EU TEAMS FOR EU DREAMS
PAPHOS, CYPRUS   16-23 October 2022

WHO ARE WE?

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT TRAINING FOUNDATION is a non-profit organization with the main purpose in organizing projects and activities aimed at personal and professional development of young people and youth workers, encouraging volunteering and cultural diversity with the help of non-formal and formal education methods.

About the project:

This Training Course was dedicated to all the youth workers and teachers who wanted to improve their team management and team building skills. We wanted to bring together both experienced and unexperienced youth worker that were motivated and willing to learn.

The project was implemented by Youth Employment/Training Foundation (IEEN) - www.youthempowermentfoundation.org

 Our project objectives were:

1. Improve participants competences in better understanding the different stages of forming a team, conflict management and communication within a team of young people.

2. Teaching participants various non-formal methods: team building, trust building, conflict management.

3. Improving participants' confidence in their skills to manage and coordinate a team.

OUR PARTICIPANTS LEARNT HOW TO :

■ Understand the team building processes: how the team forms, how to communicate within the team and how to make the team trust each other;

■ Strengthen a team with non-formal methods;

■ Manage the different types of personalities inside a group;

■ Apply conflict management tools;

■ Keep young people motivated;

■ Delegate tasks.

STAGES OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT

When we use words GROUP and TEAM in particular we understand it as a collection of people who interact with one another, accept rights and obligations as members and who share a common identity. Criteria for a group include: formal social structure; face-to-face interaction; perception about common fate; common goals; interdependence; self-definition as group members and recognition by others. To understand the group forming and developing processes perhaps the most often used approach is Bruce Tuckman's classic description of the stages of group development – his forming, storming, norming and performing model of group development.

STAGE 1: FORMING

Individual behavior is driven by a desire to be accepted by others, and avoid controversy or conflict. Serious issues and feelings are avoided, and people focus on being busy with routines, such as team organization, who does what, when to meet, etc. But individuals are also gathering information and impressions - about each other, and about the scope of the task and how to approach it. This is a comfortable stage to be in, but the avoidance of conflict and threat means that not much actually gets done. Forming includes: excitement, anticipation and optimism; suspicion and anxiety about the work to be done; defining the tasks and how they will be accomplished; determining acceptable group behavior; deciding what information needs to be gathered; long discussions about ideas and issues, and for some members, impatience with these discussions; also difficulties to identify some of the relevant problems.

STAGE 2: STORMING

Individuals in the group can only remain nice to each other for so long, as important issues start to be addressed. In the storming period members have their own ideas as to how the process should look, and the personal agendas prevails. Storming is probably the most difficult stage for the team. They begin to understand that tasks are different as seemed at first glance. They become impatient about the lack of progress and argue about what actions the team should take. They try to impose their personal ideas and resist working in partnership with other members of the group. Some people s patience will break early, and minor confrontations will arise that are quickly dealt with or glossed over. These may relate to the work of the group itself, or to roles and responsibilities within the group. Some will observe that it s good to be getting into the real issues, whilst others will wish to remain in the comfort and security of stage 1. Depending on the culture of the organization and individuals, the conflict will be more or less suppressed, but it'll be there, under the surface. To deal with the conflict, individuals may feel they are winning or losing battles, and will look for structural clarity and rules to prevent the conflict persisting. To summarize: storming includes resisting the tasks; resisting quality improvement approaches suggested by other members; arguing, defensiveness, competition and choosing sides; establishing unrealistic aims and objectives; divisions, increased tensions and jealousy. This means that members have little energy to spend on progressing towards the project aims and objectives, but they are beginning to understand each other.

STAGE 3: NORMING

As Stage 2 evolves, the rules of engagement for the group become established, and the scope of the group s tasks or responsibilities are clear and agreed. Norming phase is when the team reaches agreement on what the process will be. Everyone wants to be a part of the new agreement. Members are enthusiastic and may wish to go even more far than initially defined objectives. During this stage, members resolve their differences, they accept the team, team ground rules, and the individuality of fellow members. Emotional conflict is resolved and relations become more cooperative. Having had their arguments, they now understand each other better, and can appreciate each other s skills and experience. Individuals listen to each other, appreciate and support each other, and are prepared to change preconceived views: they feel they re part of a cohesive, effective group. However, individuals have had to work hard to attain this stage, and may resist any pressure to change - especially from the outside - for fear that the group will break up, or revert to a storm. Norming includes an ability to express criticism constructively; acceptance of membership in the team; an attempt to achieve harmony by avoiding conflict; more friendliness and confidence in each other; sharing of personal problems; a sense of team cohesion, spirit and goals; establishing and maintaining team ground rules and boundaries. Team members do not put so much energy on differences, so they have more time for starting to work.

STAGE 4: PERFORMING

Not all groups reach this stage, characterized by a state of interdependence and flexibility. At last team members have discovered and accepted each other's strengths and weaknesses, and learned what their roles are. Everyone knows each other well enough to be able to work together, and trusts each other enough to allow independent activity. Roles and responsibilities change according to need in an almost seamless way. Group identity, loyalty and morale are all high, and everyone is equally task-orientated and people-oriented. This high degree of comfort means that all the energy of the group can be directed towards the task(s) in hand. Performing includes constructive self-change, close attachment to the team; ability to prevent or solve group problems.

STAGE 5: ADJOURNING

This is about completion and disengagement, both from the tasks and the group members. Individuals will be proud of having achieved much and glad to have been part of such an enjoyable group. They need to recognise what they ve done, and consciously move on, feeling good about what was achieved. Recognition of, and sensitivity to people s feelings in the adjourning stage is extremely important, particularly if members of the group have been closely bonded, as they may feel insecurity or threats from this change. Tuckman s original work simply described the way he had observed groups evolve, whether they were conscious of it or not. But for us the real value is in recognizing where a group is in the process, and helping it to move to the Performing stage. In the real world, groups are often forming and changing, and each time that happens, they can move to a different Tuckman Stage. A group might be happily Norming or Performing, but a new member might force them back into Storming. Seasoned leaders will be ready for this, and will help the group get back to Performing as quickly as possible. Leadership of teams requires an ability to diagnose the stage of development of teams, and make appropriate interventions that move the team forward.

MARSHMALLOW CHALLENGE - TEAM BUILDING METHOD

Build a Tower   Build a Team

Items you need: spaghetti, tape, rope, marshmallows
Time: 25 minutes
Description: Participants will be grouped in teams of 4 or 5.

Each team will receive a few spaghettis, a little tape, a piece of rope and a marshmallow. They will have to build the tallest tower only using tese tools in 10 minutes. After the 10 minutes each group has to stop working on their tower and the facilitator / trainer will go team by team and will check whose tower is the tallest. Only the towers that stay on their own (without any help of the participants or other items) will be taken into consideration.

Examples for debriefing questions:
- How did you feel during the activity?
- How did your team manage the time?
- How did you communicate in your team?
- Did your group have a leader?
- If yes, how did you choose him/her?

- How do you think your team could have improved?
- What have you learned during this activity?
- How will you use what you learned in the future?

ABIGAIL S TALE

Abigail s Tale is a story that shows how people view the world from different perspectives, have different values and reach different conclusions out of the same information.

Aims of the tool
When mixing with people from different cultures we should be aware that all their actions, values and attitudes are not necessarily defined by their culture. With this exercise you can show how similar people think differently, how they have different moral values and different ways of seeing reality.

Description of the tool
Abigail s Tale is a story that shows how people view the world from different perspectives, have different values and reach different conclusions out of the same information.
1. Give them a printed version of the story or tell the story (maybe drawing the characters on a flipchart).
2. Give them 3 to establish the guilty parties from the guiltiest to the less guilty.
3. (Optional) Split them in pairs and give them 5 to make the list (guiltiest to less guilty).
4. Put them in groups of 5 with the same goal (a common list). (15-25)
5. Do a group discussion (15)
6. Debrief (15)

Variations:
- Modify the story to have unisex names and ask at the end what would happen if that character was a woman (or a man); e.g.: Sinbad could be a woman and Abigail a boy. Or they could be gay.
- Modify the story to say Abigail loved Tom (instead of they were in love) and ask the question: what would you say if Abigail was actually a stalker? <-- we don t always have all the information and just reading some words on paper doesn t mean we have the whole picture

Other things you can do/note:
- Ask lateral thinking questions like would you reorder your list if Abigail was 13? How?
- Sorting by Europe s legal system we get: Bob beating Tom (no mitigating circumstances), Tom hitting Abigail (mitigating circumstances) and Sinbad (economic monopoly).
- Fun fact: In Bulgaria one participant said Sinbad was the best business man ever. He found a need and offered fair services to fill the need. All demonstrated by the fact that Abigail accepted his offer.
- When splitting them into pairs you can try pairs of different sex
- In a training touching political subjects you can consider the story as a metaphor of how EU countries try to reach a common ground (though they have different values)
- Different views/perspectives to be explored: culture, family ties, violence, friendship, loyalty, attitudes towards sexual activities
- Some people will interpret the Bob left with Abigail part as if to mean that Abigail entered a relationship with Bob (but they could have just gone out for a drink). Interpretations vs facts.

Abigail's Tale

Once upon a time there was a pretty girl called Abigail who lived in a house with her mother. Everyday she would walk across her town, over the only bridge crossing the river to river to see her boyfriend, Tom. Abi thought Tom was lovely! She would skip and sing on her way to see her boyfriend, and they were very much in love.

Of course Tom also thought Abi was lovely. He too would cross the town and the only bridge across the river to go and see Abi, but he didn t skip and sing, at least when the other boys were looking he didn t!

They were so in love and would walk around holding hands to show everyone how much they loved each other. Aww!

One night a great storm flooded the river and swept away the bridge, the only bridge so the next morning they could only stand on opposite banks of the river and wave to each other, both very sad that they couldn t hold hands.

Abigail cried. She cried and cried and cried and wanted to see her Tom, but it would be months before a new bridge would be built, and there was no other way to cross the river. Then after a few days Abigail saw a little rowing boat tied up on the river, and went to speak to the man who owned it.

Please Abi begged Please row me across the river so I can see my Tom . The man who owned the boat was called Sinbad. Not many people spoke to him, and very little was known about him. Sinbad thought about Abigail s problem and offered to help. I will row you across the river Sinbad said, and Abi smiled, but she was happy to quickly. Sinbad continued I will row you across the river, if you sleep with me.

Abigail s smile turned into a frightful scream and she ran off crying. She couldn t decide what to do. She wanted to see Tom so badly, but didn t want to sleep with Sinbad. She felt torn between seeing her boyfriend and cheating on him with Sinbad, and she felt she needed to ask someone for advice, so sat down with mother and explained the whole story.

Abigail's mother listened to her story and when Abi had finished she looked at her mother, waiting for her advice. well her mother started you need to sort this one out for yourself . Abigail s mother offered no advice as she wanted Abi to make the decision for herself.

Abi was now more confused than ever and sat in her park thinking over her options. She decided she wanted to see Tom more than ever... he would know what to do, so she jumped up and went to Sinbad.

After she slept with him, Sinbad kept his word and took her on his boat across the river. Abi ran as soon as she arrived on shore to Tom. Tears running her face, she banged on his door and he was very shocked to see Abi, and to see that she was so upset. Abi explained everything that happened to her, and when she told Tom she had to sleep with Sinbad to see her, he went crazy.

WHAT! he shouted you cheated on me… with Sinbad! Abi tried to explain why she did it, but Tom was so angry he slammed the door shut and didn t want to speak to Abi again.

Abi cried some more, and now was on the wrong side of the river to ask her mother for advice, but she knew where Tom s best friend, Bob, lived.

She went around to Bob s house and explained everything to him. Bob let her into his house and gave her a nice cup of tea to try and help things. As Abi explained what had happened today, Bob was disgusted with how Tom had acted. So disgusted in fact that he went around to Tom s house and beat him up for treating Abi so badly.

Then Bob left with Abigail.

And this is where our story ends.

TESTIMONIALS

After EU Teams for EU Dreams, I documented 16 methods which I found useful, but the cherry on top of the cake was the summit simulation. I have actually facilitated it with one of my youth groups back home and it turned out overwhelmingly awesome. I started treating my youth groups more like a team than like a class.
Popa Radu-Alexandru, Romania

My main thoughts are about that, it is not easy to build a team from a group of people, specially if they didn t know each other before. However it is super important in purpose of cooperating efficiently.
Feelings - I m thankful that I was able to participate in the training course and meet wonderful people :) <3
Methods - all the methods presented by trainers was engaging and enjoyable, for me one of the hardest was a Marshmellow Challange when we needed to build a tower with the limited time and resources. I actively promote Erasmus+ projects by talking with people I know or with new acquaintances. Apart of the conversation I m showing them how to look for the opportunities (FB groups, Insta profiles, SALTO and ESC websites)."
Tomasz Wroza, Poland

It was so beautifully and nicely organised, I already wrote all the methods in my list of NFE methods and I have all these incredible memories an feelings when I think about what happened ⬜ This training course helped me have some very important reflections and thoughts about what is the role of a leader, how they should behave and how it is so important to always put their team's needs first."
Luca Iulia-Georgiana, Romania

The teaching methodology is the first thing I remember, it's incredible how team exercises make you think so much and change behavior models. The exercise that I mainly remember is the one with the billiard stick, it was incredible.
Ismael Durán Albaladejo, Spain

After this project, I still feel like I need to change things up in my life when it comes to being more assertive about my needs, which ultimately influence the way I live and the way I work, both alone and with other people. I m currently working on writing two training courses about topics I m passionate about, which definetely feels very fulfilling. I'm also learning to appreciate more the people that I have in my life, even though they are not close to me.
Giulia Sanna, Italy

PARTNERS

ROMANIA - ASK YOURSELF

is a non-governmental organization created in 2015 by a group of young people who wanted to promote Erasmus + opportunities and non-formal education. The values of the association are: equality, education, interculturality and civic involvement. Through our activities we want to encourage young people to try new learning opportunities, discover themselves, to improve their skills, and get involved in the development of their community Our youth workers provide support in implementing the ideas of young volunteers while offering them complex development opportunities.

Contact: https://www.facebook.com/askyourselfromania/

POLAND - PROACTIVE ASSOCIATION

is a non-governmental organization that was created in order to meet the need of young people to participate actively in a their local community and to take part in international initiatives. The association was formed by young people who have gained educational and international experience in youth work and who want to enable other youngsters to gain personal competences through non-formal learning, active participation in society and youth mobility projects. StoPro aims to widen youth interests in democracy, environment, healthy living, human rights, intercultural communication and volunteering in order to help them become active citizens and participants of youth initiatives both local and international.

Contact: https://www.facebook.com/stoproassociation/

ITALY - COME PENSIAMO. ETNOGRAFIA E FORMAZIONE

is an NGO believing in social change and innovation based on what and how the people think. Our goal is to thave an impact in the life of the people with fewer opportunities. That s why we promote qualitative researches studying, by ethnographic methods, the thought of the people, especially those with fewer opportunities. We use this material to set up innovative trainings and projects,in order to support and inspire more effective social policies. We organise local, national and transnational events to share the results of our activities, promoting transnational mobility, active citizenship and cultural exchange. Contact: https://www.facebook.com/comepensiamo/

SPAIN - AKTIVE KOSMOS

Aktive Kosmos is a non-profit organization based in Herencia, Spain. This organization is dedicated to meet young people s needs and provide them with services for their personal, social and cultural growth. The aim of this organization is to help youngsters to take action in their communities. We consider youth the base of our future and the key of social development to create a better world. We focus our work in the opportunity to affirm Human Rights in all their aspects and contradictions, in order to promote a culture of a better society, to fight against all forms of discrimination and prejudice. Our organization promotes the importance of immigrants and refugees inclusion in our societies provides them with a space where they spend and share time together
Contact: https://www.facebook.com/AktiveKosmoss/

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