STEP DESCRIPTION)
HOT OR NOT (15 MINUTES)

Trainer prepares a set of printed or projected digital trends (e.g., ChatGPT, TikTok marketing, AI-generated images, automation tools, Discord servers, online coaching, NFT services).

Participants vote with their bodies — one side of the room is “Hot (still growing),” the other is “Not (fading/irrelevant).”

After each vote, 1–2 participants briefly share why they chose their position.

Trainer wraps up by noting how subjective and fast-changing trends can be — making it important for educators to stay adaptable.

TREND MAPPING (30 MINUTES)

Trainer introduces 6 key trend zones (posted on wall or screen):

1. AI tools
2. Automation
3. Niche services
4. Creator economy
5. Remote team tech
6. Micro-entrepreneurship

Participants are given sticky notes or printed trend cards (examples of tools, services, behaviours). In small groups, they:

- Place each trend in a zone
- Write 1–2 ideas for how it might be useful for a VA or VET learner
- Identify any risks or ethical concerns

Groups rotate, add ideas to other boards, then debrief in plenary with a focus on:

- What trends are already relevant to youth?
- Which ones might be harder to provide educational sessions about?
- How can we keep up without needing to be experts?

DISCOVERY STATIONS (50 MINUTES)

Trainer sets up 3–4 themed stations where participants can briefly explore or watch demos of emerging tools:

- AI content creation: (e.g., ChatGPT, Copy.ai, Canva AI)
- Automation platforms: (e.g., Zapier, IFTTT, Notion templates)
- Design and visual tools: (e.g., Adobe Express, Descript, Synthesia)
- Niche services: (e.g., podcast editing, e-book formatting, online course setup)

At each station, participants:

- Explore a real example or tutorial (trainer-led or video)
- Answer reflection questions: What could learners do with this? How hard is it to learn? What's the risk?
- Groups rotate every 10 minutes. Last 10 minutes of this step are left for debriefing.

HOW WE CAN ORGANISE THE EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS AROUND THE TRENDS (60 MINUTES)

Participants form small teams and choose 1–2 trends they explored earlier. Task:

1. Design a short lesson or workshop for VET learners that introduces the trend and builds a skill around it
2. Use a creative, learner-cantered method (not a lecture!)
3. Include a short explanation of why this trend matters for youth employment or entrepreneurship

Each team prepares:

- A lesson title
- Objectives
- Short session flow (max 30–45 minutes)
- Tools and materials needed

Teams present their ideas in plenary (3–4 minutes each).

REFLECTION IN PLENARY AND CONCLUSION OF THE SESSION (10 MINUTES)

In the final part of the session, participants reflect on the key takeaways from the day. They are asked to answer the following questions in plenary:

- What trend are you most excited to explore further?
- What are the risks of "education about the trends" without critical thinking?
- How can we help learners navigate innovation without being overwhelmed?

Participants then write a sentence on a card: "The next digital trend I want to integrate into my teaching is…" Cards are displayed on a wall in the working room as a takeaway.

MATERIALS

- Sticky notes, trend cards, flipcharts
- Laptops or phones for exploring tools
- Pre-prepared tutorial videos or websites (offline access if needed)
- Reflection prompts and group planning templates
- Markers, tape, cards

OUTCOMES

- Educators can identify and analyse current and emerging digital trends in virtual assistants field and gig work
- Participants experience hands-on exploration of AI, automation, and niche service tools
- Educators co-design innovative micro-sessions that connect youth with modern opportunities
- Increased confidence in educating about future-proof and trend-sensitive content

SESSION 3

Embedding sustainability and ethics into entrepreneurship education

DURATION

180 minutes

OBJECTIVES OF SESSION

- To introduce the concepts of ethical freelancing, digital sustainability, and social impact in the context of virtual assistance.
- To explore the role of values, responsibility, and long-term thinking in digital entrepreneurship.
- To support educators in creating space for ethical reflection in learner projects and discussions.
- To offer practical tools for embedding sustainability principles into VA business development.

SESSION FLOW: (STEP BY STEP DESCRIPTION)

VALUES SORTING (40 MINUTES)

Each participant receives a deck of 20 value cards (printed or written on paper), including values like:

- Profit
- Flexibility
- Privacy
- Equality
- Transparency
- Sustainability
- Growth
- Simplicity
- Inclusion
- Speed

More values to be prepared by trainer in preparation for the session. Value cards can be printed on plain A4 paper, and cut on the smaller dimensions.*

Participants have following tasks, step-by-step:

1. Choose your top 5 personal business values
2. Pair up and discuss in pairs: Where do you match? Where do you differ?
3. Join a group of 4–5 and prepare a "value manifesto" for a fictional VA agency

After the groups are formed, they are given 15-20 minutes to prepare manifesto based on the values they have in the group.

Each group presents their manifesto in 1 minute.

Trainer leads a short debrief with use of the following questions: What values often conflict in business? Why is it important to discuss this with learners?

WORLD CAFÉ OF ETHICAL DILEMMAS (50 MINUTES)

Trainers set up 3 tables, each with a printed ethical dilemma scenario and guiding questions. Example of dilemmas (trainers can prepare different dilemmas than the ones suggested below):

"A VA is asked to write fake reviews for a client."
"You discover your client is using your content to promote harmful products."
"A competitor offers to sell you a client list."

Task: At each table, participants need to discuss:

1. What would you do and why?
2. What questions should you ask yourself before deciding?
3. How would you guide a young learner facing this?

Groups rotate every 15 minutes.

Trainer wraps up with reflections on how to frame these discussions with learners in a non-judgmental, open way.

CRITICAL THINKING EXERCISE ON SUSTAINABILITY (45 MINUTES)

Trainer prepares a mix of real VA-related business practices (printed examples, ads, screenshots, or short case blurbs). Examples:

- A VA uses AI tools to speed up work but doesn't disclose it
- A freelancer uses only eco-friendly digital tools
- A social media manager promotes a sustainable brand but uses clickbait headlines
- A VA refuses clients that don't align with their values

More examples need to be prepared by trainers, as part of preparation for the session.

Participants work in small groups to:

- Sort each example as "Sustainable," "Unsustainable," or "Mixed"
- Write 1 sentence explaining their reasoning for each

In conclusion of the step, participants with the trainers discuss with use of the following questions:

- What surprised us?
- How can we help learners develop this kind of awareness?

DESIGNING IMPACT – EMBEDDING VALUES IN PROJECTS (45 MINUTES)
Each participant chooses one topic (e.g., ethical freelancing, inclusive branding, digital minimalism) and outlines a micro-project or task they could assign to learners that connects entrepreneurship with ethical or sustainable action.

They complete a short template:

- Project title
- Age/group of learners
- Learning goal
- Task description
- One ethical or sustainability angle

Participants pair up and present their idea for peer feedback.

Trainer wraps up the session by summarizing key principles of value-driven entrepreneurship education.

MATERIALS

- Printed value cards
- Dilemma cards for café tables
- Visual examples or mini case studies (printed or digital)
- Project planning templates
- Flipcharts, sticky notes, markers

Note: This session requires well prepared examples and materials to be given out to participants as part of each step. These examples need to be adapted to local realities in order to resonate to the cases familiar to participants; thus we have listed just proposed examples to be used for each step – not the final materials.

OUTCOMES

- Educators recognize the importance of ethics and sustainability in VA education
- Participants engage in real-life scenario thinking and value-based decision making
- Educators leave with ideas and tools to integrate social responsibility into entrepreneurship sessions
- Clear and applicable micro-project formats are developed for learners

SESSION 4

Designing lessons on digital marketing for service promotion

DURATION
180 minutes

OBJECTIVES OF SESSION
- To familiarize educators with current and emerging trends relevant to virtual assistance and digital work.
- To build capacity for identifying and integrating digital innovations into VET teaching practices.
- To promote reflective and forward-thinking approaches to curriculum design and youth empowerment.
- To explore tools and strategies for making VET education responsive to fast-changing technologies like AI, automation, and niche online services.

SESSION FLOW: (STEP BY STEP DESCRIPTION)
ENERGIZER – COUNT UP (15 MINUTES)
The group stands in a close huddled circle with their eyes closed. A variation is to have the group disperse around a room, standing, sitting or lying down.

The goal is to count to 20 (or the number of members in the group.) Only one person may say one number at a time. If two people speak at the same time, even for the slightest moment, the group must start over at number 1. The group has succeeded when they have counted up to the set number.

WHAT IS DIGITAL MARKETING? (35 MINUTES)
The trainer asks participants to go online so everyone could follow interactive visual presentation through the rest of the session, through online tool mentimeter.com.

Questions raised for group brainstorming within the presentation:
- What social media are there?
- What is social media?
- Are traditional media social media?
- Are blogs part of social media?

The trainer adds several theoretical inputs regarding what social media are, some common features social media have, connection of social media and social networking; important aspects of ICT and social media; understanding basic terminology related to umbrella term of digital marketing; ways for VET providers and educational institutions to use social media (other than advertising).

DIGITAL VS TRADITIONAL MARKETING (30 MINUTES)
Trainer introduces the topic by briefly explaining that marketing can generally be categorized into traditional and digital forms, each with its own strengths and weaknesses.

The trainer then reads a series of statements and participants position themselves physically along a line (or imaginary spectrum) from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree.”

Statements are the following:
“Digital marketing is more cost-effective than traditional marketing.”
“Traditional marketing is more trustworthy.”
“Social media ads reach the right people more easily than TV or radio ads.”
“Print advertising is no longer effective.”
“Digital campaigns are easier to measure.”

After each one, the trainer invites a few participants to share why they stood where they did. Trainer summarizes by pulling together key takeaways and linking them to:
- Reach
- Cost
- Personalization
- Measurability
- Interaction

DIGITAL MARKETING AND VET LEARNERS (30 MINUTES)
At the start of the activity, the trainer prepares four flipchart stations around the room, each dedicated to a specific guiding question:
- What do learners need to know about digital marketing?
- What are the most useful digital tools for VET learners?
- How can educators help learners assess their audience?
- What are realistic goals for young people starting with digital marketing?

Participants are divided into small groups and assigned a starting station. Each group has a few minutes to reflect on the topic and write down their ideas directly on the flipchart paper. The focus is on generating practical, learner-focused input—participants might draw on their own teaching experiences or insights from earlier parts of the session.

After several minutes, groups rotate to the next station, where they first read what previous groups have written, then add their own contributions. This process continues until all groups have visited each station.

In the final round, instead of writing new ideas, participants review all existing inputs and mark them with symbols—such as ✓ for ideas they agree with or find valuable, and ✕ for those they consider less relevant or problematic. This quick visual voting provides instant insight into which points resonate most across the group.

The trainer then facilitates a short debriefing discussion, highlighting the most commonly supported ideas, raising questions about diverging views, and inviting comments on any particularly innovative or surprising contributions.

CORE ELEMENTS OF DIGITAL MARKETING (50 MINUTES)

Participants are divided into four small groups, each assigned one key digital marketing topic:

- SEO (Search Engine Optimization)
- Content creation
- Social media Ppatforms
- Engagement strategies

Each group receives a short info pack with visuals, examples, and guiding questions. They explore the material together and prepare a short 3–5 minute presentation for the rest of the group.

For example, the SEO group explains how keywords affect Google rankings, while the content group brainstorms what types of content are most useful for VET learners. The social media group maps which platforms fit which goals, and the engagement group shares simple ways to boost interaction, like polls or hashtags.

After presentations, the trainer fills in any gaps and highlights connections between the topics. The activity gives participants a clear, shared foundation in digital marketing and models a practical method they can use with their own learners.

REFLECTION – POPCORN METHOD (20 MINUTES)

Participants take turns spontaneously sharing their words or phrases. There’s no fixed order, no pressure to speak immediately.

Guiding reflection questions for participants are the following:

- What’s one thing that surprised you today?
- What’s a new term or concept you’re taking away?
- What might you want to explore more after today?

MATERIALS

- Sticky notes, markers, flipcharts
- Internet access (phones/laptops for group research)
- Projector and presentation slides

OUTCOMES

- Participants will understand what digital marketing is and how it differs from traditional approaches
- Participants will Recognize the relevance of digital marketing for VET learners and young entrepreneurs
- Participants will be able to Identify core tools and strategies used in digital marketing (e.g., SEO, content types, platforms, engagement methods)
- Participants will be able to critically reflect on how to introduce and teach digital marketing to beginners.

SESSION 5

Teaching financial planning and long-term stability in freelancing

DURATION
180 minutes

OBJECTIVES OF SESSION
- Equip VET educators with practical tools to teach key financial concepts in the context of freelancing
- To strengthen educators' understanding of pricing strategies, savings, budgeting for irregular income, and planning for long-term sustainability in self-employment
- To support educators in designing engaging, accessible, and inclusive financial learning activities for diverse learners.
- To encourage collaborative problem-solving and peer learning through group budgeting challenges and reflection.

SESSION FLOW: (STEP BY STEP DESCRIPTION)
MATCH THE TERM – FINANCIAL VOCABULARY FOR FREELANCERS (20 MINUTES)

Participants are divided into small groups or pairs. Each group receives two sets of cards: one with key freelance financial terms and another with definitions. Groups work together to match each term to its correct definition within 10 minutes. Terms might include: cash flow, invoice, variable income, profit margin, savings buffer, budgeting, taxes, business expenses, and sustainability. At the end, trainer leads a 10-minute review. Groups present their matches. Trainer confirms correct answers, explains tricky terms, and invites examples from participants' teaching or real-life freelance cases.

THEORETICAL INPUTS – FINANCE FOR FREELANCERS (20 MINUTES)
Trainer gives a concise, visual-based input on key financial concepts that freelancers need to understand and manage. Topics that should be covered are at least the following:

- How freelancers earn: fixed vs. project-based, retainer work
- Budgeting with irregular income: average earnings vs. worst-case planning
- Importance of savings: building an emergency fund
- Pricing strategies: hourly vs. value-based pricing
- Tax planning basics for freelancers

PLAN YOUR FREELANCE BUDGET (25 MINUTES)
Participants form small groups (4-5 per group). Each group receives a brief scenario describing a freelance project (design a logo for a new business, deliver 3 workshops, or produce a video).

Groups use a provided budget template to:

- Estimate income from the freelance job
- Plan key expenses (software, transport, internet, time investment)
- Allocate a portion for taxes and savings

Each group presents their freelance budget and choices (approx. 3 minutes each). The trainer encourages comparisons, explores priorities (such as how much to save), and highlights good practices.

DIGITAL MARKETING AND VET LEARNERS (30 MINUTES)
At the start of the activity, the trainer prepares four flipchart stations around the room, each dedicated to a specific guiding question:

- What do learners need to know about digital marketing?
- What are the most useful digital tools for VET learners?
- How can educators help learners assess their audience?
- What are realistic goals for young people starting with digital marketing?

Participants are divided into small groups and assigned a starting station. Each group has a few minutes to reflect on the topic and write down their ideas directly on the flipchart paper.

The focus is on generating practical, learner-focused input—participants might draw on their own teaching experiences or insights from earlier parts of the session.

After several minutes, groups rotate to the next station, where they first read what previous groups have written, then add their own contributions.

This process continues until all groups have visited each station.

In the final round, instead of writing new ideas, participants review all existing inputs and mark them with symbols—such as ✓ for ideas they agree with or find valuable, and ✕ for those they consider less relevant or problematic.

This quick visual voting provides instant insight into which points resonate most across the group.

The trainer then facilitates a short debriefing discussion, highlighting the most commonly supported ideas, raising questions about diverging views, and inviting comments on any particularly innovative or surprising contributions.

FREELANCE LIFE CHALLENGE – BUDGETING WITH IRREGULAR INCOME (45 MINUTES)

Participants remain in groups. Each group receives an initial 3-month freelance income/expense plan and a challenge sheet.

Task 1 (5 min):

Review the given starting monthly income and fixed costs. Build an initial plan, including:

- Expected earnings
- Savings targets
- Taxes and living expenses

Task 2 (3x5 min):

In each round, groups receive a card with a new freelance-specific scenario:
"Your biggest client delays payment by 30 days."
"You receive an offer to speak at an event for 250 €."
"Unexpected health cost: 200 €."
Groups update their plans accordingly.

Task 3 - Presentations (5 min per group):

Each group shares their revised plan and how they responded to challenges.

Task 4 - Discussion (10 min):

Trainer leads a reflection:

- Which strategies worked best?
- What would you do differently?
- How did this feel compared to real freelance experiences?
- How can you use this exercise with learners?

REFLECTION (10 MINUTES)

Trainer leads the reflection through the following questions:

- What new insights have you gained about teaching finance in a freelance context?
- How will you adapt these exercises for your learners?
- What do your learners struggle with most in terms of money?
- How confident do you feel now to lead budgeting tasks in your own classroom?

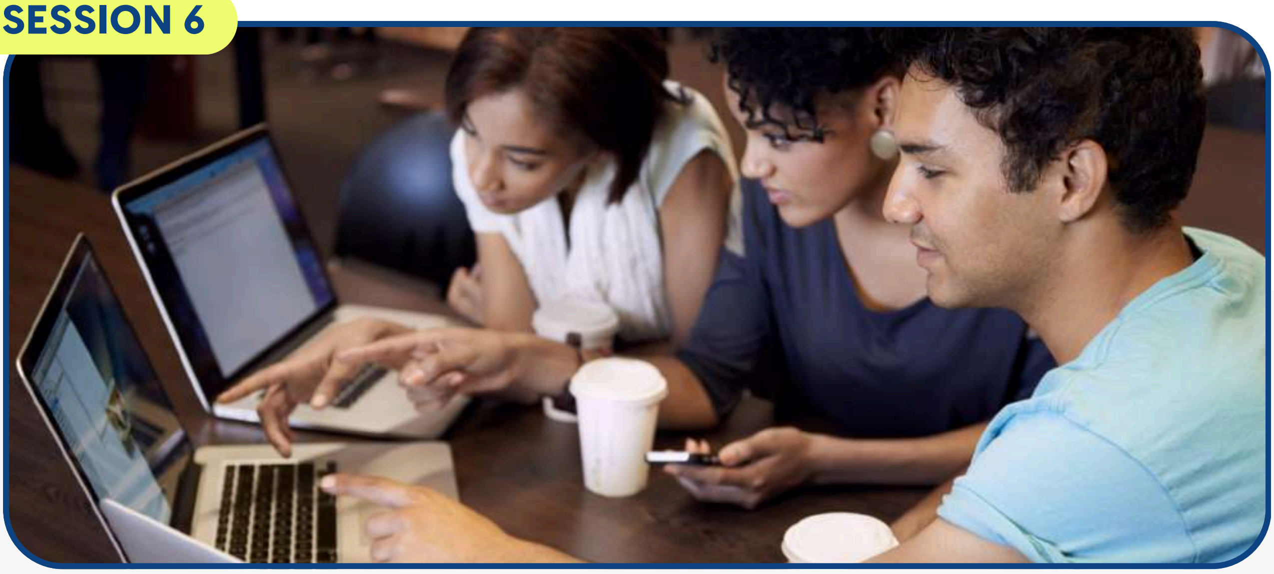
MATERIALS

- Whiteboard, markers, pens and paper, projector, laptops/tablets, internet access,
- Set of term-definition cards (“cash flow,” “buffer,” “variable income”),
- Budget spreadsheet for a freelance project (Step 3),
- Budget spreadsheet for freelance life scenario (Step 4),
- Challenge cards with freelance-specific unexpected costs or changes.

OUTCOMES

- Participants are able to explain core financial terms and concepts relevant to freelance work
- Participants are able to demonstrate how to help learners price their services and plan for unpredictable income
- Participants can design and deliver engaging exercises on budgeting and financial resilience
- Participants are able to reflect on inclusive teaching approaches, especially for learners with limited financial knowledge or different communication needs.

SESSION 6



Empowering learners to build resilience and commit to lifelong learning

DURATION
180 minutes

OBJECTIVES OF SESSION
- To equip educators with tools to foster resilience in learners
- To teach strategies for keeping learners motivated and focused on lifelong personal development
- To provide reflective coaching techniques to help learners overcome setbacks and continue their growth

SESSION FLOW: (STEP BY STEP DESCRIPTION)

INTRODUCTION (15 MINUTES)
Participants are asked to recall a personal challenge they faced while learning or teaching. In small groups (3–4 people), they share their stories of overcoming challenges and the strategies they used to stay motivated. Each group shares one story with the larger group, and the facilitator encourages reflection on common themes (such as persistence, support, self-reflection)

THEORIES OF RESILIENCE AND LIFELONG LEARNING (30 MINUTES)
The facilitator delivers a brief theoretical input on the importance of resilience and lifelong learning for both educators and learners, by describing:
- The concept of resilience in education: bouncing back from setbacks.
- Lifelong learning: continuous development and adaptation in the face of challenges.
- The role of VET educators in nurturing resilience and commitment to learning.

After the theoretical input, the group reflects on how these concepts apply to their own teaching practices. In pairs, they discuss:

- How do they currently encourage resilience in their learners?
- What barriers to lifelong learning have they encountered in their classrooms?

COACHING STRATEGIES (40 MINUTES)

The trainer introduces several key coaching strategies that can help build resilience in learners:

- Positive reframing: turning challenges into learning opportunities
- Goal setting: breaking down big goals into achievable steps
- Self-reflection: encouraging learners to evaluate their progress and learn from setbacks

Participants are split into pairs. Each pair receives a scenario where a learner is facing a setback (failing an exam, struggling with motivation). One participant plays the learner, and the other plays the coach, using the strategies shared.

After the role play, pairs give each other feedback on the effectiveness of the coaching strategies used. The facilitator also provides input and clarifies any questions.

REFLECTIVE TOOLS FOR EMPOWERING LEARNERS (30 MINUTES)

The trainer introduces several reflective tools that learners can use to stay motivated, including:

- Journaling: writing about challenges and achievements
- Self-assessment: reflecting on strengths and areas for improvement Growth mindset: understanding that abilities can improve with effort and persistence

Participants take 10 minutes to individually fill out a reflection worksheet (provided by the trainer), which prompts them to think about their teaching practice and how they encourage reflection in their learners.

In small groups, participants discuss the following questions:

- Which reflective tools could you use with your learners?
- How could you incorporate reflection into your current curriculum?

GROUP ACTIVITY - DESIGNING A RESILIENCE-BUILDING PLAN FOR LEARNERS (50 MINUTES)

Trainer explains that the goal of this activity is to create a practical, actionable plan for supporting learners in building resilience. Each group will work with a learner profile facing various challenges (e.g., time management, self-confidence). Trainer briefly introduces the three components of the plan:

- Coaching strategies
- Reflective tools
- Concrete actions

Trainer divides participants into small groups (4–5 people) and distributes learner profiles and templates for the resilience-building plan. Trainer sets the timer and encourages groups to work together to design their resilience-building plan.

Participants focus on the following:

- **Coaching strategies:** think about how the learner can be coached to tackle their challenges. What techniques will build their resilience? (e.g., motivational interviewing, goal setting, or breaking large tasks into manageable steps)
- **Reflective tools:** identify tools the learner can use to reflect on progress and stay motivated (e.g., daily journals, self-assessment quizzes, peer feedback loops).
- **Concrete actions:** suggest specific actions the learner can take to stay committed to their development. What small steps will help them maintain focus and engagement?

Trainer moves around the groups to offer support, answer questions, and ensure participants stay on track. Once the group work is completed, each group presents their resilience-building plan. The presentation should cover:

- Coaching strategies they've proposed
- Reflective tools to keep the learner motivated
- Concrete actions for ongoing commitment to lifelong learning

Each group has 2 minutes to present, and participants are encouraged to ask questions or provide feedback. Trainer provides feedback on each group's plan, emphasizing practical strategies and offering suggestions for improvement. At the end, trainer facilitates a short discussion around these questions:

- What strategies do you think would be most effective for learners in your own teaching context?
- How can these plans be adapted to different learner needs?
- How would you integrate coaching and reflective tools into your existing teaching methods?

REFLECTION IN PLENARY AND CONCLUSION OF THE SESSION (15 MINUTES)

Trainer invites participants to reflect on the session in plenary, using the following questions:

- What is one new strategy or tool you will implement with your learners to build resilience?
- What personal goal will you set to continue your own lifelong learning journey?

MATERIALS

- Learner profiles with challenges
- Resilience-building plan templates (printed or digital)
- Markers and flipchart paper for group work (optional)
- Timer to manage group work and presentations

OUTCOMES

- Participants understand the concept of resilience in learning and its impact on motivation
- Educators gain practical coaching strategies to support learners in overcoming setbacks
- Participants learn reflective tools to help learners stay motivated and engaged
- Educators develop skills to design actionable resilience-building plans for learners
- Participants are equipped to foster lifelong learning commitment in their students

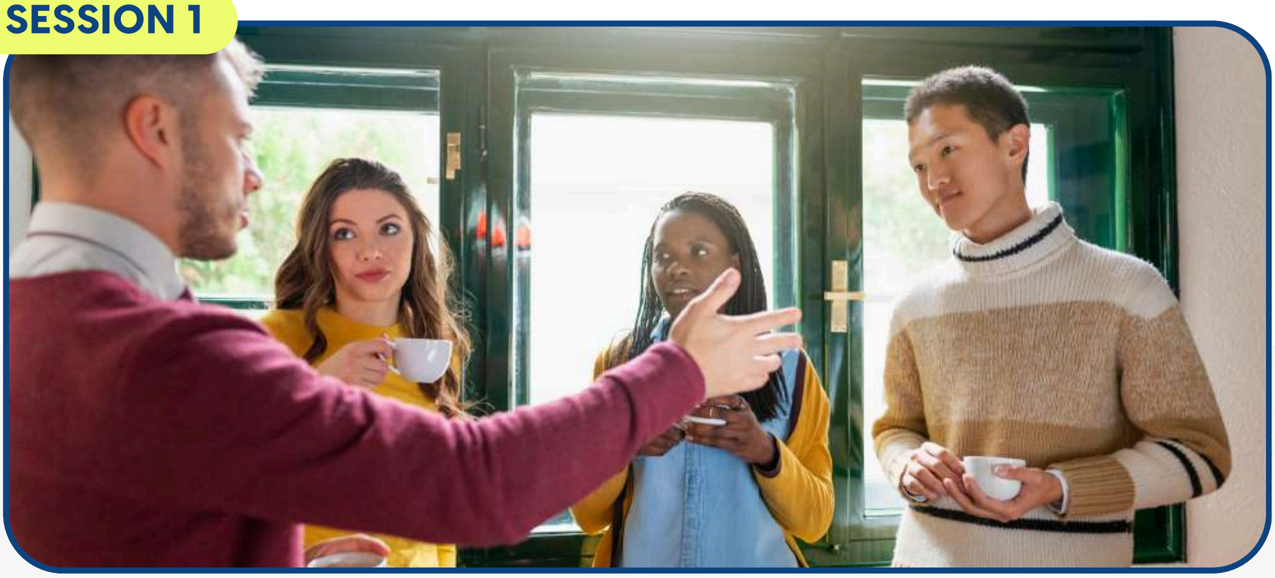
04

Introduction, teambuilding and closing the residential and/or long-term training

In this last chapter we bring you with 2 sessions to be implemented at the beginning of the longer (residential) training – Introduction and getting to know eachother session, and at the end of the longer training – evaluation session.

If you decide to use only few of the sessions from this curriculum, you can always combine activities from these sessions for your introductory and evaluation parts of the program.

SESSION 1



Introduction and getting to know each other

DURATION
180 minutes

OBJECTIVES OF SESSION

- To introduce the team, project, and the purpose of the training course.
- To create a welcoming and engaging environment where participants can get to know each other.
- To foster interaction and relationship-building through dynamic activities.
- To encourage participants to contribute to the training course by shaping parts of the agenda.
- To establish a shared understanding of the training objectives and expectations.
- To strengthen teamwork and problem-solving skills through a fun, high-energy group challenge.
- To define a group agreement that ensures a productive and respectful learning space.

SESSION FLOW: (STEP BY STEP DESCRIPTION)

INTRODUCTION OF THE STAFF AND THE PROJECT (15 MINUTES)

Trainers introduce themselves and logistic staff, project and why we are here.

NAME AND MORNING MOVE (15 MINUTES)

Trainer invites participants to share their name in circle, together with one movement they do first thing in the morning, when they wake up. The game starts with the first participants sharing their name and the movement. Every next person needs to repeat the names and morning movements of the previous participants, and their own. Game continues until everyone had a chance to participate. In the end, the whole group can repeat the names and movements.

SPEED DATING (30 MINUTES)
Participants sit in two circles of chairs, facing eachother. The trainer explains how the speed dating game functions (participants talk to the pair on opposite of them, both persons need to share on the given topic, at the end when we hear the signal we say goodbye to our date and move to the new date), and starts the game with the first topic to be discussed (from the list below). Every 2-3 minutes, trainer calls out the signal, and asks the outer circle to rotate for one spot on their right.

Game continues until everyone from the outer circle had a chance to talk to everyone on the inner circle, or until the time runs out – whatever comes first.

List of the statements/questions for the game:
1. If you could live anywhere in the world, where would it be and why?
2. If you could have dinner with any historical figure, who would it be and why?
3. What's a hobby or activity you've always wanted to try but haven't yet?
4. What's the most adventurous thing you've ever done?
5. What's your go-to comfort food?
6. If you could have any superpower, what would it be and how would you use it?
7. What's a fun fact about you that most people don't know?
8. What's your favourite way to spend a weekend?
9. If you could instantly master any skill, what would it be and why?
10. What's your dream job or career goal?
11. If you won the lottery tomorrow, what's the first thing you'd do?
12. Who has been the most influential person in your life and how?
13. Do you prefer mornings or evenings, and why?
14. What's a place you've visited that you'd recommend to everyone?
15. What's your favourite type of music or favourite artist?
16. If you could relive any day in your life, which one would it be and why?

4 CORNERS (50 MINUTES)
Participants are divided into 4 smaller groups, each group taking position in one of the corners of the working room. Trainer explains that each corner has specific segment of the program to be discussed.

In the beginning corners 1 and 4 are facilitated by the trainers' team, while in every next rotation someone from the group takes the spot of facilitating the corner for the new group to come.

Trainer explains that there will be 10 minutes for each corner, and that groups will rotate to their right side. On each rotation, one person from the group who just came to the corner they were at, needs to stay and take the role of the facilitator of that corner for the group to come.

Topics of each corner are:
1st corner: Agenda and expectations (*participants go through the agenda posted on the wall, discuss what will be learning outcomes of each session, and write their expectations from the event on the post-it notes put alongside the agenda)*

2nd corner: Contributions: energisers (*participants get the papers and pens to write a list of energisers that will be used during the program of the TC)*

3rd corner: Contributions: Youtube playlist (*participants get the papers and pens to write a list of songs that will be played during the breaks and during the program of the TC)*

4th corner: Project objectives and how can we further contribute to them (*participants get isnights into the objectives of the event and how they connect to the agenda)*

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE (50 MINUTES)
Trainer plays the theme song from the movie "Mission Impossible" and explains to the group that in next 40 minutes they need to solve as many tasks from the list, as a team.

They get a chance to ask any questions just after the list is presented to them, and after that they are on their own.

List of the tasks for the game:
- Make project logo.
- Make 5 crazy group photos to post on the social media, for presenting this project.
- Make the tallest tower, using only your shoes.
- Create the longest line with just the socks you have in your rooms.
- Count number of beds, pillows, closets, TVs, Acs, remote controllers, toilet paper rolls – in all of your rooms
- Count number of steps from the hotel to the restaurant, from the hotel to the supermarket, and from the restaurant to the supermarket
- Calculate how many people can lay down on floors of all of your rooms, and present the equation you use for the calculations
- Make the project message, using only mother tongues of participating countries; but try to have the message understandable to all of us
- Create the tallest human pyramid, and have it pictured
- Drink 7 litres of water
- Find and present 5 facts about Mostar, and 5 facts about Blagaj

In the conclusion of the game, trainer reflects on the game in plenary; with use of the following questions:
- What went well during the game?
- What didn't go as planned? If you had to play the game all over again now, what would you change?
- How the processes in the group went? Did you have a leaders? How were the decisions made?
- What can we learn about ourselves from this exercise? How can we apply it for functioning on optimal level during the training course?

GROUP AGREEMENT (10 MINUTES)
As a continuation of the previous exercise, trainer writes down list of the group agreements. At the end, all of the participants sign the agreement.

(SECRET FRIEND GAME (10 MINUTES)
Trainer concludes the session with intro of the Secret friend game to participants.

MATERIALS

- Markers, flipcharts, post-it notes
- Prepared printed agenda (on the wall)
- Printed project objectives
- Papers and pens for energiser and music contributions
- Speaker and music playlist (for energiser and breaks)
- Printed "Mission Impossible" task list
- Timer or bell for activity rotations
- Camera or smartphone for photos and videos
- Printed value cards or blank cards for group agreement
- Group agreement template (on flipchart or large paper)
- Optional: printed Secret Friend cards or slips

OUTCOMES

- Participants become familiar with the team, venue, and objectives of the training course
- A positive and collaborative group atmosphere is established
- Participants get to know each other on both personal and team levels
- Participants actively contribute to the agenda through music, energisers, and ideas
- Teamwork, creativity, and problem-solving skills are practiced in a high-energy challenge
- A group agreement is co-created to set expectations for respectful, inclusive, and productive participation
- The Secret Friend activity is introduced to promote kindness and bonding throughout the training

SESSION 2

Evaluation and closing

DURATION

180 minutes

OBJECTIVES OF SESSION

- To reflect on the learning process throughout the event and evaluate individual and group learning outcomes
- To provide space and support for participants to build upon the results of the event by sharing ideas for new projects and cooperation among the participating organisations

SESSION FLOW: (STEP BY STEP DESCRIPTION)

WALK THROUGH THE PROGRAM (25 MINUTES)

Session is opened with an interactive walk of participants, together with the trainers' team, around the walking room. During the walk, group goes visiting each of the flipchart papers developed as part of the sessions – from the first till the last day. As part of the walk, everyone reminds themselves on how the flow of the activities went – from arriving to the venue and meeting eachother on the first day, until the current session. Also – fears, expectations and contributions discussed in smaller groups on the second day of the training, are analysed and participants answer the questions: "Did any of these come true? How?". At the end of the activity, trainers invite participants to take a seat back in the circle.

DIXIT CARDS EXERCISE – HOW DO I FEEL ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE OF PARTICIPATING IN THIS EVENT (35 MINUTES)
After participants had a chance to remind themselves on the program and flow of the activities during the training, trainers play some relaxing music in the background. They take Dixit cards and arrange them on the floor.

Participants are invited to, in silence, stand up and walk around the room while looking at the different Dixit cards arranged on the floor. Trainer asks participants to each choose one card that reflects their personal experience of the training.

After each participant has a card in their hand, they are invited to take a seat in the circle again.

Trainers then ask for participants to, voluntarily, stand up and share with the group the card they have each chosen and share how that card reflects their experience of this event.

Activity is concluded once each participant had a chance to share their card.

WRITTEN EVALUATION IN GOOGLE FORMS (30 MINUTES)
Participants are invited to fill out evaluation form, using their devices. They are given space and time to individually reflect on the training course, and fill out the online evaluation form.

SINKING SHIP MESSAGES (30 MINUTES)
Since the training course was opened with a metaphor where the event is presented in a form of a trip in which the boat is our expectations, sails are our contributions, and sea is our fears; the official program is closed with an exercise "Sinking ship".

Name of each participant and organisational team members is written on flipchart paper, in preparation for the session.

Everyone is invited to write farewell messages to eachother. At the end of the exercise participants cut out parts of the flipchart paper with the messages left for them, as something they can bring back homes after leaving the event.

MARKET OF IDEAS FOR NEW PROJECTS AND COOPERATION AMONG PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS (60 MINUTES)
Last 60 minutes are left for participants to discuss the ideas for future projects and cooperation.

During these 60 minutes, participants have a chance to group around the different ideas shared on the previous days, and based on their interests and interests of their organisations discuss possible future cooperation.

The process of market of ideas is supported by the trainers, providing advices and information to participants when and where needed – within the smaller groups formed around the specific topics/ideas.

MATERIALS

- Dixit cards
- Flipchart papers
- Pens and pencils

OUTCOMES

- Participants reflect on the training program, identifying key moments and outcomes
- Participants emotionally connect with their training experience using Dixit cards
- Participants provide constructive feedback through an online evaluation
- Participants share farewell messages, fostering closure and connection
- Participants explore opportunities for future collaboration and project development

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