

# H A N D B O O K

“Exploring Youth work for career management  
with different abilities’ youngsters”



**TITLE:**

Handbook “Exploring Youth work for career management with different abilities’ youngsters”

**PROJECT:**

“Youth work for career management with different abilities’ youngsters” funded by the JUGEND für Europa, the German National Agency for the Erasmus+ Youth programme.

**Project partners are:**

- Outreach Hannover e.V., Germany
- DOMAS – training, consultation and business services, Croatia
- Out of the Box International, Belgium
- Company for professional rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities ITECCION, Serbia
- Centre for Non-formal education and Lifelong learning (CNELL), Serbia
- LINK DMT SRL, Italy
- Association for improvement of modern living skills “Realization”, Croatia

**PUBLISHER:**

Outreach Hannover, e.V., Germany

**EDITOR:**

Domagoj Morić

**AUTHORS:**

Domagoj Morić  
Stanče Matović  
Marko Paunović  
Pavle Jevdic  
Jelena Ilić  
Danijela Matorcevic  
Berna Xhemajli

**GRAPHIC DESIGN:**

Nikola Radovanović

Hannover, Germany  
2022



## Table of Contents

SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT “Youth work for career management with different abilities’ youngsters” ...	1
INTRODUCTION .....	4
WHAT IS CAREER MANAGEMENT .....	5
Career management in general .....	5
Career Management Model .....	7
IMPORTANCE OF CAREER ORIENTATION FOR YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES.....	9
CAREER PLANNING CONTEXT – PARTICULARLY IN PANDEMIC TIMES AND CRISES .....	11
What crises times bring to career planning context .....	11
Career crisis management plan .....	12
CAREER STAGES AND DYNAMICS.....	13
Traditional framework of career stages and their dynamics .....	13
A cyclical model of career stages and their dynamics.....	14
THE ROLE OF INNOVATION AND 21 <sup>ST</sup> CENTURY SKILLS IN A CAREER CONTEXT OF A YOUNG PERSON WITH DISABILITIES .....	16
The role of innovation in a career context of a young person with disabilities .....	16
The most important 21 <sup>st</sup> century skills .....	16
CAREER MANAGEMENT STAKEHOLDERS.....	18
How to analyse stakeholders in career management .....	18
COMPETENCES OF YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES FOR STARTING THEIR CAREER .....	21
Communication skills.....	21
Employability skills.....	22
Organisational management .....	22
Teamwork.....	22
VALUES IN CAREER MANAGEMENT FOR YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING ANTI-CAREER AND PRO-DEVELOPMENT DRIVERS.....	25
PERSONAL BRANDING AS A TOOL FOR CAREER MANAGEMENT FOR YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES.....	28
Personal Branding Canvas .....	28
Tips to create a unique personal brand.....	29
THE CONCEPT OF IKIGAI IN CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT .....	31
LATEST TECHNOLOGIES AND TOOLS FOR CAREER PLANNING .....	33
Career exploration tools and technologies .....	33
Awareness tools and technologies .....	35

Goal setting tools and technologies .....	40
Strategy development and implementation tools and technologies.....	41
Feedback.....	43
ADAPTATION OF DIFFERENT METHODS AND PRACTICES FOR CAREER PLANNING OF YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES .....	45
FINAL WORDS.....	47
REFERENCES.....	48



## SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT “Youth work for career management with different abilities’ youngsters”

Financial crisis such as the ones in 2008 as well as the recent crisis with Covid-19 pandemic have caused an increase of unemployment rate. The consequences of such crisis are mainly noticed among young people who are in the phases of planning to develop their professional career. On the other hand, career orientation and management are being recognised more and more as an essential aspect of one’s life. While businesses and institutions are constantly experiencing changes and adaptation to new trends in their operation, the need for new skills development from employees are unavoidable. Thus, there is a need for young people to be proactive when it comes to new skills development. While young people experience and choose different programmes to attend due to their curiosity in learning, there is a point in their life when they usually consider themselves as non-decided to which field or role, they see themselves working in the near future. In many cases this results in short-time employment for different institutions or job positions and not being competent enough in a specific field or role. When young people are not aware of the need for a strategy to connect these dots/experiences for developing their career, they might end up feeling incompetent and unable where to continue further. This is mostly present in communities where economic difficulties are more recognised, so young people are obliged to find a job that will provide them with income, regardless of their professional development.

Another important aspect and which is considered as a challenge when it comes to career planning is knowing oneself. Very often young people are triggered to follow their friends and choose the same field of study/work and later they see that they are not being adapted or motivated about their chosen field of study/work. This is a consequence of lack of self-reflection and things that motivate them, as well as lack of practical and quality education that highlights their talents and skills ownership. It can be said with certainty that there is a high number of people that are talented and skilled in some other job while they work elsewhere because of their certified education on that field and non-recognition of their talents earlier.


Across the EU, people with disabilities are far less likely to be employed than people without disabilities. The barriers to quality employment add to the problem of poverty and social exclusion faced by people with disabilities. Barriers preventing access to the employment market are most of the times based on misconceptions and judgments on person’s abilities.<sup>1</sup>

In our communities and among our beneficiaries, there are many young people disabilities who lack the employment and regular salary/income. With current situation of Covid-19 pandemic and the fact that due to different lockdown and/or social distancing measures, lots of employers have fired their employees, or are not having enough revenues to keep the employees sufficiently paid. We find ourselves still with higher unemployment rates and with lower economic level now (especially of our target groups) than before the pandemic measures started.

Developing educational approaches on career management is the core of this project. Using their past experiences with career planning and entrepreneurship education, the project partners are planning to develop new methods to address the needs and constrains of their target group – youth and young adults with different abilities.

---

<sup>1</sup> Employment Policy. (2022, September 16). European Disability Forum. <https://www.edf-feph.org/employment-policy/>



Our project “Youth work for career management with different abilities’ youngsters” focuses on inclusion of young people with disabilities within the career/employment development, by promoting their sense of initiative and entrepreneurship, as well as increasing their employability and career planning and management skills, as well as digital capacity.

Even though career management seems very important for young people, there is still lack of awareness on this regard for a significant number of young people, especially those considered with fewer opportunities and young people with disabilities. Mainstream youth and those who live in big cities are way more informed about certain existing opportunities and attending different programmes that provide education for needed skills and capacities and validate their competences.

However, there is not always active promotion and opportunity offers to young people with fewer opportunities and young people with disabilities. These target groups are not approached enough by educational institutions and organisations working with career orientation topics. That results on still having quite a high percentage of youth with fewer opportunities unemployed and with lack of competences’ development on their jobs or job applications. In addition, persons with disabilities often face societal barriers and disability evokes negative perceptions and discrimination in many societies.

With this project, we want our beneficiaries, youth with disabilities, to improve their skills of career management, and we also aim to empower more youth workers for organising adequate career orientation, planning and development programmes, in line with the newest updates and cross-sectoral approach.


Project objectives:

- Empower young people with disabilities for quality career management through development of inspiring, innovative, and up-to-date handbook, as well as the online course.
- Empower our youth workers and improve knowledge management of our organisations for building competences of educators in career management for youth with disabilities, through LTTA, innovative curriculum and useful toolkit with workshops for beneficiaries.
- Exchange good practices and further develop quality strategic partnership among partners from 5 European countries with different realities regarding career management possibilities and realities.

Motivation of partners in this project is to “equip” young adults with disabilities with set of skills needed to work on personal development in fields of career management and creating (self)employment opportunities proactively in today’s reality of employment uncertainty and the world of extinction of many known jobs and occupation now and even more in the future. That new needed capacity are digital skills for (digital) employment, self-employment, or entrepreneurship - competence that can be trained and developed by gaining different skills, knowledge, attitudes through quality youth work and non-formal education.

Project activities are:

- A1 – Project Management
- M1 – Kick-off meeting
- O1 Handbook “Exploring Youth work for career management with different abilities’ youngsters”
- M2 – Second meeting

- 
- O2 - Curriculum “Empowering youth workers for quality youth work for career management with different abilities ‘youngsters”
  - M3 – Third meeting
  - O3 - Toolkit “Mentoring and supporting youngsters with different abilities for career planning and management”
  - M4 – Fourth meeting
  - O4 - E-learning course “Career planning and management course for youngsters with different abilities”
  - C1 - LTTA Training of trainers
  - E1, E2, E3, E4, E5 – Open conferences in RS, IT, HR, DE, BE
  - M5 – Final Evaluation meeting

Project partners are:

- Outreach Hannover, e.V., Germany
- DOMAS – training, consultation and business services, Croatia
- Out of the Box International, Belgium
- Company for professional rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities ITECCION, Serbia
- Centre for Non-formal education and Lifelong learning (CNELL), Serbia
- LINK DMT SRL, Italy
- Association for improvement of modern living skills “Realization”, Croatia

## INTRODUCTION

Handbook “Exploring Youth work for career management with different abilities’ youngsters” is envisioned as an innovative publication for relevant topics and tools for youth workers who work with young people with disabilities. The handbook gives an overview of all the up-to-date topics around career management and planning a young person might need to get employed or self-employed. It serves as theoretical and conceptual resource for youth workers when organising further career management and orientation activities.

The content of this handbook is based on the experience of experts in various fields of youth education - psychologists, digital entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship, career planning. This raises awareness of the importance of employability and cross-sectorial cooperation in the project. It serves as a guide for successful preparation of young people with disabilities to start their career paths.

Target group of this project, young people with disabilities, is characterised by a high level of unemployment, low degree of financial independence and social power, and very low involvement in managerial and entrepreneurial positions, especially due to the fact that quite some of them also have been involved in an adapted education possibilities - without many updates about new technologies and innovations.

New digital technologies such as social media, big data, and mobile and cloud solutions technologies give opportunities for new ways of collaboration, leveraging resources, product/service design, development and deployment over open standards and shared technologies. This provides opportunities for youth with different abilities who couldn't participate in traditional labour market before.

In digital sector, mostly, the only necessary physical tool is a computer or a mobile phone. This enables people with different physical disabilities to create, write, draw or sing and to actively participate in the business process.

This handbook explores the career planning and management with special emphasis on working with youth with disabilities. It explores specific competences, values and skills important for career management. It starts with the topic of career management and its processes, as well as a career management model as a good starting point. Then, it continues by the chapter which focuses on the importance career orientation of young people with disabilities, and the career planning context we live today as a society.

Next comes the chapters on career stages and dynamics of each stage, and the role of innovation and 21st century skills in career context of young people with disabilities. Further, chapter on stakeholders in career management offers a strategy on how to analyse relevant stakeholders in career management depending on their level of interest and power to influence the success of career management process.

The chapter on competences essential to develop for young people with disabilities cover the areas of communication skills, employability skills, organisational management and teamwork.

Next chapter covers the topic of values in career management for youth with disabilities, including anti-career and pro-development drivers. After that comes the part about personal branding as a tool for career management of young people with disabilities, and the concept of ikigai in developing career and managing it. Next comes the chapter on the latest technologies and tools to use when working on career planning, and lastly the chapter on adaptation of different methods and practices for career planning of young people with disabilities.



## WHAT IS CAREER MANAGEMENT

### Career management in general

Career management is in most cases a life-long process which implies investing time and resources to fulfil career goals, and further develop them throughout life. It is an ongoing process of adapting to the changing times and dynamic demands of the market.

Career management can be defined in many ways and from different points of view. For the purpose of this handbook, we will define career management as “conscious planning of one’s activities and engagement in the job one undertakes in the course of his life for better fulfilment, growth and financial stability”<sup>2</sup>. As shown in the picture below, career management is the middle point where planning, experience and learning overlap.



Source: [www.managementstudyguide.com](http://www.managementstudyguide.com)

To be able to manage one’s career it is important to be aware of all the opportunities, as well as to be conscious of own talents, strengths, weaknesses and all the other relevant aspects.

According to Ucmcerced (n.d), career management assumes a range of different processes a person goes through<sup>3</sup>, including awareness, career exploration, career planning, life-long learning, and networking

- **Self-awareness** assumes turning within to discover own values, skills, interests, abilities, talents, personality, motivations, as well as limitations and challenges. Self-awareness is developed through working with others, asking for feedback from family, friends, professors, mentors, youth workers or peers.
- **Career exploration** is a process that helps young people to take designated time to think about and set their career goals, as well as to think about how to utilise strengths, experience, motivation, and talents to achieve their goals in a given period. In this stage, a young person can conduct **informal interviews** with a person who is already working in their desired career path. This enables the person to learn about different aspects of choosing a particular career – benefits, challenges, required competencies, etc. Through **job shadowing** a young person can

<sup>2</sup> Juneja, P. (n.d.) Career Management – Meaning and important concepts. <https://www.managementstudyguide.com/career-management.htm>

<sup>3</sup> UCMERCED (n.d.) Career Management. <https://hr.ucmerced.edu/training/careermanagement>

spend a day, a week, or another period in observing a professional in their desired career path on the job. They can ask questions, accompany them on meetings, participate in daily activities, etc. **Volunteering** gives an opportunity to gain practical experience and invest their time to make a difference in the world. **Finding a mentor** in a specific branch of industry can provide relevant information about the reality and offer much needed support from someone more experienced. **Part-time work** might provide opportunities for jobs with low level of responsibility and a chance to get to know a specific working environment from the inside. **Internships** provide more direct experience with relevant tasks for the role. Attending various online and offline **courses and trainings** can provide a solid foundation to continue building own career path.

- **Career planning** is an ongoing process that happens throughout life because career goals often change with individual's identity and interests, as well as on the labour market requirements. It includes setting goals, taking action, achieving those goals, and then going back to reassess those goals after some time to see if it is necessary to adapt them or change them based on the new situation. It is important to raise awareness of this among young people so that they are aware that a career is something that is fluid, and it is changing through life because we live in a different world now than it was fifty years ago. Even if they "make a mistake" in their career, they can choose a different one once the opportunity arises.
- **Life-long learning** assumes that we do not stop learning once we get out of school or university. Technologies and economies are changing throughout time, and individuals need to adapt to them if they want to continue to be involved in the emerging economy.
- **Networking** means building connections with people in industries or areas in which a young person wants to develop a career. Personal networks are usually a great source of valuable information straight from the field, and from those who are directly involved in a particular industry or do a particular job.

Career management requires from individuals to develop and maintain various skills which help them to identify their existing skills, develop learning goals and then take action to fulfil those goals.

For that reason, many countries have developed Career management skills (CMS) frameworks which define skills and attitudes individuals need to manage their careers effectively. The LEADER Framework offers five areas of career management skills – Personal effectiveness; managing relationships; finding and accessing work; managing life and career; understanding the world.

Youth work can support young people in career management by setting up career management or career orientation programmes which go along with the dynamic changes and the social and economic development of society. Those programmes can cover some or all the above-mentioned processes of career development.

To make sure the programme or a specific project serves the purpose, it is important to monitor success and effectiveness indicators. Prachi Juneja (n.d.) proposes the following four indicators of career programme effectiveness for companies, which have been adapted to the youth work context<sup>4</sup>:

- Matching standards of the programme with expected results
- Greater self-awareness of young people
- Balance between young person (current or future employee, or self-employed) and the requirements of the enterprise or the job market

---

<sup>4</sup> Juneja, P. (n.d.) Indicators of Career Program Effectiveness. MSG Management Study Guide. <https://www.managementstudyguide.com/career-management.htm>

- Changes in performance

### Career Management Model

Career management is a life-long process which includes active, continual and conscious management of various processes - personal assessment, setting goals, taking action, learning from experience, collecting feedback, adjusting expectations, and learning from past experiences and mistakes. It is a process that requires that young people have support from a more experienced person – a mentor, psychologist, youth worker, older peers, etc. The best expected outcomes of career management would include personal fulfilment, sense of achievement, good work-life balance, opportunities for advanced and development, health working climate and environment, and satisfying financial security.


GodShalk, GreenHaus and Callanan (2019) say that career management is an ongoing process which enables a person to:

- Collect relevant information about himself/herself and the career world
- Develop a picture of own interests, values, skills, knowledge, attitudes, talents and preferred lifestyles
- Set realistic career goals
- Develop a strategy for achieving their goals and implement an action plan
- Collect feedback regarding the effectiveness of the strategy

There are many models of Career management offered by different authors and institutions who work with young people. One of the models consists of the following components (iedunote.com) – career exploration, awareness, goal setting, strategy development, strategy implementation, feedback, career appraisal, as shown in the diagram below:



*Source: Career Management Model (iEduNote.com)*



The most important points of this model, as proposed by iEduNote.com are further explained below.

1. **Career exploration** – raising awareness of own talents, values, priorities in career, interests, and other career-related topics. It is also about raising awareness of own strengths or weaknesses. Exploration does not only include self-exploration, but also exploration of the environment, of what is on the outside of the person. To raise awareness of the environment, its challenges and opportunities. Exploring the environment assumes exploring different types of industries, types of career and occupation, competencies and experience needed, as well as required attitudes towards in a specific career.
2. **Awareness** – being aware of own qualities and characteristics which are relevant for individual's environment to be able to set concrete and right career goals.
3. **Goal setting** – to maintain motivation, to measure success, to have an overview of the choices and steps required to get to a specific destination. Well set goals usually follow the S.M.A.R.T.(E.R.) model. This means they are set in a way that they are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time bound, (educational, and realistic).
4. **Strategy Development** – developing a plan to arrive to a desired future.
5. **Strategy Implementation** – putting in action strategies to achieve desired goals through a specific time frame.
6. **Feedback** – collecting feedback from various sources to evaluate the progress or the success of the goals set.
7. **Career Appraisal** – going through a process to use career related feedback to determine how appropriate their goals and strategies are. In this way, an individual can monitor the course of their career. This process might also lead in the direction of re-examining career goals which were set, or to revise the strategy.

## IMPORTANCE OF CAREER ORIENTATION FOR YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

Young people today, and even more youth with disabilities face great difficulties in building sustainable careers. By the time a young person goes through primary, secondary, and sometimes tertiary education, their desired career might change several times, or there is no need on the market for what they want. Most of them have a limited perception of what a specific career assumes, or they see it through rose-coloured glasses. On the other hand, there is lack of support regarding career orientation throughout formal education, and many times educational staff in many countries is not aware of how much the economy has changed, and they are not aware of so many different career choices and learning opportunities available to young people today. So, they also cannot offer adequate support in the career orientation process.

Youth with disabilities faces additional limitations and challenges due to prejudice, lack of support and guidance, limited career options, and often positive discrimination because of their situation or condition.

The sad reality of youth work in most countries today is that by the time young person comes to a youth worker, he or she has already lost any interest in building a career due to various difficulties. They might have dropped out of school and never got a formal degree, they might have had learning or behaviour difficulties within the school and family context, they might have started family early, they might have overprotective family or partners, they might have lost all the hope to ever fulfil their dream career or even to have any kind of a job, etc.


Still, youth work activities can serve as a good starting point to motivate young people who have lost their motivation in choosing or developing their career interests. Youth work and non-formal learning activities can be a great way to provide opportunities for youth to develop competences they are missing, upgrade their existing competences, build a network of support people and peers, find a mentor in the career of their interest, find volunteering or job shadowing opportunities, develop their personality, etc.

Youth work activities should be complementary to formal education and be implemented in cooperation with a network of different stakeholders who all work for the same goal – career guidance and support for youth in general, and then adapt to specific needs of young people with disabilities in their local realities.

Challenges of youth with disabilities in the career orientation process often include lack of self-awareness, the clash between their needs and possibilities, low level of engagement into society to develop a network of professional contacts, limited options on the job market, lack of support in their local communities, and even families, etc.

All these possible challenges young people with disabilities face only show us how important it is to tackle this topic with great care and commitment to really make a difference and offer opportunities for career orientation to them. This opens many new doors for them and allows them to live more meaningful and fulfilling lives if they have a sense of contribution to society with the work that they do. It is one of the most important elements of successful social inclusion and integration into community.

When it comes to working with young people with disabilities, it is important to start career orientation quite early in their lives and provide ongoing support throughout life. This does not mean that they have to make decisions about their career early in life, but that they have opportunities to discover different career options, become self-aware, and develop skills needed to enter a specific field, or to go in the desired direction.



Support is crucial in transition periods, between stages in education or later in between jobs. Person-centred approach is needed here, to put the young person with a disability in the centre of the decision-making process. This can be sometimes rather difficult for the family if they are used to making all day-to-day decisions for the disabled person. However, it is even more important to raise awareness of the importance of empowering young people with disabilities to make their own decisions, which sometimes means failing. In that way they learn to develop new skills.

It is also important to address limitations and barriers to be able to find the most suitable limitations for young people who might be limited by their disabilities in terms of health and safety, mobility or cognition. These should be addressed carefully, not to impose limitations due to prejudice, but to support young people with disabilities as they discover their own limitations through experience.

Some of the other factors youth workers need to take into consideration when working with youth with disabilities through career orientation:

- Their rights as a person with disability so that they are also informed of their rights on the job market, no discrimination in the selection process, options available as solutions to accommodate a specific disability.
- The need for raising awareness of potential prejudice and discrimination later in life and offering guidance on how to overcome such situations.
- Availability of various volunteering and training opportunities that can help them develop their soft skills which are much needed in today's job markets.
- Encouraging self-employment for young people with disabilities who have unique skills which would be only wasted if they entered a job market. Or sometimes, that can be the only solution for a young person to develop themselves as a professional and get income.
- Be solution focused. Although there are so many limitations and challenges around the topic of employment of young people with disabilities, always think of possible solutions for a specific situation.
- There are many inclusive career opportunities for young people with disabilities, it is just important to take the time to discover them.

## CAREER PLANNING CONTEXT – PARTICULARLY IN PANDEMIC TIMES AND CRISES

### What crises times bring to career planning context

When comparing career development in 21st century to the 20th century, it is possible to observe significant differences in the way we understand career compared to only 50 years ago. Before career was considered as something that was based on going higher on the hierarchy to generate more income, status, and power. Security was the main value. Companies were those who oversaw career development of employees who were more often reluctant about any new things than they were excited about life-long learning and development. Knowledge and specialised skills were the most important values when employing new people.

Nowadays, employees want to have a fulfilling career, with less boundaries, more opportunities for development, more flexibility, and a satisfying work-life balance. Employers focus on searching for potential employees with transferable skills which can be valuable anywhere and anytime, especially in times of crisis. Career development has switched more in the domain of the responsibility of an individual. Everyone takes care of their career needs, interests, and desires. Employers can support them and invest resources in them, but the control is in hands of an individual. Employers focus on creating working environments in which employees want to stay and grow with rather than being focused on planning their career course for them. Individuals need to invest time and resources to build their reputation, do networking and learn throughout their lives to satisfy their career aspirations. It requires a high level of commitment to stay up to date with their chosen career, or to change it completely, which is becoming more and more frequent.

Additionally, to all the socio-economic changes over the last 50 years, we have recently entered an era of crises of all kinds – health, environmental, economic, social. From a very predictable way of living and working, we had to switch to a quite unpredictable mode.

During the pandemic times for example, many people were forced to change their lifestyles. Isolation and fear-based communication had a huge impact on mental health of many people, and the highest negative impact is visible among the most vulnerable groups in society, including people and youth with disabilities. Many social activities were restricted, as well as access to many institutions which provide all kinds of social services to those groups.

Medical help and ways to practice own rights for medical care were greatly limited and conditioned. Due to their physical and mental conditions, many young people with disabilities were not able to follow the proposed measures like wearing a protective mask, or to cover their mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing or maintain hygiene as it was recommended. These factors additionally restricted their participation in social life, education or in the job market, and further contributed to their social exclusion. Most of their lives during the pandemic times were focused on survival, and career planning was put to the side.

Many services and companies had to switch to online and remote mode of work over night which on the one hand further restricted youth with disabilities unable to make this shift to find a job, or to plan their career. It has become almost impossible to predict outcomes of any plans, to control the course of their implementation, or to control the outcomes. Although there were many jobs that disappeared over night and will continue disappearing over the course of a decade, there are also many opportunities

arising for something new. These hectic times led to many innovations in all fields, many new approaches to work and career development.

These kinds of unpredictable socio-economic developments require putting career planning aside, and developing new skills set or upgrading existing skills to become more resilient and able to adapt to sudden changes. So, the focus needs to be put on developing transferable and soft skills rather than on planning and blindly following the plan if it is impossible to predict the outcomes of the process. Times of crisis teach us to move away from the familiar and to say yes to the opportunity to “reinvent themselves, to approach problem solving in creative new ways, to coordinate, collaborate, and negotiate effectively with others, to exercise leadership, and to cultivate critical thinking to better analyse data and information, filter out noise, and to create reliable bases for decision making”.<sup>5</sup>

### Career crisis management plan

In times of crisis, either collective crisis or personal crisis, it is possible to get out of stronger by developing a **career crisis management plan**. Networking is very important during times like this because activating our network is a way how people can support each other for mutual benefit. It can greatly help us in building a career crisis management plan, which will consequently make us more resilient and professionally sustainable. Alaina G. Levine (2022) proposes the following steps to design and implement own career crisis management plan:

1. **Recognise your emotions and give yourself space and time to feel** them before taking any further action.
2. **View the situation as a logic problem** – look at challenges as a series of questions that need answering and break them down into smaller and manageable steps.
3. **Check your record and inventory your skills** – review your accomplishments, awards, promotions, volunteering achievements, projects, etc. When you gather the facts, categorise the skills.
4. **Understand your career ecosystem** – collect data on the market or area of expertise where you’re looking for opportunities. Recognise all the gaps – which gaps on the market can you fill with your skills.
5. **Refine your marketing materials** – review your CV, online profiles like LinkedIn, Facebook or Instagram, and research all the ways how you can communicate your values, skills, and attitudes.
6. **Activate your network** – reach out to people, invest in win-win cooperation, schedule meetings and ask people, “How can I help you during this challenging time?”
7. **Diversify your network and skills** – connect with people inside and outside your sector, region, or culture. In this way you can discover new opportunities.
8. **Think entrepreneurially** – continually look for opportunities to serve your community and add value by solving problems<sup>6</sup>.

---

<sup>5</sup> Mello Alves, M. (2020, April 14) Career development in times of crisis. LinkedIn. <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/career-development-times-crisis-marissol-mello-alves-msc-/>

<sup>6</sup> Levine, A.G. (2022, August 8) How to build a crisis management plan for your career. APS News. <https://www.aps.org/publications/apsnews/202209/crisis.cfm>



## CAREER STAGES AND DYNAMICS

### Traditional framework of career stages and their dynamics

Career development is a life-long process during which there are different stages. One of the traditional conceptual frameworks proposes **five career stages and dynamics** of each stage. It was proposed by Super (1951)<sup>7</sup>. Although it is quite old, this framework still applies for traditional linear career development.

- **Growth stage** (age 4 to 13) is the stage in which a child develops its capacities, attitudes and interests. As children get older, they get more concerned about the future, they want to increase the level of control over their life, they start working harder at school once they become aware of the direction in which they want to go, and they start developing habits and attitudes to achieve those goals.
- **Exploration stage** (age 14 to 24) is the stage of transitioning into young adulthood. The focus of this stage is self-reflection and going after (higher) educational goals. Those goals become clear, and a young person specifies strategies to implement their career preferences.
- **Establishment stage** (age 24 to 44) is the stage when the adult person enters into a first job after higher education. This might also happen in the previous stage if a young person graduated from secondary education. This stage is characterised by establishing own place in the world of work when the person secures a place in an organisation and advances on the career ladder.
- **Maintenance stage** (age 45 to 65) is characterised by aging and the tendency to keep the current positions, while updating competencies to stay up-to-date with the developments in the field, and innovating.
- **Disengagement stage** (over 65) is characterised by making active plans to retire.

If one observes this framework from the 21<sup>st</sup> century perspective, it is obvious that kind of a linear model is slowly getting outdated and that there are new models emerging which take into consideration more flexibility and adaptability because it is highly likely that an individual will change careers two to three times, sometimes even totally switch industries because of specific life circumstances and experience.

The disadvantage of this model is that it is limited only to specific job roles, assumes linear and hierarchical career development and fixed working hours in an office, as well as the belief that one size fits all. All of these have recently become a part of history due to the global pandemic, and many workplaces, careers and industries were forced to change to survive. This kind of a change requires a significant transformation in the ways we perceive career development.

Also, this kind of a traditional model might work poorly for young people with disabilities, as their development – personal and professional usually follows a unique path with different time frames. A cyclical model is what could work better for them as it offers more opportunities for their career development and later management.

---

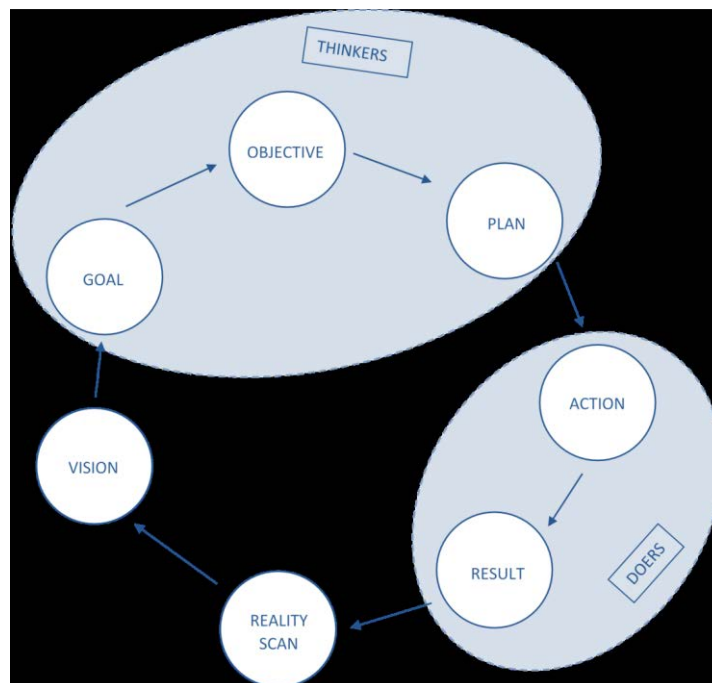
<sup>7</sup> Super, D.E. (1951). Vocational adjustment: Implementing a self-concept. *Occupations*, 30, 88-92.

## A cyclical model of career stages and their dynamics

Another model proposed by Magnusson (1992) describes **five cyclical processes** which are crucial for effective career planning<sup>8</sup>:

- **Initiation** – starting the career planning process, determining motivation, and self-assessment
- **Exploration** – exploring how to put their vision into action through interviews, networking, job shadowing and collecting relevant work experience
- **Decision-making** – making decisions based on their cognitive abilities as well as relying on intuition for guidance in situations when data is not so relevant
- **Preparation** – developing an action plan, as well as developing prerequisite skills and resources for implementation
- **Implementation** – put the plan into action. It is important to develop support systems, and systems for feedback and reward.

One of the processes emerged from the experience of working within the youth work field withing the framework of non-formal education. It visualises a **cyclical approach to learning and development** on all levels. It can be easily applied to career planning as well. Cyclical models are at the core of modern career models, career stages and underlying dynamics.




*Source: Synergy personal development trainings*

This cyclical learning consists of seven steps. Each step is accompanied by following questions:

- **REALITY SCAN** – What do I have now? Which resources do I have at disposal? What is missing in my career?

<sup>8</sup> Magnusson, K. C. (1992). Five critical processes of career counselling. In M. Van Norman (Ed.), National Consultation on Vocational Counselling Papers: 1992 (pp. 217-227). Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

- 
- **VISION** – Why do I want to make a change or to do something different? Which values are important for me?
  - **GOAL** – What do I want to create? What new do I want to accomplish? What are my desired results?
  - **OBJECTIVES** – Which steps do I need to take to achieve my goal(s)?
  - **PLAN** – How will I do it? Which actions do I need to take and when?
  - **ACTION** – Which is the first action I need to take in order to begin the process?
  - **RESULT** – What was achieved?

And then the cycle starts again with a new reality. This diagram also shows that there are two types of people who usually get stuck on some steps – thinkers and doers. Thinkers get stuck between setting goals, objectives, and planning. They usually miss the other stages of reality scan, defining their values and vision, doing action, and arriving to results. Doers get stuck between action and results, missing most of the creative process. Consequently, their realities stay the same and there is no progress in their careers.

Other important career stages in modern career development young people can consider sometimes include some of the following:

- Taking a gap year to volunteer or travel the world to expand horizons and to develop various competencies which might be very valuable for a specific career choice.
- Taking time to cultivate your passion – focusing on inner passions and how to turn them into a career, rather than adapting to the demands of the ever-changing economy.
- Immersing oneself into the unknown – going with the flow without a concrete plan because a plan mostly leads to predictable career path.
- Investing into continual growth – being proactive in searching for opportunities to learn and develop, rather than being told to do so by the company or the industry.
- Changing a career at least once to start from zero in a different environment to develop oneself.

## THE ROLE OF INNOVATION AND 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY SKILLS IN A CAREER CONTEXT OF A YOUNG PERSON WITH DISABILITIES

When guiding and supporting young people with disabilities in career management and orientation it is important to take into consideration wider context of life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As it was stated before, socio-economic conditions of our society have largely changed over the last 50 years. From industrial age, we have moved to information age which often requires a completely different skill set that young people in general need to develop to be competitive on the job market. Formal education is still largely based on industrial age which is preparing them for jobs that will stop to exist once they get out of formal educational systems, so most of the young people lack basic knowledge, skills and attitudes that go in line with the ever-changing markets.

The main focus is on developing the ability to adapt to change because we live in an era when nothing is guaranteed. Young people with disabilities need to be more resilient and capable to act to sudden changes. This can be rather challenging for some young people with disabilities if they are strictly limited by their physical, mental or psychological capabilities. And such sudden changes can leave a young person with disabilities feel left behind because updating skills cannot happen overnight. For some young people with disabilities on the other hand, which can open a wide range of opportunities. All of those who are not able to work in heavy industrialised jobs due to limitations of their disabilities, now have better access to the job market where soft skills are in focus, or they can become self-employed and develop themselves in that direction. Often their disadvantage and limitation can be a great benefit in specific field.

### **The role of innovation in a career context of a young person with disabilities**

Innovation has an important role in working with young people with disabilities. It helps drive inclusion by changing systems to be able to respond to the different needs of people with disabilities. Current systems, approaches and programmes are undergoing changes, and new are emerging. Innovation also applies to coming up with new technological solutions that can be implemented in the work force to provide more opportunities for employment and inclusion of young people with disabilities. Additionally, recent pandemic opened up possibilities for digital work which offers new forms of work, much more flexibility on all levels, or opportunities for digital entrepreneurship.

### **The most important 21<sup>st</sup> century skills**

By 21<sup>st</sup> century skills we mean skills which are basic requirements for young people to develop to succeed in their careers. They include social skills, initiative, productivity, critical thinking, communication, flexibility, leadership, information literacy, collaboration, media literacy, technology literacy.

Bri Stauffer (2022) categorises 21<sup>st</sup> century skills into three main categories – learning skills, literacy skills, and life skills<sup>9</sup>.

---

<sup>9</sup> Stauffer, B. (2022, January 10) What are 21st century skills? AES – Applied Educational Systems. <https://www.aeseducation.com/blog/what-are-21st-century-skills>



### Learning skills

Learning skills are about developing mental processes required to adapt and move around in a modern work environment. The four skills that go under this category are:

- Critical thinking – finding solutions to problems;
- Creativity – thinking outside the box;
- Collaboration – working with others;
- Communication – talking to others.

### Literacy skills

Literacy skills focus on discerning facts, publishing outlets, and the technology behind them, as well as on determining trustworthiness of information. Literacy skills that go under this category are:

- Information literacy – understanding facts, figures, statistics and data;
- Media literacy – understanding the methods and outlets in which information is published;
- Technology literacy – understanding the machines that make the information age possible.

### Life skills

Life skills focus on tangible elements of everyday life, on personal and professional qualities. Life skills that go under this category are:

- Flexibility – ability to change and adapt to different circumstances;
- Leadership – motivating a team to accomplish objectives;
- Initiative – starting projects, strategies and plans without being told;
- Productivity – maintaining efficiency without distractions;
- Social skills – meeting and networking for mutual benefit.

There are also many other skills which could be considered 21<sup>st</sup> century skills because their definition depends on the context of the specific career or industry. Also, new skills get on the list continually, and some get off the list as the times are changing.

For young people with disabilities to develop these skills, it is important for youth workers to create non-formal learning spaces that would provide them with opportunities and experiences.

## CAREER MANAGEMENT STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholders are either individuals or groups of people who have an impact or can influence the outcome of a specific project, programme, implementation of changes or desired goals in general. Stakeholders are those who can greatly contribute to success and / or failure of what you are trying to achieve. Stakeholders in career management can greatly influence the success in guiding young people in choosing the right career options for them and achieving success in it.

Experience shows that career management is not something that can be handled only by formal educational system, as there is a lack of awareness of the importance of early career orientation, lack of qualified staff who would provide support and guidance for students while they are in school, and most often there is a lack of resources. And even more importantly, it is even more difficult for young people with disabilities as they often require individualised approach to career management and qualified support person who will guide them.

Youth work and non-formal education has proven to offer the much-needed support and guidance for young people which is complementary to formal education and other services they already use. Youth workers have the capacity to offer additional non-formal support in form of guidance, support, coaching, mentoring and training young people with disabilities, as well as to engage different relevant stakeholders in the process of career management.

### How to analyse stakeholders in career management?

Engaging stakeholders can be of crucial importance in successful career management for youth with disabilities, as it helps build relationships and a support network. Warwick Business School (2018) proposes the following five steps to ensure success – identify, analyse, plan, act and engage.

#### Step 1: Identify

In this step you identify who all the relevant stakeholders are – those who have an interest in your goals and those who have a certain degree of influence over their implementation.

There are two groups of stakeholders important to consider – internal stakeholders and external stakeholders. Internal stakeholders are individuals or groups of people who are participating in implementation of a specific project or goals. Their engagement levels might differ, but they have influence over the whole process and the final success of it. External stakeholders do not directly participate in working on the project or are not involved in career management process, but they have a degree of influence over it, or are influenced by it.

#### Step 2: Analyse

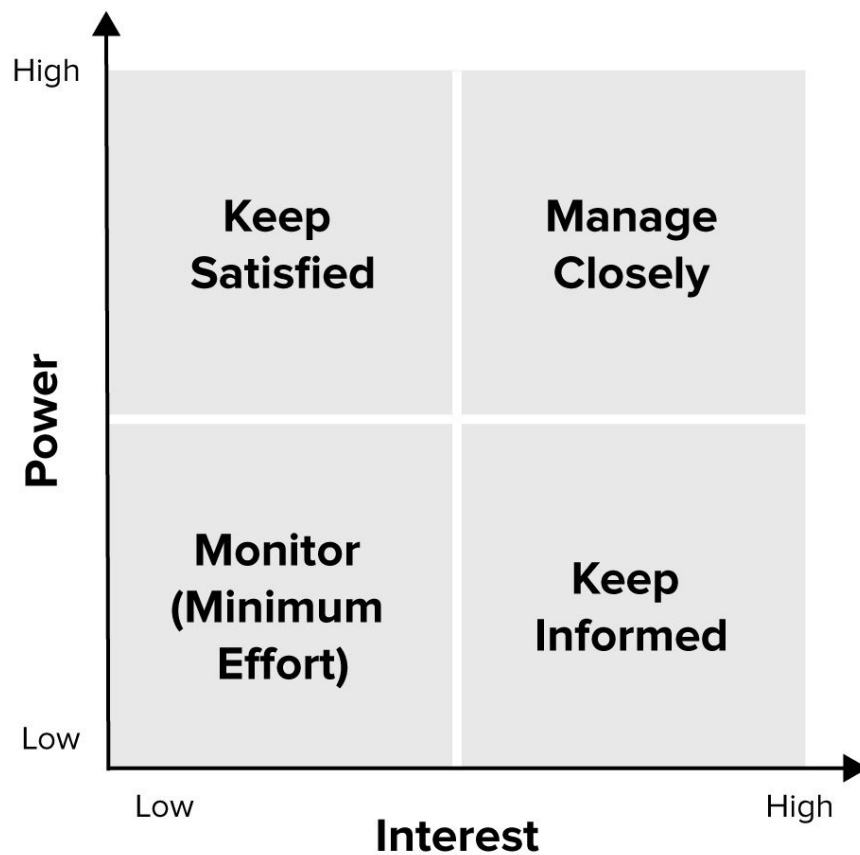
In this step you analyse each stakeholder to understand them better to be able to engage with them and influence them. Take time to understand who is available to support the process, and what they bring to the table – which skills or other resources. Categorise them in terms of how they are impacted and their level of commitment.

To understand your key stakeholders, it is necessary to discover what they feel about your project, your work, proposed changes, programmes, etc. The Mind Tools Content team (n.d.) proposes the following questions:

- What emotional or financial interest do they have in the outcome of your work? It is positive or negative?
- What is their motivation?

- What information do they want from you, and what is the best way to communicate with them?
- What is your current opinion of your work or a project? Which information is it based on?
- Who or what influences their opinions in generally, and their opinions of you?
- If their impact is not likely to be positive, what will win them over to support your work if they have high level of influence over it?
- If you think you will not be able to win them around, how will you manage their opposition?
- Who else might be influenced by their opinions? Can you turn them into your stakeholders.


After identifying all the relevant internal and external stakeholders, and analysing their opinions and motivation, it is important to prioritise them. The grid below can be used to classify stakeholders according to the power they have over a project or work in general, and their level of interest in it.



Source: [mindtools.com](http://mindtools.com)

As the matrix shows, stakeholders can fall into four categories:

1. High power, highly interested people – they need to be managed closely. It is important to engage them completely and satisfy them.
2. High power, less interested people – they need to be kept satisfied but not overloaded with information because they might get bored if overloaded with information.
3. Low power, highly interested people – they need to be kept informed and engaged in communication about the project, work, changes, or implementation of goals.

- 
4. Low power, less interested people – they need to be monitored, but not overloaded with too much of communication.

**Step 3: Plan**

In this step you draw up a campaign for engaging your stakeholders and communicating with them. Consider the messages you will send out, the attitude you will take, who will manage the communications and handle feedback. Consider the frequency and type of communication relevant for each stakeholder as not all of them have the same level of engagement.

**Step 4: Act and engage**

Monitor outcomes and success continuously to be able to reassess your plans if necessary. Look at the bigger picture, observe if there are any new stakeholders who show up along the way and consider how to engage them. Think about a different approach if needed.



## COMPETENCES OF YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES FOR STARTING THEIR CAREER

There are many young people in Europe who go through their formal education – primary, secondary and most often academic education, and still struggle to start a desired career upon graduating. That is often so because formal education seems not to provide necessary skills for starting a career and then later for further developing it. Starting a career from this position can often feel discouraging or disempowering, when young people start internalising lack of success, and blaming themselves. The sad reality is that in most cases it is not their fault because formal systems in most countries do not provide a comprehensive framework for competence development of youth in general, and even less for youth with disabilities.

As society we are lacking understanding that it is a responsibility of each community and adult person to do their best when preparing young people for the career market. Most are just left to find a way to survive in “the jungle” without proper training, guidance or support on how to do so. Youth work field is the field which can respond to the needs of youth with disabilities who lack competences for starting their career through non-formal learning activities. Together with other stakeholders, youth workers create a complementary support to formal education to have a wider network of support and more opportunities to develop their competences for starting career.

Competences which are important for youth with disabilities to develop for starting their career include communication skills, employability skills, organisational management, and teamwork. There are also many additional skills which they might need to develop, but they depend on specific requirements of their desired career. These four areas will be in focus of this handbook, but it is also important to take into consideration other areas depending on the young person who is included in non-formal and youth work activities, and limitations of their disabilities.


It is also important to be aware that youth with disabilities sometimes cannot develop the skills for starting their careers in the same way as all the other youth. For that reason, it is important to adapt the approach and tools to every individual young person with a specific disability.

### Communication skills

Communication skills are essential for starting a career because communication is a way to socialise, meet people, develop relationships, present oneself, communicate own needs, express oneself in different ways. We can communicate verbally and non-verbally, online and offline. It is also important to understand own communication style - passive, aggressive, passive-aggressive, and assertive, as well as to train young people to learn how to express themselves assertively.

Communication skills can also be divided into interpersonal and intrapersonal communication skills. Interpersonal skills are skills we need when we communicate face-to-face with one or more people. If this happens in live setting, we communicate not just with words, but also non-verbally through gestures, voice, facial expressions, and our appearance. If we communicate online or through audio only, communication is limited, and it is necessary to be aware of potential misunderstandings in communication. Intrapersonal communication refers to the internal dialogue which happens in the mind of every individual which impacts beliefs and emotional states of people. It has big importance in self-confidence of a young person and can impact their career choices.

In terms of starting a career, good communication skills are essential for presenting oneself through a CV or a job interview, expressing thoughts and feelings effectively, active listening, being able to negotiate with others, presenting own point of view and persuading others, as well as presenting and public speaking.



Youth workers can create learning spaces for young people with disabilities which will help them improve their communication skills through workshops, simulation games, presentations, case studies, group challenges, energisers, job shadowing, youth exchanges and many other ways.

Some of the outcomes of youth work activities in terms of building and developing communication skills include developing more confidence and resilience in young people with disabilities, knowing how to express themselves respectfully as well as to respect the other, presenting themselves in the best possible light, being able to manage their social and formal relationships, expressing themselves effectively, achieving career goals, and many others.

## **Employability skills**

Employability skills include a wide range of skills that are transferable and not connected to a specific profession which make a person 'employable'. Technical and factual knowledge and practical application of that knowledge go under the category of non-transferable skills and have a great impact on employability. However, nowadays it is equally important, or sometimes even more important to develop all kinds of non-transferable skills to be able to function as a part of a company or to grow an enterprise.

Employability of young people who often come out of formal education without relevant knowledge and experience to immerse themselves in the modern job market largely depends on their attitudes, skills, experiences outside of their formal education.

The most important employability skills employers often look for in their potential employees are communication and interpersonal skills, problem-solving, taking initiative, being pro-active, being able to work under pressure, critical thinking, collaboration, flexibility, time management, leadership, adaptability, resilience, problem solving, organisation and planning, and many more. It is important to not down that now all jobs require all the skills in one person. When working in a team, different team members cover different areas of expertise and complement each other's skills.

Also, having the 'right' mindset for a specific job or field has become one of the most desirable employability skills among employers who often say that people can easily learn the facts or theory as well as to develop practical skills in a specific field if they have the right mindset for the job or the position. Such employers are willing to invest in training and educating their current and future employees to give them the What and the How if the person has a desirable attitude.

## **Organisational management**

Organisational management includes a wide range of skills around organisation like flexibility and adaptability, time management, multi-tasking, prioritising, scheduling, project management, budgeting, consistent communication, delegating, organisation of working space, etc.

Organisations skills help to create order and structure. They are highly important when working in a team, but also equally important when someone is self-employed or a freelancer with more flexibility. Developing organisational skills helps to be more productive and efficient in a shorter time frame, avoid miscommunication, to stay on budget, to reach goals within the deadline, and to create a more productive routine in general.

These skills are very important because most of the work that is done nowadays is project-based. It means that there are usually strict deadlines and budget constraints set to reach specific goals.

## **Teamwork**

Teamwork is one of the most important skills to develop to work and successfully collaborate with other people. Although it is not always the case that a person works within a team, for example self-employed

or freelancers still need to collaborate with others in some way to achieve certain goals and earn profits. Teamwork is important in almost every industry on all levels.

Teamwork skills can be developed only in settings when working with other people. One can know what teamwork is in theory, but not be able to apply that knowledge in practice. Young people develop their teamwork skills to some degree throughout formal education when collaborating on common tasks or projects, or through team sports. Due to individual personality types and life experiences, each person tends to develop a specific way how they function inside of a team, and how they contribute. Teamwork skills can also be further developed throughout life. It is important to recognise current team roles a person is taking, and then if needed expand or adapt to the needs of the team.


Dr. Meredith Belbin developed the team role theory based on common behavioural attributes. Her model consists of three categories – action oriented, thought-oriented and people-oriented. Teams strive on collaboration and productivity. To have a successful teamwork, It is important that each team member fulfils a specific role that is aligned with their strengths.

The nine Belbin Team Roles (Belbin, n.d.) are Resource Investigator, Teamworker and Co-ordinator (the Social roles); Plant, Monitor Evaluator and Specialist (the Thinking roles), and Shaper, Implementer and Completer Finisher (the Action or Task roles)<sup>10</sup>.

1. **Resource investigator** uses their inquisitive nature to find ideas to bring back to the team. Main strengths include being outgoing, enthusiastic, exploring opportunities and building contacts. Main weaknesses include being over-optimistic and losing their enthusiasm quite quickly.
2. **Team workers** helps to keep the team together, identifies the work required and completes it on behalf of the team. Main strengths include being co-operative, perceptive and diplomatic, listening and averting disagreements. Main weaknesses might include being indecisive and avoiding confrontation.
3. **Co-ordinator** focuses on the team's objectives and delegating the work to the right team members. Main strengths include being mature, confident, able to identify talents and clarify goals. Main weaknesses might include being seen as manipulative and delegating their own work to others.
4. **Plant** tends to be very creative and to come up with unconventional solutions to problems. Main strengths include being creative, imaginative, free-thinking, generating ideas easily and solving difficult problems. Main weaknesses might include ignoring incidents and being too preoccupied to communicate effectively.
5. **Monitor Evaluator** is the logical one who makes impartial judgement when needed and weighs up options that the team has. Main strengths include being sober, strategic, and discerning, being able to see all the options and judge accurately. Main weaknesses might be that there is sometimes lack of drive and ability to inspire others and being overly critical.
6. **Specialist** brings in-depth knowledge of a key area to the team. Main strengths include being single-minded, self-starting and dedicated. Main weaknesses might include tendency to contribute on a narrow front and dwelling too long on the technicalities.
7. **Shaper** provides the necessary drive to ensure that the team keeps moving and does not lose focus. Main strengths include being challenging, dynamic, thriving under pressure, having the drive and courage to overcome obstacles. Main weaknesses might include being prone to provocation and sometimes offending other people's feelings.

---

<sup>10</sup> Belbin (n.d.) The Nine Belbin Team Roles. <https://www.belbin.com/about/belbin-team-roles>

- 
8. **Implementer** is needed to plan a workable strategy and carry it out as efficiently as possible. Main strengths include being practical, reliable and efficient, turning ideas into action and organising the work that needs to be done. Main weaknesses might include being inflexible and slow in responding to new possibilities.
  9. **Completer finisher** is most effective at the end of the task to polish and scrutinise the work for errors. Main strengths include being painstaking, conscientious, anxious, searching for errors, polishing and perfecting the work. Main weaknesses might include being inclined to worry and being reluctant to delegate.

## VALUES IN CAREER MANAGEMENT FOR YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING ANTI-CAREER AND PRO-DEVELOPMENT DRIVERS

Identifying own career values is important because it determines the level of success and feeling of accomplishment to be successful in career management. Understanding own preferences and what is important for a person will help to decide if a specific career or a job in a specific environment is for them. Sometimes a job can be perfect for us, but the values that a company or a specific industry is promoting can be totally different from ours. This kind of situation might work for a short while, but it will soon start being uncomfortable. When our values are in alignment with the values of the environment where we work, it is much easier to focus on other things like going your best in tasks, innovating, developing and making progress in career.

Career values can be categorised according to different principles. Indeed Editorial Team (2021) proposes differentiation between intrinsic, extrinsic and lifestyle values<sup>11</sup>.

**Intrinsic career values** are factors which create personal meaning within a job or a career path like:

- **Achievement** – ability to achieve goals through motivating tasks;
- **Creativity** – being able to practice creativity on regular basis;
- **Autonomy** – being able to work independently;
- **Benevolence** – being able to help others;
- **Challenge** – being able to challenge oneself through new tasks;
- **Leadership** – leading and inspiring a team;
- **Collaboration** – being able to collaborate on daily basis.

**Extrinsic career values** are external factors received for the work done like:

- **Compensation** – monetary exchange for work;
- **Benefits** – benefits that come with employment like health insurance, educational budget, gym membership, personal development opportunities;
- **Job security** – feeling secure and stable within a job position;
- **Promotions** – having possibilities for promotion;
- **Recognition** – being recognised for achievements publicly;
- **Influence** – being able to influence actions, opinions and ideas of others.

**Lifestyle career values** are those factors which contribute to person's quality of life outside of work, and have an impact on work-life balance like:

- **Support** – having support at work can have a great influence on the quality of life outside of workplace;
- **Leisure** – having enough time for enjoying leisure activities, to relax;
- **Location** – location and connection between work and home can be a significant factor;
- **Family** – having family friendly work schedule and workplace, as well as flexibility;
- **Diversity and culture** – having opportunities to experience different cultural, ethnic, racial and religious contexts.

---

<sup>11</sup> Indeed Editorial Team (2021, May 25) Career Values: How to Identify yours and Cultivate Success as a Professional. <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/career-values>

Dan Beverly (2016) talks about 9 career drivers that motivate and inspire individuals to pursue a specific career. They are as follows:

- **Reward** – main focus is wealth and a wish for a decent standard of living;
- **Security** – main focus is assurance, that a career provides a solid and predictable future;
- **Status** – main focus is position, and that the person is recognised, admired and respected at work;
- **Autonomy** – main focus is choice, that the person has independence and the ability to make decisions;
- **Creativity** – main focus is originality, that the person can innovate and produce original output;
- **Expertise** – main focus is mastery, that the person achieves a high level of specialisation in the field;
- **Power** – main focus is dominance, that the person can control people, resources, and choices;
- **Meaning** – main focus is contribution, that the person is able to create intrinsically valuable work;
- **Affiliation** – main focus is connection, that the person is able to establish and maintain fulfilling professional relationships<sup>12</sup>.

Catherine Nangle (2017) proposes ten common career drivers in a different framework:

- **The Expert** – this person is driven by the need to become an expert in the field, to further develop abilities in one specific subject rather than across more different subjects;
- **The Creative** – this person is driven by the need to be creatively engaged, to think outside of the box, to be innovative, and to bring fresh ideas;
- **The Helper** – this person is driven by the need to make a difference with their work, searches for deeper meaning in career, and prefers jobs with a tangible and positive impact;
- **The Influencer** – this person is driven by the need to take control of situations while enjoys having impact on big decisions in the workplace, and to guide and motivate people;
- **The Organiser** – this person is driven by the need to keep things in order and enjoys doing it, likes planning and to think things through to achieve great results;
- **The Reward seeker** – this person is driven by the need to receive financial return for the invested efforts, enjoys taking on big challenges because results will be worth of it;
- **The Socialiser** – this person is driven by the need to have a strong team and great social environment, loves working with people, and thrives when work involves a lot of social interactions;
- **The Securer** – this person is driven by the need for security, searches for career that is in high demand to be sure that there will always be a steady income, and that the job position is secured;
- **The Autonomy Seeker** – this person is driven by the need to be independent at work, to be able to make own decisions and have good work-life balance, choosing own working hours and location, or having control over the amount of workload;

---

<sup>12</sup> Beverly, D. (2016, October 12) 9 Career Drivers to Accelerate your Perfectly Designed Career. <https://www.danbeverly.com/9-career-drivers-accelerate-perfectly-designed-career/>

- **The Active** – this person is driven by the need to be in constant motion, both mentally and physically, loves to travel and interact with people, seeks excitements and movement in all ways<sup>13</sup>.

Nowadays, there is also a strong movement of ‘anti-career’ and ‘pro-development’ drivers. Instead of choosing a particular career path, or defining it as such, or seeing one’s career as something that pays the bills, these movements promote the value of living own’s life purpose.

It is about putting the whole concept of career aside because it is seen as something that is imposed from the outside and created as a response to the development of the job market and industries. Instead of looking for a job or searching for the ‘right career path’ is it important to allow person’s inner purpose and calling to unfold with time. Instead of having a career, a person can be pro-development, meaning invest energy in personal evolution, development, exploration, experiences, and living own purpose rather than changing oneself to fit the requirements of the market.

These types of drivers can be very encouraging for young people and bring a sense of release. It is important to realise that they do not need to be or do what their families or society expects them to be. Maybe they already have everything they need inside themselves; they just need to discover it and remember it. Once they start living it, there will also be ways how to receive payment for their contributions and services. Consequently, they will be able to make a living, and feel an immense level of satisfaction that comes from living their highest purpose.

Additionally, young people with disabilities might value working in an inclusive working environment, being able to meet their physical and psychological needs, being able to work and contribute without positive discrimination when they receive work or rewards benefits just because they are disabled. Needs of every young person with disabilities might differ, and it is important to take an individualised approach when supporting them in discovering their core values in career.

---

<sup>13</sup> Nangle, C. (2017) How to identify your career drivers (and use them to your advantage. NatWest Group. <https://jobs.natwestgroup.com/posts/how-to-identify-your-career-drivers-and-use-them-to-your-advantage>

# PERSONAL BRANDING AS A TOOL FOR CAREER MANAGEMENT FOR YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

## Personal Branding Canvas

Personal Branding Canvas is a tool which helps individuals to think about their personal brand and further develop it. It was created by Luigi Centenaro, and it consists of nine blocks. It is a holistic and visual map of all the elements one needs to take into consideration when developing or improving own personal brand. The nine blocks include:

1. **Who you are** (core identity) – personal history, education, background, origins, your uniqueness, personality, values, passions, talents, what you stand for, your goals and ambitions, your successes, interests, and hobbies;
2. **What you offer** (key capabilities) – your key products and services, the value you create;
3. **Why you are credible** (reasons to believe) – your success record and accomplishments, completed projects or achievements or certifications;
4. **What benefits you provide** (value proposition) – a list of the benefits you can provide to someone, own added value, what you bring to the table, and present evidence that supports one's competencies;
5. **Why you** (positioning) – why should someone hire you or use your services, what makes you a good candidate, what makes you different;
6. **How they know you** (communication) – ways people or companies will reach you, and how they will know you;
7. **Who needs to know** (target audience) – think who the audience of your brand will be (e.g. potential employers, companies, non-profit organisations, potential clients, etc.);
8. **What you need** (key investments) – list the things you need to invest in your own personal brand, which resources are needed, how to develop specific skills, etc;
9. **What you get** (results) – list how you would benefit from investing your time and resources for your personal brand to achieve desired objectives.

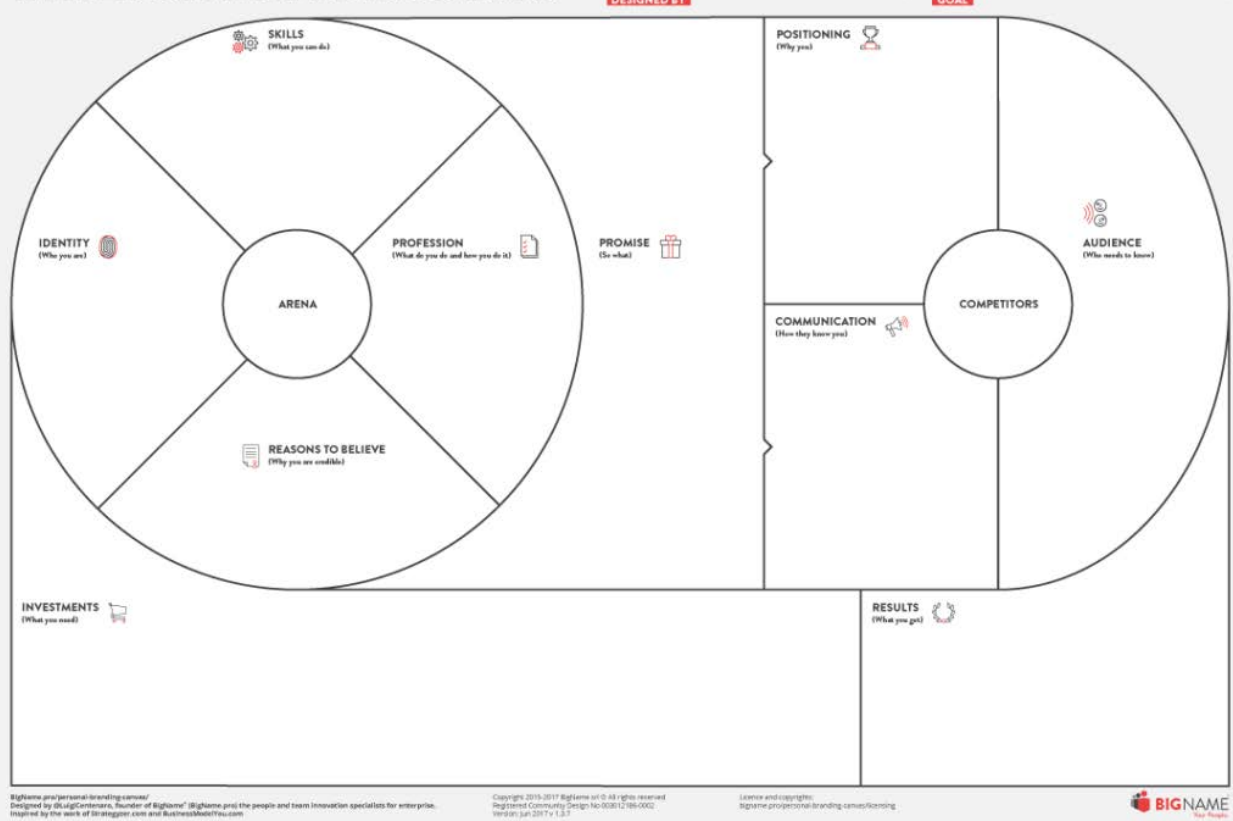
Personal brand is relevant and important for anyone who wants to either develop own business or find their way in a specific career or industry. It is highly desirable for industries and careers with a lot of competitors, and it is a great way to stand out among so many options. Being unique is what can launch one's career or a business to a whole new level. As Jessica Hernandez (2017) says, personal branding is an ongoing process through which a person establishes own professional image which leaves an impression on others about who they are, what they can do, and why someone would like to work with them<sup>14</sup>.

---

<sup>14</sup> Hernandez, J. (2017) The Importance of Personal Branding to Career Growth plus 12 Tips for Branding Success. Great Resumes Fast. <https://greatresumesfast.com/blog/the-importance-of-personal-branding-to-career-growth/>



## THE PERSONAL BRANDING CANVAS




Source: BigName

### Tips to create a unique personal brand

Goldie Chan proposes the following **10 tips to create a unique** and inviting personal brand:

- **Have a focus** – define your key message and stay with it when presenting yourself to a specific target group;
- **Be genuine** – be yourself and authentic when presenting yourself either online or offline;
- **Tell a story** – building a story can be crucial in engaging a specific audience. Creating written, photographic, or video materials is a great way to do it. Adapt the format to the desired audience and choose the right communication channel for you;
- **Be consistent** - create content around the topic, which is in your focus, and stick to it. It needs to be unique so that your target audience can associate your content with you;
- **Be ready to fail** – failure can be difficult, yet it can be very valuable to experience to be aware of all the potential things that might happen;
- **Create a positive impact** – instead of competing with others and burning bridges, build the community around yourself with time;
- **Follow a successful example** – learn from successful and influential people;
- **Live your brand** – instead of separating your brand from your everyday life, it can be even more successful to have them united;

- 
- **Let other people tell your story** – the word-of-mouth is the best promotion;
  - **Leave a legacy** – once you build up your brand, the next step is to think about the legacy you will leave behind.

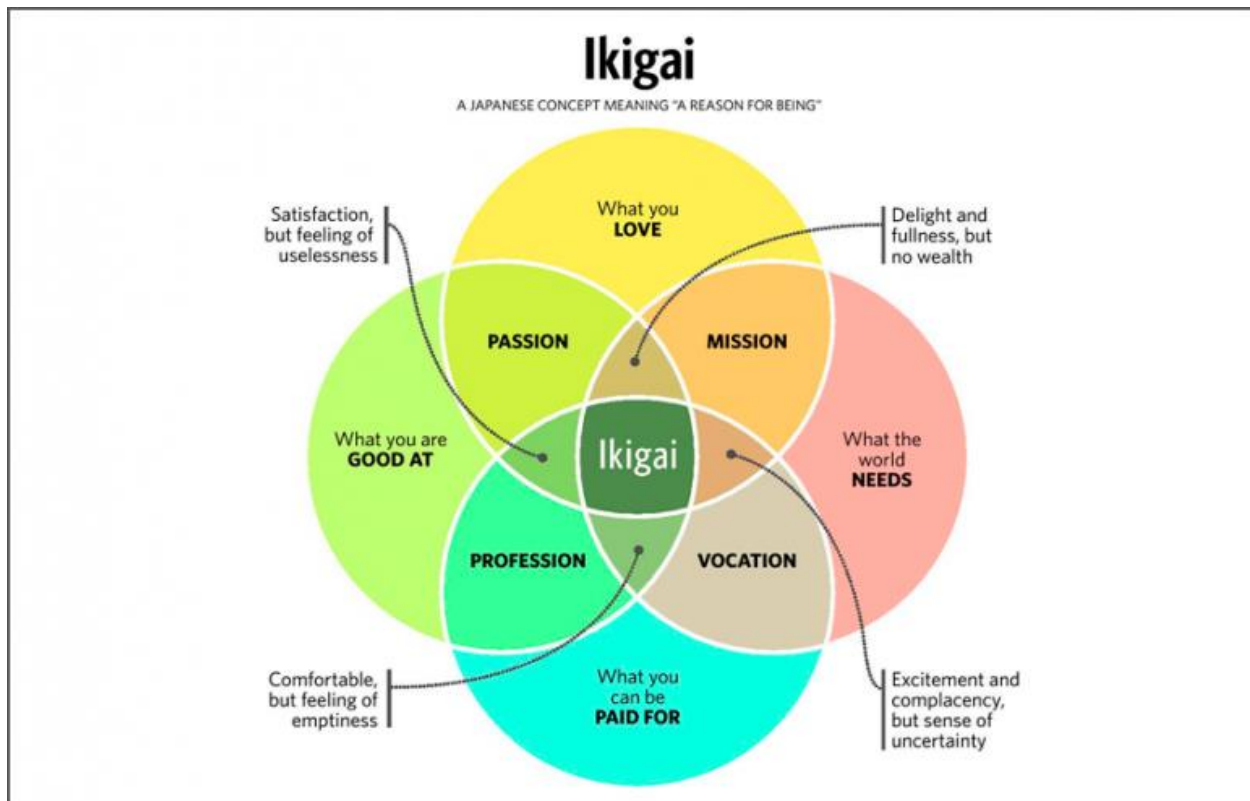
Jessica Hernandez (2017) also adds more important tips for successful personal branding including the following:

- **Getting started** – mapping out what makes you known for and your best brand attributes;
- **Utilise your resources** – reach out to people in your surroundings to find out what those who know you the best think about your best qualities which would bring you career benefits;
- **Figure out your WHY** – make a list of the reasons that drive your work;
- **Be authentic in all communications** – be down-to-earth and genuine about your passions and your purpose;
- **Send a consistent message** – keep your message consistent through any communication channel you choose to use;
- **Be a thought leader** – share your expertise and thoughts with the world;
- **Learn and grow** – invest in new experiences, new trends, continue developing and growing;
- **Be proactive** – think of solutions without being asked;
- **Assess yourself** – regularly assess your performance, goals, growth, strengths and weaknesses.

## THE CONCEPT OF IKIGAI IN CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT

IKIGAI is a Japanese concept which consists of four areas: what you love, what you are good at, what the world needs, and for what you can be paid. This is a concept which means your 'reason for being'. 'Iki' means 'life' in Japanese, and 'gai' describes value or worth. Our ikigai is life purpose, what brings us inspiration, motivation and joy.

The area where what you love and what you are good at overlap is your passion. The area where what you are good at and what you can be paid for overlap is your profession. The area where what you can be paid for and what the world needs overlap is your vocation. The area where what the world needs and what you love overlap is your mission. And the point in which all these four areas overlap is our reason for being (i.e. IKIGAI).



Source: [zekluu.com](http://zekluu.com)

According to Eatough (2021), knowing your ikigai can help one to: design your ideal work lifestyle, create strong social connections at work, create a healthy work-life balance, pursue your career dreams, and enjoy your work<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> Eatough, E. (2021, May 7) What is ikigai and how can it change my life? BetterUp. <https://www.betterup.com/blog/what-is-ikigai>

Further, Eatough (2021), suggests that once we find our ikigai, we need to align our life with it. And we can do it by creating small goals, plan your implementation strategy, develop a support system around yourself and test it out<sup>16</sup>.

Finding your ikigai is an equivalent to living a meaningful and fulfilling life, which means also doing a fulfilling and meaningful job, or building your own brand, which is based on your true calling, rather than adapting oneself to the mainstream expectations of the society and economy.

Youth workers can help young people with disabilities by setting up a learning environment in which they will have the time and guidance to discover their ikigai. Except for the four main questions there are many additional things to think about to clarify each of the four areas of ikigai. Aglaé Dancette (2021) proposes the following process for each area:

**1. What do you like doing?**

Make a list of the things that bring you joy without limiting yourself. Also think about who you are jealous of and why because the process of finding the right path sometimes leads us through frustration, anger, pain and many other unpleasant situations which might seem bad at first, but they can also be extremely helpful when initiating change.

**2. What are you good at?**

Write down all the things you are good at, and all the things' people compliment you on. Then identify areas that require abilities you possess.

**3. What can you be paid for?**

Revise all the professional skills you have, and you can be paid for doing them.

**4. What does the world need?**

Tune into the world around you, your surroundings, and your community. Observe if there are any issues that have an impact on you or concern you for any reason. Notice any situations you would like to change<sup>17</sup>.

Once all the four areas have been mapped, a youth worker leads the young person to recognise the intersection of his or her passion, purpose, profession and vocation. This is their ikigai. Further career development activities should be based on the outcome of this process. It should also be repeated several times and revised from time to time to see if anything changed to be able to adapt the career guidance and planning process.

---

<sup>16</sup> Eatough, E. (2021, May 7) What is ikigai and how can it change my life? BetterUp. <https://www.betterup.com/blog/what-is-ikigai>

<sup>17</sup> Dancette, A. (2021, November 9) Ikigai-ing your way to the perfect job. Welcome to the Jungle. <https://www.welcometothejungle.com/fr/articles/ikigai-method-finding-ideal-job>

## LATEST TECHNOLOGIES AND TOOLS FOR CAREER PLANNING

### Career exploration tools and technologies

To explore their career options, young people can use various tools and technologies available to them. The main categories have already been mentioned before and will be further discussed now.

**Informal interviews** can be conducted in form of an **unstructured interview**. This type of interviews is the most flexible one and allows space for spontaneity. The order of the questions is not set, and they depend on previous answers. Questions are open-ended. This type of an interview creates a more relaxing atmosphere for a conversation without pressure of order, or time. When spending time with a professional, a young person can conduct this type of interview. However, even though this type of an interview is very flexible, it requires a lot of preparation for someone who is not interested. Some of the questions that they might ask the professional in their desired career path might be:

- How did you choose your career path?
- How was the journey from the beginning of your professional life until now? Which opportunities did you get, and which obstacles got into your way?
- How does your average working day look like?
- What are the benefits of your career path, and what are the limitations?
- How satisfied are you with your choice and would you choose something else now? If yes, why?
- Which advice would you give to a young person who wants to choose this career?
- What do you like best / least about your job?
- What problems or challenges are there in this type of work?
- What skills and special skills are needed in this field?
- And many more depending on the context.

**Job shadowing** a young person can spend a day, a week, or another period in observing a professional in their desired career path on the job. They can ask questions, accompany them on meetings, participate in daily activities, etc.

It is also important to prepare young people for a job shadowing experience. Asking questions, active listening, and observing are the most important things young person needs. For that they can use various tools and technologies, such as;

- sheets with questions about the job and career,
- observation sheets with pointers about observing from different points of view objectively, and noting down what was observed for one day, week or a longer period of time,
- questions for reflection after the experience – what they liked the most or the least; what expectations were met, and which were not; how their perception about a career or a job changed after the experience; if they still want to pursue that career; etc.

Job shadowing opportunities around Europe: <https://www.jobshadoweur.com/>

**Volunteering** gives an opportunity to gain practical experience and invest their time to make a difference in the world. Volunteering can be local, national and international. Nowadays there are so many different volunteering opportunities that it is sometimes difficult to choose. The simplest way is to start locally. Engage in activities of non-profit organisations in your community or on national level. Ask

around, get in touch with many organisations around you which seem interesting or relevant for you. To gain international experience browse some of the web pages and apps available on EU and global levels:

- European Solidarity Corps: <https://eusolidaritycorps.eupa.org.mt/>
- Workaway: <https://www.workaway.info/>
- Global Volunteer by AIESEC: <https://aiesec.org/global-volunteer>
- Global Volunteers: <https://globalvolunteers.org/>
- Go Overseas: <https://www.gooverseas.com/volunteer-abroad>

**Finding a mentor** in a specific branch of industry can provide relevant information about the reality and offer much needed support from someone more experienced. Once young people identify own mentorship needs, it is important to create a list of people they admire and would like to learn from. The process of searching for a good mentor starts from their personal network of contact. Youth workers can support them by reaching out to different stakeholders in the local community to discover the people who would be interested into mentorship. If possible, involve young people in mentorship programmes if they exist, or consider starting one if there is a need for it among young people.

Chronus mentoring programme identifies five steps to building a successful mentoring program:

- Design your program – consider audience, goals and format
- Attract participants – consider recruitment and training
- Connect mentors and mentees – consider user profiles and matching
- Guide mentoring – consider workflows, resources, check points
- Measure success – consider return of investment and learning impact<sup>18</sup>.

A good place to find mentors can also be various social media platforms or platforms focused on mentoring programmes only:

- LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/>
- MentorCloud: <https://www.mentorcloud.com/mentor-platform>
- Growthmentor: <https://www.growthmentor.com/blog/online-mentoring-platforms-software/>
- The Mentoring Club: <https://www.mentoring-club.com/>

**Internships** provide more direct experience with relevant tasks for the role. The same as with volunteering and mentorship programmes, there are many internship programmes available on local, national and international levels. For local and national levels, it is important to search existing providers of such opportunities, companies in the desired career path of a young person, various projects that are implemented by non-governmental sector, etc. On European and global levels there are many platforms available to search for opportunities:

- EU traineeship programmes: <https://epso.europa.eu/en/job-opportunities/traineeships>
- EURODESK internships: <https://programmes.eurodesk.eu/internships>
- Erasmus intern: <https://erasmusintern.org/>
- AIESEC internship: <https://aiesec.org/global-talent>
- Global experiences: <https://www.globalexperiences.com/>
- The Intern Group: <https://www.theinterngroup.com/>

---

<sup>18</sup> Chronus (n.d.) Five Steps to Building a Successful Mentoring Program. <https://chronus.com/how-to-start-a-mentoring-program>

- CIEE Summer Global Internship: <https://www.ciee.org/go-abroad/college-study-abroad/internships/summer-global-internships>

**Various online and offline courses and trainings** can provide a solid foundation to continue building own career path.

- Erasmus+ training courses and youth exchanges: <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/>
- Coursera online learning platform: <https://www.coursera.org/>
- Udemy learning platform: <https://www.udemy.com/>
- Future Learn: <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses>
- LinkedIn learning: <https://www.linkedin.com/learning/>
- Skill share learning platform: <https://www.skillshare.com/>

All these international platforms and existing projects can serve as good case practices for youth workers and organisations that want to start local or national mentorship, volunteering, training, or internship platforms to create opportunities for youth with disabilities.

### Awareness tools and technologies

The section of awareness tools and technologies covers SWOT analysis and 16 personalities tools which are further described below.

#### SWOT analysis

SWOT represents strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Strengths and weaknesses are internal factors, while opportunities and threats represent external factors. Those can be listed as four separate lists or in a visual grid like on the image below.



SLIDEMODEL.COM

Source: Personal SWOT PowerPoint Template by SlideModel

The Mind Tools Content Team (n.d.) proposes using a personal SWOT analysis to discover opportunities, to understand own strengths and weaknesses to be able to manage them or improve. There are different questions that can be asked in each area, and it greatly depends on the purpose of doing the SWOT analysis. Some of the following questions might be relevant for young people with disabilities who are working on their self-assessment for the purpose of career management<sup>19</sup>.

### **STRENGTHS**

- What are you good at?
- What advantages do you have that others don't (e.g., which skills, talents, certifications, education, or connections)?
- What do you do better than others interested in the same career path?
- What personal resources are available to you?
- What strengths do other people see in you?
- Which achievements are you most proud of?
- What values are important for you?
- What do you enjoy doing? What makes you happy?

### **WEAKNESSES**

- Which skills do you need to improve and develop?
- What tasks do you usually avoid because you don't feel confident doing them?
- What will the people around you see as your weaknesses?
- What don't you like to do?
- What are your negative work habits (e.g., being late, procrastinating, being disorganised, short attention span, short temper, etc.)?

### **OPPORTUNITIES**

- What new technology or innovation can help you in your career management?
- Is your desired industry growing? If so, how can you take advantage of the current market?
- Which key trends affect your industry? And which skills will be required for success in the next 5 years?
- Do you have a network of strategic contacts to help you?
- What trends do you see developing in your desired field, and how can you take advantage of them?
- Is there a gap in your desired career, or industry?
- If you are planning to be self-employed, do your customers or clients complain about something in your enterprise? If so, could you create an opportunity by offering a solution?

### **THREATS**

- What obstacles do you currently face?
- Is there any competition for the same job or a project?
- How is your industry changing and affecting your career options?
- Is your job (or the demand for the things you do) changing with the current changes?
- Does changing technology threaten your desired career?

---

<sup>19</sup> Mind Tools Content Team (n.d.) Stakeholder Analysis – Winning support for your Project. [https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newPPM\\_07.htm](https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newPPM_07.htm)



- What skills will be required from you in the future? How easy or difficult is it to develop them?
- Are any of your skills getting outdated? What can be done about it?
- Could any of your weaknesses lead to threats?

Making your personal SWOT analysis is also possible online. The online tool was developed by ALIGNMENT, and can be accessed here: <https://www.alignment.io/blog/personal-swot-analysis>

According to ALIGNMENT (n.d.), SWOT analysis can be beneficial in some of the following ways:

- In comparing own strengths and weaknesses to those which are required in the desired career path of a young person.
- In becoming aware of own strengths to put in focus when writing a CV or a motivational letter, or during a job interview
- In addressing potential weaknesses
- In assessing which opportunities to pursue like enrolling to formal and non-formal courses, trainings or seminars to develop-soft-skills
- In managing potential threats before they materialise
- In understanding which opportunities are more suitable for a young person by comparing strengths to available opportunities to be more likely to succeed.

### **Personality type tools – 16 personalities**

There are multiple ways available to determine one's personality types like Myers-Briggs Type Indicator test which is a foundation for many modern tools for self-assessment. Here, the focus will be on 16 personalities tool which is widely available for free, and easy to use. Their model is used on big five personality traits: Mind, Energy, Nature, Tactics, and Identity.

The aspect of the Mind shows how a person interacts with the surroundings. The aspect of Energy determines how we see the world and process information. The aspect of Nature determines how we make decisions and cope with emotions. The aspect of Tactics reflects our approach to work, planning and decision-making. And finally, the aspect of Identity underpins all others, showing how confident we are in our abilities and decisions. The tool is explained in greater details here: <https://www.16personalities.com/>, where it is also possible to take a free test and get a description of own personality type.

The tool consists of two layers – roles and strategies. The layer of Roles determines our goals, interests and preferred activities. **The four roles are analysts, diplomats, sentinels and explorers.** Each role is then divided into 4 more personality types all of which are explained below:

1. **Analysts** – people who embrace rationality and impartiality, they are successful in intellectual debates as well as in scientific and technological fields. They are independent, open-minded, imaginative and strong-willed. They are excellent strategic thinkers but might experience difficulties in social and romantic pursuits.
  - a) **Architects** – imaginative and strategic thinkers, with a plan for everything.
  - b) **Logician** – innovative inventors with unquenchable thirst for knowledge.
  - c) **Commander** – bold, imaginative and strong-willed leaders, always finding a way or marking one.
  - d) **Debater** – smart and curious thinkers who cannot resist an intellectual challenge.
  - e)

2. **Diplomats** focus on empathy and cooperation. They shine in fields of diplomacy and counselling. They are cooperative and imaginative, and they often harmonise their working environment or social circles. They are warm, empathic and influential individuals.
  - a) **Advocates** – quiet and mystical, yet very inspiring and tireless idealists.
  - b) **Mediators** – poetic, kind and altruistic people, always eager to help a good cause.
  - c) **Protagonists** – charismatic and inspiring leaders, able to mesmerise their listeners.
  - d) **Campaigner** – enthusiastic, creative and sociable free spirits who can always find a reason to smile.
  
3. **Sentinels** are cooperative and practical, they embrace and create order, security and stability. They tend to be hard-working and traditional; they excel in logistical or administrative fields especially those that rely on hierarchy and rules. They stick to their plans and accept difficult tasks.
  - a) **Logistician** – practical and fact-minded individuals whose reliability cannot be doubted.
  - b) **Defender** – very dedicated and warm protectors, always ready to defend their loved ones.
  - c) **Executive** – excellent administrators, unsurpassed at managing things or people.
  - d) **Consul** – extraordinarily caring, social and popular people, always eager to help.
  
4. **Explorers** are the most spontaneous and able to connect to their surroundings- They are practical, react quickly when needed, and able to think on their feet. They are masters of tools and techniques, and able to use them in so many different ways. They are very valuable in times of crisis.
  - a) **Virtuoso** – bold and practical experimenters, masters of all kinds of tools
  - b) **Adventurer** – flexible and charming artists, always ready to explore and experience something new.
  - c) **Entrepreneur** – smart, energetic and very perceptive people, who truly enjoy living on the edge.
  - d) **Entertainer** – spontaneous, energetic and enthusiastic people. Life is never boring around them.

The layer of strategies shows our preferred way of doing things and achieving goals. The four strategies are:

- **Confident individualism** – people who prefer doing things alone, rely on their own skills and instinct rather than on those of other people. They know what they are good at and have high self-confidence. Trust in oneself and personal responsibility are important values for them, and they do not pay too much attention to other people's opinions.
- **People Mastery** – people who seek social contact and tend to be good communicators. They are comfortable with social events, and confident in their abilities to express their opinions. They play an active role in the society, but they are not too concerned about other people's opinions.
- **Constant Improvement** – people who are quiet and individualistic. They tend to be perfectionists and driven by success. They invest a lot of effort to deliver the best possible results. They are dedicated to their craft, but also tend to worry too much about their performance.
- **Social Engagement** – people who are sociable, energetic and success-driven. They are often restless, perfectionists and moody. They are curious and willing to work hard to achieve high success. They value their social status.

### Finding your Element

One more tool which can be used in work with young people with fewer opportunities is related to finding their passions in life and connecting it with potential career prospects. The tool is based on the book "The Element" written by Sir Ken Robinson and Lou Aronica, who said that we need to find out what we are good at and achieve a happy and balanced life. By them, the educational system needs to teach us more about finding our passions and what we are good at<sup>20</sup>.

Robinson and Aronica (2009) state that we are born with different capacities and abilities. Those can include spirituality, intuition, intelligence or imagination. However, we do not use all of them or we do not understand the power of our capacities. Also, they mention that people are not aware of the potentials they have, people can change and grow throughout the life. All of this is connected with the cultures we live in, influence of different societal and peer groups and our own expectations.

Therefore, it would be good to think about what our passions are and what are we good at. The process of finding "The Element" consists of several stages. Robinson and Aronica (2009) state that "The Element" is a meeting point between passions we have in life and natural aptitudes. The whole concept revolves around four main concepts:

- **I get it:** this is a place where you feel most comfortable; skills and knowledge you acquired and you can do it; for example, some people can be really good at mathematics, whereas some others can be better at communication and empathy.
- **I love it:** this concept revolves around your passions and what you like to do; for some people this is drawing, for others is creating new materials; for someone else programming. So, in this place you love what you do and often, you get lost in the time by doing it - this is called "the flow". For example, you can play a guitar and lose the sense of time. Or cook something delicious and not being aware that several hours have passed by. Often, if you are in the flow doing something, it means it is your passion.
- **I want it:** this concept is connected with our personal point of view; if you want to do something to love (previous point), then this is connected with our personal characteristics, upbringing, self-belief, ambition and other values. Here you can ask yourself what do you want to do and what are you keen on?
- **Where is it:** in order to find our passions and succeed in life, we need other people or some other help. We should always ask ourselves who are the people (experts, friends, family) or other materials (books, e-learning) that can help us in achieving our passion.

So, you can do a simple exercise with young people with fewer opportunities to find out their passions. Ask them to write answers to the following questions:

- **I get it:** What are you good at? What are the professions you are good at? What are your skills that you are really good at? (e.g., I get the methodology of teaching and group cohesion.)
- **I love it:** What do you like to do in life? What do you go into "flow" with and forget about the time? What is your passion? (e.g., I love to do workshops for young people on career development.)
- **I want it:** Do you have a perfect position and career? What would it be? What do you want to do in life? (e.g., I want to become an educator or trainer in the field of youth.)

---

<sup>20</sup> Robinson, K., Aronica, L. (2009) The element: how finding your passion changes everything. Viking Penguin. New York

- **Where is it:** Who are the people that can help me with achieving my passion? What are the materials that can support me in finding my passion? (e.g., I can ask fellow trainers, ask recommendations or go on training for trainers).

When finishing the exercise, ask young people to look at similarities and if they have similarities in the answers, they have found their Element. In the examples above related to education, you can see how the answers overlap and that the person has found their Element. We encourage you to try this with young people!

## Goal setting tools and technologies

This section covers several tools and technologies for setting goals – S.M.A.R.T.(E.R.) tool, GROW tool, CLEAR tool, and various apps available for setting goals and monitoring their success.

In order to ensure that a young person will achieve success in their desired career field, setting goals is the following step after going through career exploration and awareness stages. S.M.A.R.T. tool was introduced in the eighties by George T. Doran to create criteria that would help in accomplishing desired goals. Later, two more categories were added, which resulted in S.M.A.R.T(E.R.) tool for defining goals.

The **SMART(ER)** acronym stands for the following:

- **S = Specific.** When setting a goal think about the Who, What, When, Where, Which and Why to be as specific as possible about what you want to accomplish.
- **M = Measurable.** Think how you will measure if you meet the goal, or the progress of the process.
- **A = Achievable.** Think if it is possible to achieve a goal to be inspired rather than discouraged. Consider if you have the necessary resources and tools.
- **R = Relevant.** Think if the goal makes sense in the broader sense of the market or industry.
- **T = Time-bound.** Consider realistic time frame for achieving a goal and set a deadline for what can be accomplished in a given period.
- **E = Evaluate.** Think about ways of evaluating goals and how often they will be evaluated.
- **R = Readjust.** If something is not working, readjust it. Change the approach, methods or tools used.

The **GROW goal setting model** was developed by Business Coaches Graham Alexander, Alan Fine and Sir John Whitmore in the 1980s (Mead, 2019). It was later further developed, but in essence GROW stands for – goal, reality, options, will.

- **Goal** – What do you want? What is your ultimate goal?
- **Reality** – Where are you now? What is preventing you from achieving your goal?
- **Options** – What can you do? Which resources do you have available? What changes can you do and want to make in your behaviour to overcome obstacles?
- **Will** – What will you do? What is the first step to start making changes?

Working with GROW model helps young people to build their awareness of current desires and aspirations, current beliefs and values, current resources available, and actions required to achieve set goals.

**CLEAR goal setting model** was developed by Kreek in 2018 and it focuses on supporting teams to achieve business and organisation goals. It stands for: collaborative, limited, emotional, appreciable, refinable.

- **Collaborative** – the desired goal needs to involve a team or social element which drives everyone to contribute to success.
- **Limited** – a set timeframe for achieving the goal.
- **Emotional** – goals need to be connected to core values of the individual and the group or a team. This is what drives passion to achieve the goal.
- **Appreciable** – the end goal can be quite big, but all the steps in between can and should be small to make them achievable.
- **Refinable** – goals need to be adaptable and resilient to changes, especially unexpected changes.

Additionally, other tools that can be used to setting goals are:

- Journaling to track goals daily or weekly.
- Visualising what wants to be achieved, putting positive affirmations around the space.
- Creating vision boards to create a physical representation of goals and ideas.
- Asking for support from your network of peers, friends and family to work towards a specific goal.
- Imagining oneself one year from the present moment to see how the future will look like including your work, home, relationships, finances, oneself.
- Using apps and other digital resources to set goals and set reminders.

There are many technological solutions and apps available to help young people in setting good goals like: Goal Setting Tracker Planner app; Dreamfora: Daily Goal Setting; Goals planner; goalmap – SMART goal setting tool; Higher Goals – Goal Setter; Success Coach – Life Planner; Reach it: Goals, Habit Tracker; UGoal: Goal Setting & Planner; Habit Tracker; Goal Meter: Goal Tracker; Life Goals – My Goal Planner; To Do List and Goal Planner, and many other available on different platforms.

## Strategy development and implementation tools and technologies

Strategy development is one of the most important steps of the career management process. Dan Overgaag (2022) proposes six elements of effective strategic planning in business operations framework which has been adapted to the context of youth work. Those six elements are: vision, mission, objectives, strategy, approach and tactics as it is visible on the image below.



Source: Dan Overgaag, [www.spur-reply.com](http://www.spur-reply.com)

He explains each step in detail, as follows:

1. **Define your VISION** – a vision statement serves as a clear guide for deciding on the current and future actions. It is about defining the long-term vision a young person has of themselves. A powerful statement can point them in the right direction, and a weak statement can make the rest of the process more difficult.
2. **Create your MISSION** – mission is about how a young person plans to achieve their vision. It means defining the why and how.
3. **Set your OBJECTIVES** – set specific results that need to be achieved within a specific time frame.
4. **Develop your STRATEGY** – develop a long-term plan to be able to achieve objectives (e.g., find a job, do job shadowing, participate in non-formal learning, get certified in an online course, etc.).
5. **Outline your APPROACH** – define the methodology which will be used to put the strategy into action.
6. **Get down to TACTICS** – think of initiatives, projects of programmes which will enable the person to implement their plan<sup>21</sup>.

Tom Wright (2022) also emphasises the importance of thinking of **4 critical components of a strategic plan**:

1. **DESTINATION** – Where do I want to take my career?
2. **STARTING POINT** - Where am I now?
3. **JOURNEY** – How will I get where I want to be?
4. **CHECKPOINTS** – How will I know if I am successful?

<sup>21</sup> Overgaag, D. (2022, August 21) 6 Elements of effective strategic planning. Reply Spur. <https://spur-reply.com/blog/the-6-elements-of-effective-strategic-planning>

In terms of technologies, there are many digital platforms and mobile apps available free of charge which can be quite helpful in this phase of strategy development. Here are some of them:

- ClickUp: <https://clickup.com/>
- Trello: <https://trello.com/>
- Asana: <https://asana.com/>
- Jira: <https://jira.atlassian.com/>
- Monday.com: <https://monday.com/>
- Smartsheet: <https://www.smartsheet.com/>
- Notion: <https://www.notion.so/>
- Miro: <https://miro.com/>

## Feedback

Once a young person starts implementing a strategy, collecting feedback is what comes next. Feedback is important for ongoing process of adaptation of the strategy and learning from the experience right away, rather than waiting for too long. Adjusting on the go is one of the crucial elements of success in career planning process.

Feedback can be collected in various ways – in person, online, in written form or in a conversation. It is important not to take feedback personally, because it represents opinion of a limited number of people. If more people point out the same, then it is time to reconsider changing something. A young person can collect feedback from their environment, from teachers and educators, from youth workers, from potential employers, during projects or training courses, when volunteering, during their mentorship experience, at a job interview, etc. The more data available makes it easier to make decisions and plan further steps.

Feedback should be descriptive, specific, appropriate, useful, wanted, at the right time and clear. It is important to be as objective as possible, speak only from own perspective, and avoid judgement. It is important to learn how to give feedback, as well as how to receive it. Centre for Teaching Excellence (n.d.) proposes the following **tips for receiving feedback effectively**:


- **Listen to the feedback** you are given without interrupting. Just listen to a person without assuming.
- **Be aware of your responses** in terms of your body language.
- **Be open** to receive new ideas and different opinions.
- **Understand the message** and make sure you understand it. Ask questions, listen actively and summarise the main points.
- **Reflect and decide** what to do. Assess all the feedback that is valuable, and then decide.
- **Follow up** to feedback received if you maybe decided to implement any of it<sup>22</sup>.

Additionally, Centre for Teaching Excellence (n.d.) proposes the following **tips for giving effective feedback**:

- **Concentrate on the behaviour**, not the person – describe your feelings about the situation or specific behaviour.

---

<sup>22</sup> Centre for Teaching Excellence (n.d.) Receiving and Giving Effective Feedback. University of Waterloo. <https://uwaterloo.ca/centre-for-teaching-excellence/teaching-resources/teaching-tips/assessing-student-work/grading-and-feedback/receiving-and-giving-effective-feedback>

- 
- **Balance the content** – use the ‘sandwich approach’ which means beginning by a positive comment to provide reinforcement, then point out an area that needs improvement or needs to be changed, and finish with a positive comment.
  - **Be specific** – avoid generalisations.
  - **Be realistic** – focus on what can be changed, not on the things that are out of control of the recipient of feedback.
  - **Own the feedback** – use the pronoun “I” instead of “they” or “one”
  - **Be timely** – choose appropriate time to communicate the feedback.
  - **Offer continuing support** – follow-up with the person, be available if needed to answer any questions<sup>23</sup>.

---

<sup>23</sup> Centre for Teaching Excellence (n.d.) Receiving and Giving Effective Feedback. University of Waterloo. <https://uwaterloo.ca/centre-for-teaching-excellence/teaching-resources/teaching-tips/assessing-student-work/grading-and-feedback/receiving-and-giving-effective-feedback>



## ADAPTATION OF DIFFERENT METHODS AND PRACTICES FOR CAREER PLANNING OF YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

In this section, we will talk more about the adaptation of different methods and practices when working with young people with fewer opportunities, with a focus on disabilities. Firstly, we would like to emphasise that the first step is to get acquainted with the target group and type of disability persons have, in order to prepare the best. Thus, in this section, are presented some tips and tricks that can help educators in future work.

### 1. Assess the needs of your group

There are different types of disabilities, so never assume. Some disabilities are not that visible, so it is good to ask participants what you should do in order for them to feel comfortable and what could be the best approach. The simple question of: What can we do in order to make the training or work with you better? can be a good starting point. So, it is good to make a needs assessment and based on this, adapt the methods and working approach. We would recommend doing this as the first step: if you are working with an individual, you can talk about this as the first topic you meet; or if you are working with a group, we would recommend making this assessment in advance, either with direct contact or short questionnaire. In that way, one will know the best how to adapt the content. It is important to have in mind the simple statement: Ask before you act.


### 2. Research more and educate yourself

We often come with some biases and perceptions of other people. Therefore, it would be good that you educate yourself more on the disability your group or individual has, so that it will be easier to approach and ensure a good working experience. That would mean that you need to find some resources online or attend some special training course which can provide you with knowledge, skills and competences to work with your target group. It is recommended to check the following website of the University of Washington, which brings a lot of quality recommendations:

<https://www.washington.edu/doit/strategies-working-people-who-have-disabilities>

### 3. Adapt the materials based on the needs assessment

In previous sections, are seen different tools that can be used in order to assess young person or to find their own career path. Educators should have in mind that materials should be adapted to different young people; for example - if you will use a personal branding canvas and you are working with persons with visual impairment, have in mind that you will have to use bigger canvas for everyone and print it on A3 paper for everyone. Maybe you will need to ensure usage of computers or a special magnifier machine to make some of the tasks. Or, put everything in a Word document so a speech processor can read the material. It would be good to avoid using pictures, as the speech processor can read them incorrectly. On the other hand, if you are working with people with hearing impairment, ensure that you have a translator who can help you in the work process. If using some video materials to support personal development (e.g., you can, while using exercise about The Element by Ken Robinson, play a



short video about the topic), ensure that there are clear and eligible translations written on the screen. So, in order to best adapt the methods, go back to the needs assessment and adapt individual materials.

**4. Ensure a pleasant and non-judgmental working environment**

In order to have participants relaxed and that they do the tasks on the training course (or also during individual work), ensure a pleasant and non-judgmental working environment. In the first meeting, mention that this is a safe space and be friendly, open and honest. Persons with disabilities are usually faced with an environment that is full of prejudices and stereotypes, which often say they cannot fulfill some of the tasks. This is often not true at all but comes from perceptions in society. Therefore, it is important to motivate people you are working with and give them needed support. Be open for any question, uncertainty and feedback.

**5. Use empathy while communicating**

Using clear, concise and assertive communication is important in any type of relationship, so do not forget to use these skills while working with youth with disabilities. Empathy is crucial here, as it shows that you understand the situation that your participants are faced with. Using empathy doesn't mean you need to be nice but having understanding and providing personal support to grow.

We hope these short tips and tricks on how to adapt methods from the Handbook, as well as this list of recommendations will help you in your future work with young people with disabilities and will have a positive impact in discovering their career path!

## FINAL WORDS

And we close this handbook with several relevant inspirational quotes about career. As Jennifer Ritchie Payette says, "Your career is like a garden. It can hold an assortment of life's energy that yields a bounty for you. You do not need to grow just one thing in your garden. You do not need to do just one thing in your career." Since choosing a career is not for life anymore, we need to encourage young people to be less stressed if they make a "wrong" decision, because they can always try it out, see if they like it, and then change to something else if they decide so. We do not have to have only one career in our life, but to focus on what fulfils us, and grow more aspects of ourselves throughout our lives.

The quote by Chris Grosser reminds us about the need to be proactive, "Opportunities don't happen, you create them." This is an important aspect of working with young people with disabilities. We create opportunities by immersing ourselves in experience, by putting our plans into action.

And lastly, Mary Kay Ash says, "Don't limit yourself. Many people limit themselves to what they think they can do. You can go as far as your mind lets you. What you believe you can achieve." This quote reminds of limitless opportunities which exist in the world, and that it is up to us how far we will go, no matter the limitations or challenges we come across on the way, as long as we are learning, developing, growing and expanding.

We hope that this handbook served as a source of inspiration to you, dear reader. That it provided a good foundation to continue building on as you work with youth with disabilities in your local or national realities. Although this job can sometimes be quite exhausting, it is also immensely rewarding. Guiding and supporting a young person as they discover their true path is a unique gift, we as youth workers can receive



## REFERENCES

- Belbin (n.d.) *The Nine Belbin Team Roles*. <https://www.belbin.com/about/belbin-team-roles>
- Beverly, D. (12.10.2016.) *9 Career Drivers to Accelerate your Perfectly Designed Career*. <https://www.danbeverly.com/9-career-drivers-accelerate-perfectly-designed-career/>
- Centre for Teaching Excellence (n.d.) *Receiving and Giving Effective Feedback*. University of Waterloo. <https://uwaterloo.ca/centre-for-teaching-excellence/teaching-resources/teaching-tips/assessing-student-work/grading-and-feedback/receiving-and-giving-effective-feedback>
- Chan, G. (8.11.2018.) *10 Golden Rules of Personal Branding*. Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/goldiechan/2018/11/08/10-golden-rules-personal-branding/?sh=46f5c32d58a7>
- Chronus (n.d.) *Five Steps to Building a Successful Mentoring Program*. <https://chronus.com/how-to-start-a-mentoring-program>
- Dancette, A. (9.11.2021.) *Ikigai-ing your way to the perfect job*. Welcome to the Jungle. <https://www.welcometothejungle.com/fr/articles/ikigai-method-finding-ideal-job>
- Eatough, E. (7.5.2021.) *What is ikigai and how can it change my life?* BetterUp. <https://www.betterup.com/blog/what-is-ikigai>
- iEduNote (n.d.) *Career Management: Benefits, Career Management Model*. <https://www.iedunote.com/career-management-benefits-career-management-model>
- GreenHaus, J. H., Callanan, G. A., GodShalk, V. M. (2019.). *Career Management for Life*. Routledge.
- Hernandez, J. (2017.) *The Importance of Personal Branding to Career Growth plus 12 Tips for Branding Success*. Great Resumes Fast. <https://greatresumesfast.com/blog/the-importance-of-personal-branding-to-career-growth/>
- Indeed Editorial Team (25.5.2021.) *Career Values: How to Identify yours and Cultivate Success as a Professional*. <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/career-values>
- Juneja, P. (n.d.) *Career Management – Meaning and important concepts*. <https://www.managementstudyguide.com/career-management.htm>
- Juneja, P. (n.d.) *Indicators of Career Program Effectiveness*. MSG Management Study Guide. <https://www.managementstudyguide.com/career-management.htm>
- Kreek, A. (6.2.2018.). *CLEAR Goals Are Better Than SMART Goals*. Kreek Speak. <https://www.kreekspeak.com/clear-goal-setting/>
- LEADER project (n.d.) *Career Management Skills Framework*. <http://www.leaderproject.eu/cms-framework.html#k-area-1-personal-effectiveness>
- Levine, A.G. (8.8.2022.) *How to build a crisis management plan for your career*. APS News. <https://www.aps.org/publications/apsnews/202209/crisis.cfm>
- Magnusson, K. C. (1992.). Five critical processes of career counselling. In M. Van Norman (Ed.), *National Consultation on Vocational Counselling Papers: 1992* (pp. 217-227). Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.
- Mead, E. (8.9.2019.) *48 Goal Setting Activities, Exercises and Games*. Positive Psychology. <https://positivepsychology.com/goal-setting-exercises/>
- Mello Alves, M. (14.4.2020.) *Career development in times of crisis*. LinkedIn.

- <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/career-development-times-crisis-marissol-mello-alves-msc/>
- Mind Tools Content Team (n.d.) *Stakeholder Analysis – Winning support for your Project*. [https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newPPM\\_07.htm](https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newPPM_07.htm)
  - Nangle , C. (2017.) *How to identify your career drivers (and use them to your advantage)*. NatWest Group. <https://jobs.natwestgroup.com/posts/how-to-identify-your-career-drivers-and-use-them-to-your-advantage>
  - Overgaag, D. (21.8.2022.) *6 Elements of effective strategic planning*. Reply Spur. <https://spur-reply.com/blog/the-6-elements-of-effective-strategic-planning>
  - Robinson, K., Aronica, L. (2009.) *The element: how finding your passion changes everything*. Viking Penguin. New York.
  - Stauffer, B. (10.1.2022.) *What are 21<sup>st</sup> century skills?* AES – Applied Educational Systems. <https://www.aeseducation.com/blog/what-are-21st-century-skills>
  - Super, D.E. (1951.). Vocational adjustment: Implementing a self-concept. *Occupations*, 30, 88-92.
  - UCMERCED (n.d.) *Career Management*. <https://hr.ucmerced.edu/training/careermanagement>
  - Warwick Business School (2018, October 22) *Career advice: Five steps to successful stakeholder engagement*. <https://www.wbs.ac.uk/blogs/staff/careers-advice-five-steps-to-successful-stakeholder-engagement/>
  - Zekluu (25.1.2020.) *Self-developing IKIGAI: the meaning of life*. <https://zekluu.com/en/self-development-ikigai-el-sentido-de-la-vida/>
  - 16 Personalities (n.d.) *Our framework*. <https://www.16personalities.com/>

PUBLISHER:

 **Outreach  
Hannover**



**Co-funded by  
the European Union**

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.