



Manuals of Tools for Youth Migrant Organisations

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Project: Incubators for Youth Migrant Organisations

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Dear Migrant!

Being a foreigner and living in Poland you add part of your own culture to society. It is a great value! You have different experience, language, customs and way of thinking – everything you tell your friends and colleagues from different countries than yours. You know well that it has more than just anecdotal value. For your listeners it means new knowledge and skills that are connected with an understanding of previously unknown culture. Each Your experience can be translated into valuable lesson for representatives of the society in which you are living now.

That's why we give into your hands this guide, which is to inspire you to public activity. It requires hard work but it is good investment. Work in third sector gives you, among others, possibility to share your experience and use it to support others. This belief was base for our project – Incubators for Youth Migrant Organisations – whose participants, migrants from around the world, decided to create their own projects that promote their culture, integration and intercultural cooperation.

We want to show you how to how to carry out your own initiatives in the NGO sector in Poland. In this publication you will find practical tips on how to work in multicultural group, what things you should focus on and how build a team and be its leader. We will show you how to analyze your ideas and turn them into effective projects and later how to promote them that others find them interesting. You will find guidance how to search for and gather funds of your enterprises and learn legal aspects necessary to formalize your initiative. And finally you will find some helpful links and addresses of other organizations created by other migrants.

We hope that this will inspire you to creative actions in NGO sector! If you have any further questions or doubts you can always visit our Foundation (Bracka 18/63).

Good luck!

Foundation for Somalia Team





Rules of good cooperation in multicultural group and team

Bartosz Kosiński

Group and Team

Work in group isn't easy. Building of an effective team takes a lot of time, work, learning, tolerance, acceptance, understanding and a little risk. People will differ with experience, age, gender, approach to life, competence and qualifications. They will have different characters, vocabulary and expression. Members of multicultural groups will also have different systems of values and attitudes. There can be differences in language and meaning. All of those differences can be a danger as well as added value for the partnership, if the group can use them.

In the literature used to distinguish between a group and a team. The group consists of, at least, two people staying together, working together. The group talks to each other, jokes, fights, makes up, spends time together and uses that time. Sometimes productively. But the group is not a team. It has to mature to that. So what will characterize the team? What factors are important for effective teamwork?

First of all, the team has clearly set goal to work towards. The goal is known and accepted by all members. Teammates should work together because of the common goal. The goal that is equally important for all of them. The goal that they want to achieve. If we look at a group of migrants living currently in Poland we will notice that they come from different countries, have different characters, age and education. But we can also notice that they are all in a similar, difficult situation. That everyday they face misunderstanding, cultural barriers and social exclusion. They want the society to accept and understand their problems, such as their customs, values and life style. Seeking of acceptance of people from their new country can be a common goal, that will be important for all members of the group. So important that it will help them to overcome their differences and build effective team.

Goal and mutual responsibility

I introduced goal at the very beginning because it takes key place among the rules of teamwork. Without common goal we cannot build efficient team. What is the next step then? Action! Cooperation in a group often limits to exchange of information and communication between people that know each other more or less. They sometimes work together but it is mostly accidental and short lived. On the other hand, the team works in a more organized, thought out way towards their common goal. Each team member knows that the team does not exist for a sake of it. It exist to work. Members plan each step together, because they know that it brings them closer to the goal. Their actions are thought out and well organized. Each team member actively participates in performing of the tasks. Cooperation, activity and responsibility are keys to teams success.

The team is characterized by synergy or, how Henry Jenkins calls it, convergence. What does it mean? It means that team building should not be a goal on its own. That forcing a team to

existence is pointless. That the teamwork is valuable only when it can make something that cannot be made any other way. Sometimes it is visualized by following equation: $1 + 1 = 3$. It means that work of two or more people shouldn't be a simple sum of their work. If you can do something easily on your own, do it on your own. If there is no need to build a team for a simple task, then maybe it is pointless to waste time and energy on it?

Why do we need a team? What are the criteria of an effective team?

Assembling a team has a point if we cannot do a given task on our own, or if a team can achieve something far more better than a single person. The team makes sense when it allows generating amazing ideas. Ideas that are derived from different cultural backgrounds that are the greatest wealth of multicultural teams. The effort put into team building is meaningful when it generates so called added value – results, that would not be possible without the team.

We can easily imagine group of people, sitting around a table, creating together a vision of multicultural festival in Warsaw. The first person shares an idea, writes it down and puts in the middle of the table. A young man sitting next to that person decides to share his idea on another piece of paper. Next to him sits older woman. She hesitates for a moment should she write down her idea. She feels safe among those people because she knows that even if her idea will be stupid or unreal no one will laugh at her. She knows that people in this team care for each other. She writes her idea on a piece of paper and puts it on the table. In front of her sits her slightly younger friend. She sees papers on the table and suddenly gets new idea. She doesn't know if it can work but she takes the risk and write her idea down. After few minutes the table is full of ideas. Some of the ideas were already in heads of team members before meeting, some were conceived during brainstorming. One inspired another. They fused, buzzed and exploded on a creative wave. They thought of things that no one would thought on their own, or it would take much more time and effort. After a while the team sets final frames of the enterprise and begin the project. Such team makes sense.

What elements of effective team can we distinguish in this example? Desire to work towards set goal is what comes to mind first. But there is also trust, positive relations between members, openness and safety that teammates must feel. Focus on action, achieving concrete results. Building something valuable. Multiculturalism is really valuable, because it enables connection between minds with completely different systems of values, concepts and attitudes. It allows highest level of creativity, but it can also be a threat.

Notice cultural differences!

This threat is primarily associated with a different perception of reality by the representatives of different cultures. Each culture gives meaning to reality that surrounds us. Culture states what is wrong and what is right. Culture sets our daily mode and our diet. Culture helps to understand the world around us. We are surrounded by mysterious symbols, gestures and behaviors. Everything around us is a mystery and, as children, growing up inside a culture, we discover them from the perspective of the culture. Cultures differ from each other and show us the world around us in a certain ways. Each way is correct, each is different and each needs understanding and acceptance but none of them can be fully known.

One of the best known modern culture researchers is Geert Hofstede, who introduced his cultural dimensions theory. Geert conducted his research in sixties and seventies on employees of IBM

Corporation working in several different countries. He proved that some patterns of thinking, feeling, and behavior are different in various cultures.

Hofstede identified and described following cultural dimensions:

Power Distance Index (PDI) – It specifies relation between superiors and subordinates and between government and citizens. It also defines the degree of acceptance of social inequality, the tendency of superiors to consult with employees, the degree of authoritarian power, and the expected rate of obedience to parents, superiors and authority.

Individualism (IDV) – It sets proportions between meaning given to an individual and a larger group. Group in collective culture supports its members and they stay loyal instead. In few individualistic societies the position of an individual is determined by its own qualities. People are expected to be independent.

Masculinity (MAS) – this particular dimension indicates differences between genders. In feminine cultures behavior of genders is similar while in masculine cultures gender roles are much more different. Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI) – It is the level of danger perceived by members of certain culture facing new, unknown and uncertain situations.

In some later researches (conducted among others by Michael Bond) established new dimension – Long Term Orientation (LTO). This dimension shows difference between long and short-term life orientation. Long-term orientation focuses on future while short-term orientation on past and present.

How it works?

Those dimensions have large impact on forming of the relations in the group. People raised in cultures with strong power distance will tend to create strong hierarchy in the group. If the team is dominated by members of collective culture we probably observe equalization of positions in the group. Decisions will be made more democratically and opinion of all team members will matter. Power distance index will bind very strongly to the dimension of individualism and collectivism.

Dimension of masculinity and femininity will influence division of tasks including fixed male and female roles. Roles in cultures with strong division between male and female models can be hard to understand and accept for people from other cultures e.g. European.

Long-term orientation and Uncertainty avoidance index can influence how the team will take action. How far-reaching plans and strategies will be. How much emphasis will be put on action and when will the project begin. What will be the proportion between planing and doing.

As we can imagine differences between certain cultural aspects can cause misunderstanding. To rise above it we need to know each other, try to understand our behavior, and find a common ground. A ground for compromise. But above all we need to avoid tendency known in psychology as fundamental attribution error. It means that we have natural tendency to place causes of our behavior externally while others internally. What does it mean? When we trip on uneven sidewalk we will admit that the faulty sidewalk was a reason. On the other hand when we observe a person stumbling on the other side of the road we will think that this person is clumsy, seeing guilt in the person and not in the surroundings. We have to remember not to judge people that way.

We shouldn't instantly blame others or suspect ill intent because intentions could have been good, but in standards different from ours.

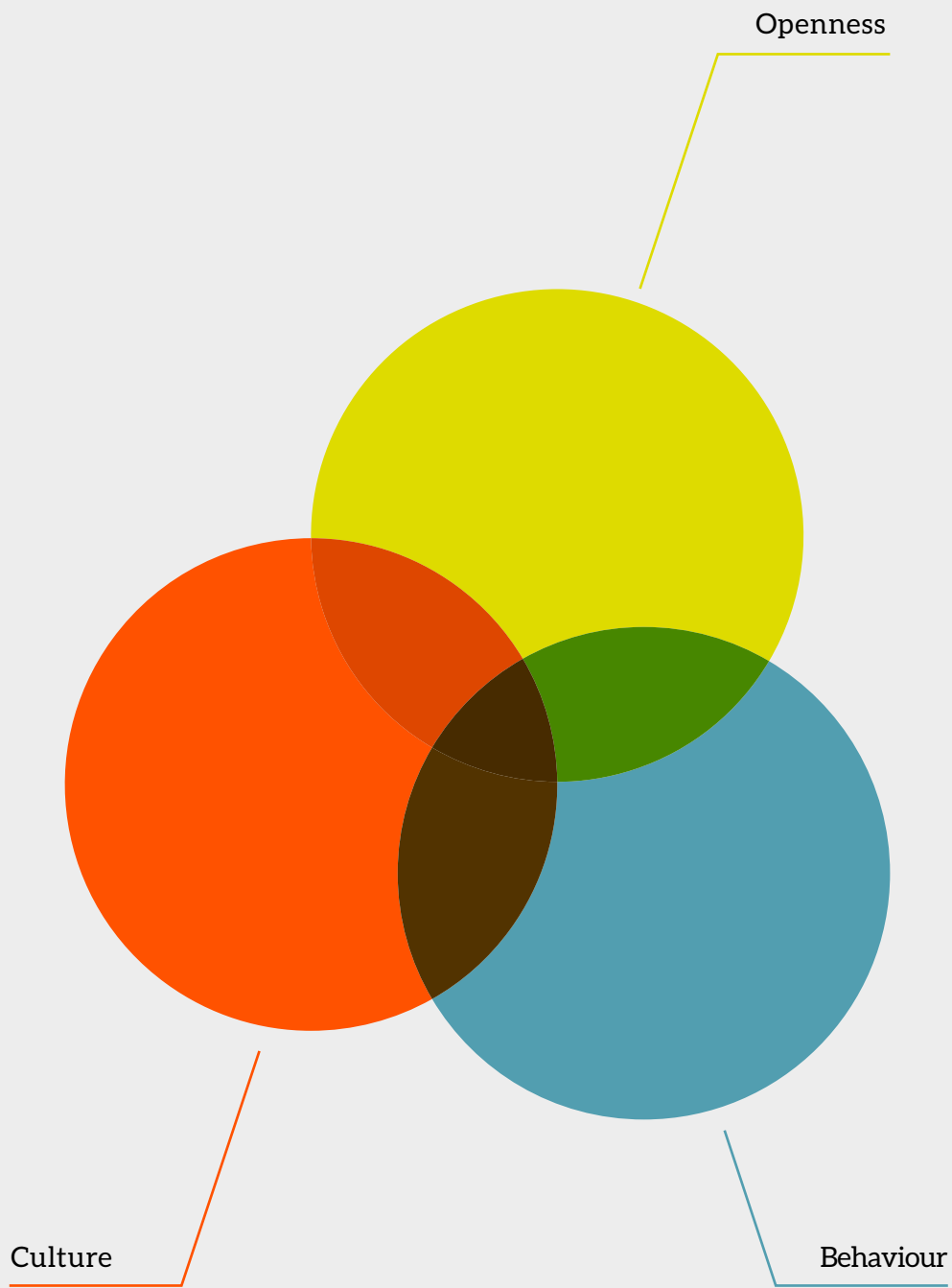
Go beyond cultural differences!

Unfortunately, rising above cultural differences is not easy. You can experience that by playing simulation game called Barnga. During this game participants play simple card game in small groups. After a while the groups are mixed and this is when conflicts begin. The rules of the game varies in each group, but so slightly that it is hard to realize at the beginning. Everyone think that they play by the same rules, but they don't. In this simulation participants experience that though there are many similarities people from different cultures see reality in a different way. Participants must understand that work in multicultural team requires identifying and understanding of those differences.

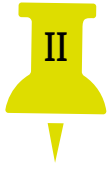
The rules are similar so it is easy to believe that we are playing the same game, but after a while someone "cheats", someone does something different, someone tries to force his interpretation. Because we think that we are playing the same game, we assume that our opponent doesn't know the rules, cheats or is just stupid. And this is when conflicts appear.

It is easy to identify big cultural differences like the way you dress, how do you greet people or how do you act during a meal. But this is just a tip of an iceberg called culture. Most of it is hidden under surface, it is hard to observe or name, even for members of given culture. If we take a look along the road we will see all the large obstacles. We will be aware of them and we will easily avoid collision. But there can be smaller barriers, hard to notice at the first glance. If we aren't careful, if we think that we know the road by heart and we don't pay attention we will fall down. It is not the big, obvious obstacles that are dangerous but the small ones. The ones that look innocent are the most unpredictable and unknown.

*So if we are to sum up
conditions of building
good multicultural team
one thing stand out in
particular – OPENNESS.*



A ground for compromise



How to communicate successfully in an international environment

Bartosz Kosiński

10 PRACTICAL TIPS

- 1 Respect cultural diversity. One of the key issues in intercultural environment is respect for group members, their culture and religion.
- 2 Gather basic information about your colleagues countries of origin. Nowadays, we have access to vast amount of information from different fields. Look for information about each members countries culture and religion.
- 3 Organize meeting about culture. Ask each member to prepare short presentation about their culture. It will help to broaden the knowledge, which in turn will improve communication and minimize conflicts.
- 4 Organize integrative games. It will allow the group to know each others behaviour and habits. It will improve communication inside the group and work atmosphere. Also it will help in the process of delegating responsibilities.
- 5 Do not assume similarities. People tend to assume that everyone they talk to is the same and uses the same cultural code. Communication is created by culture and it differs depending on cultural background.
- 6 Language is the key. The most crucial thing is that everyone used the same language fluently and understood each other. Organize language courses for those who have trouble communicating.
- 7 Remember about non-verbal communication. It constitutes the most of interaction. Gestures and facial expressions differ between cultures, so gather information on this subject.
- 8 Stereotypes and prejudice. Do not use stereotypes and prejudices that generalize ideas about about physical and psychological characteristics of foreigners.
- 9 Improve your intercultural communication skills. Participate in lectures, courses and workshops or read professional literature on the topic.
- 10 Control level of communication inside the group. Meet with individual members of the group to determine level of communication and eventual conflicts and misunderstandings. Introduce corrective actions if necessary.

Positive reinforcement in communication

We can influence people's behavior through motivation. There are many motivational techniques but positive reinforcement is one of the most effective. We distinguish four forms of positive reinforcement:

Praise way of appreciation and, in the same time, encouragement for desired change in behavior. Person motivated by praise will repeat given behavior.

Exchange contractual relationship based on promise of granting ones wish in exchange for desired behavior.

Reward one of the most effective reinforcements. Reward is granted as a recognition for desired behavior.

Verbal and non-verbal recognition direct communicate showing approval and contentment with ones work or behavior(handshake, smile, etc.)

In case of failure of positive reinforcement we can use negative consequences. They should be used as a last resort because they might cause anger and resentment of a person in relation to whom they are drawn. We distinguish three types of negative consequences.

- Cessation of rewarding because of unwanted behavior.
- Carrying for protective actions in case of reluctance to preform desired changes.
- Setting of natural consequences of undesired behavior

Rules of conducting a meeting

Person who is conducting a meeting

- Set the rules and refer to them
- Listen carefully and remember to sum everything up regularly
- Show enthusiasm by capturing ideas of participants
- Politely stop people speaking off-topic
- Encourage quiet and shy people to speak up.
- Ask participants for their opinion

Participant of the meeting

- Don't be afraid to share your opinions or ideas
- Don't interrupt others
- Express your emotions honestly without attacking others
- Develop other people ideas
- Support the person conducting the meeting
- Listen carefully to other people opinion and ideas



Examples of solutions to problems with incorrect behaviour in group

Problem

Description of a problem

Loud mouth

Talks a lot and aloud, dominates

Interrupter

Impatient, interrupts others

Whisperer

Talks on a side

Lagger

Comes late, leaves early

Shy

Sits aside, quiet

Doubting Thomas

Disapproves and doubts others ideas

Aggressor

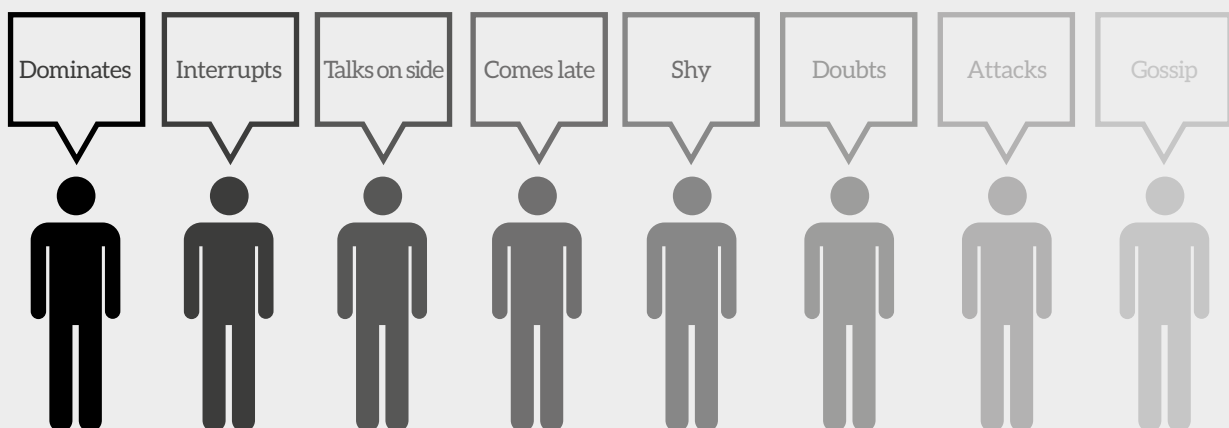
Attacks and accuses

Know-it-all

Thinks his ideas are the best, uses age or status as an advantage

Gossip

Speaks off-topic or returns to already discussed topics



Behaviour problems in group

Solution

Refer to the rule of equal input of all participants, ask to write ideas on paper.

Only person holding an object (pen, stick) is allowed to talk at given time. If it doesn't work express your emotions.

Remind of the rules, wait until person stops talking.

Don't wait up. Start the meeting with pleasant exercises and do not pay attention to the person who is late.

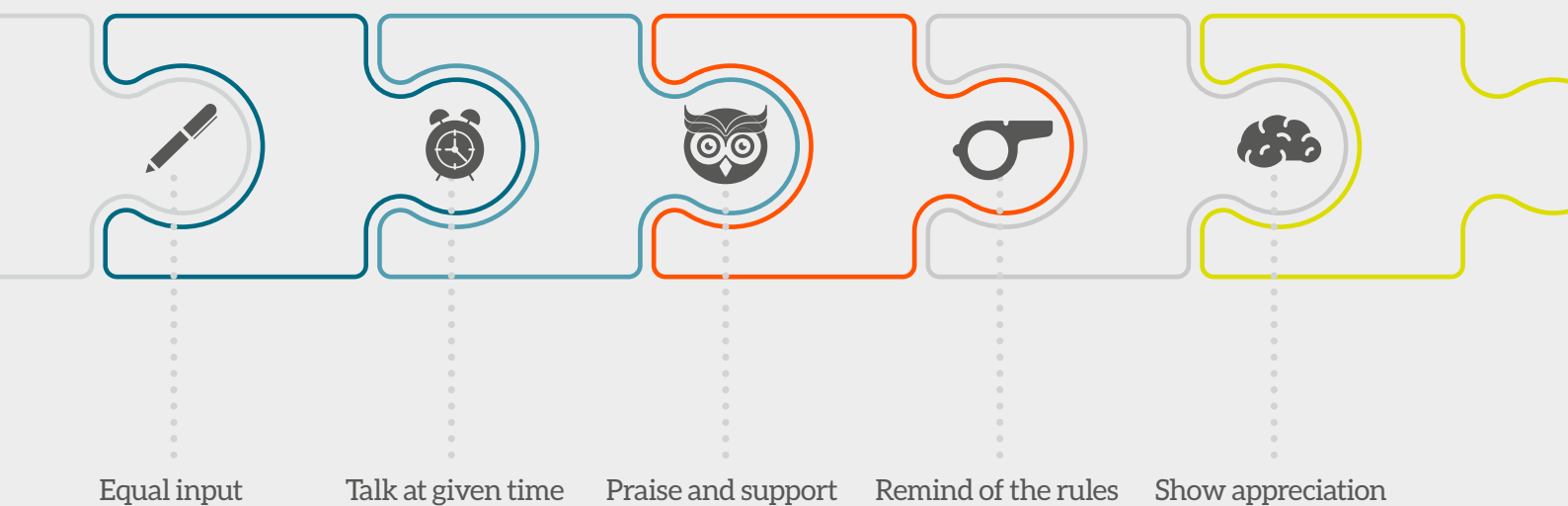
Show attention, ask for opinion, praise and support.

Set a rule that you don't judge each others ideas for a while. Ask.

Remind of the topic and rules, try to mitigate tension.

Show appreciation for expertise, remind how important is groups opinion and show your point of view.

Remind of the topic, propose talk on other subject, ask if he wants to add something to the topic.





Being a leader and social entrepreneur

Ewa Kownacka

Being a leader and social entrepreneur involves working with individuals, communities, institutions and organizations during time when people are facing difficulties and challenges. It involves as well working with difference, understanding and encompassing diversity, and being able to communicate efficiently across cultures.

Leadership seems to emerge naturally as a an answer to the need for a change. But is does not emerge by itself. It is always people, individuals, us, who take the responsibility to face the challenge, inspire and empower others to commonly build better future. Every inspirer, innovator, entrepreneur and leader needs him or herself an inspiration to be able to share it with others.

Below there is a list of resources that might be helpful in boosting creativity in intercultural leadership and pinning up key topics from previous chapters of the book. You can enjoy some materials introducing concepts that participants of the project have discovered and experienced during the workshop and providing more in-depth information, so both readers who have and not have participated in the workshop could work efficiently with this toolkit. All resources are available online for free. The list have been organized around the following topics:

Appreciative Inquiry and appreciative approach as a method for planning, managing and most importantly dealing with challenges in bringing about social change

Intercultural differences in communication and leadership

System thinking in planning and delivering social actions

Additionally some inspirational resources about leadership, management and social entrepreneurship has been added to the list.

APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY

Is a method of bringing about the change in organizations and communities. It focuses on strengths, resources and possibilities for action instead of problems to be solved. It has 2 goals, 8 assumptions and 4 steps. The process is build in a way to inspire, bring back hope, empower and strengthen bounds within organization or community, all that is needed not solely to plan a change but most importantly to make it happen.

To start:

Readings

Short theoretical introductions

<http://appreciativeinquiry.case.edu/intro/definition.cfm>

<http://appreciativeinquiry.case.edu/intro/whatisai.cfm>

Using AI to make change happen – brief summary of AI

http://www.taith.co.uk/wp_taith/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/PSMW-Sowing-Seeds-AI.pdf

Tapping into the River of Positive Possibilities by Herb Stevenson

– brief and clear presentation of the core Appreciative Inquiry methods and tools

http://www.clevelandconsultinggroup.com/pdfs/appreciative_inquiry.pdf

Appreciative Inquiry: asking powerful questions by Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence – brief guidance to understand the nature and process of crafting powerful questions

<http://www.kcsdv.org/images/pdfs/AppreciativeInquiry.pdf>

Videos

Short animation explaining the shift from problem solving approach to Appreciative Inquiry approach

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QzW22wwh1J4>

Professor John Hayes explains the term Appreciative Inquiry, and through examples and experiences shows how to use it, within less than 4 minutes!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BqHeujLHPkw>

A training video that includes the 5 principles, 4-D Cycle, positive core, Summit Process, and story of how Appreciative inquiry began. It's presented by Jackie Kelm at www.AppreciativeEngagement.com.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZwGNZ63hj5k>

Description of Appreciative Innovation: An alternative to problem solving.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UF2RV_COXuE

Appreciative Inquiry for social change in action – clarifying and inspirational example from India of community and organisational transformation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pVBMMJORMao>

<http://myrada.org/myrada/film5.html> or <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=htcbcPZht8>

Every Child A Talker project – another example of Appreciative Inquiry at work

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IM-FKGbjlrM>

Developing assets based project proposal, based on appreciative approach
– explained by Small Grants Program Indonesia

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=usTdHXfYF-g>

Going into depth:

Readings

Five Theories of Change Embedded in Appreciative Inquiry by Gervase R. Bushe (article)

<http://www.gervasebushe.ca/ai5.pdf>

What is Appreciative Inquiry by Linda Joy Mitchell (article)

<http://www.lindajoymitchell.org.uk/downloads/what-is-appreciative-inquiry.pdf>

Appreciative Inquiry Is Not (Just) About The Positive by Gervase R. Bushe (article)

http://www.gervasebushe.ca/AI_pos.pdf

Locating the Energy for Change: An Introduction to Appreciative Inquiry by Charles Elliott (e-book)

<http://ces.iisc.ernet.in/envis/sdev/appreciativeinquiry.pdf>

Videos

Diana Whitney talks about Appreciative Inquiry

Part 1: <http://vimeo.com/21962356>

Part 2: <http://vimeo.com/21962767>

More resources directories

<http://appreciativeinquiry.case.edu/>

TEDx complexe video explaining the key concepts in intercultural communication and challeges of working abroad and in multicultural team

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aa2LX6l31rg>



INTERCULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN COMMUNICATION AND LEADERSHIP

Living abroad requires learning and understanding new and mostly very different culture. Being a leader and working with migrant or cultural community, requires cross cultural competences and ability to build bridges between two or more cultures. Below you there are some internet resources that might be your cultural compass on the intercultural leadership journey.

To start:

Readings

Selection of short explanatory articles about intercultural communication

http://www.mindtools.com/pages/main/newMN_CDV.htm#culture

10 tips for intercultural leaders

<http://www.kwintessential.co.uk/cultural-services/articles/tips-intercultural-leadership.html>

Basic informations about customs and cultural features of different countries in one place.
Good place to start or when you are in a hurry.

<http://www.kwintessential.co.uk/resources/country-profiles.html>

Basic informations about management cultural features in different countries in one place.
Good place to start or when you are in a hurry.

<http://www.kwintessential.co.uk/intercultural/management/guide.html>

Series of short articles providing simple introduction to intercultural communication and competencies.

<http://www.kwintessential.co.uk/cultural-services/articles-intercultural.html>

Some tips about important part of non-verbal communication - the meaning of gestures around the world

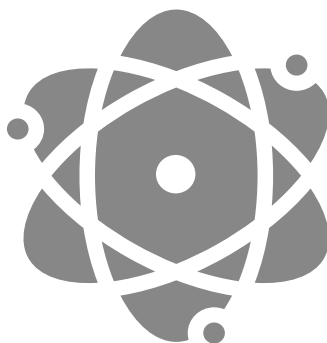
Asia & the Pacific http://www.globalbusinessleadership.com/gestures_asia.asp

Europe http://www.globalbusinessleadership.com/gestures_overview.asp

Middle East & Africa http://www.globalbusinessleadership.com/gestures_mid_af.asp

North America http://www.globalbusinessleadership.com/gestures_n_am.asp

South America http://www.globalbusinessleadership.com/gestures_s_am.asp



Going into depth:

Culture dimensions – different approaches

9 culture dimensions and 6 leadership dimensions of GLOBE project – the Global Leadership and Organizational Behaviour Effectiveness

Brief introductions to the concept and research results:

<http://www.grovetwell.com/pub-GLOBE-intro.html>

<http://www.grovetwell.com/pub-GLOBE-dimensions.html>

<https://www.boundless.com/management/textbooks/boundless-management-textbook/leadership-9/trait-approach-69/the-globe-project-348-7084/>

<http://www.ccl.org/leadership/pdf/assessments/GlobeStudy.pdf>

This video visualizes the results of the Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness Research Project (GLOBE study) which studied the properties of different cultures around the world. The project measured the values and beliefs of more than 17.000 people in 62 countries.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jKY8FhMPLEA>

7 culture dimensions by Trompenaars

TEDx talk in which Fons Trompenaars the author of the concept explains how cultural differences often lead to misunderstandings between people, but also how to seize the opportunities that diversity brings to organizations, and the world.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hmyfjKjcbm0>

5 culture dimensions by Hofstede

<http://www.mindtools.com/pages/videos/hofstede.htm>

The comparison of three main approaches to culture dimensions:

<http://www.slideshare.net/LisaParrott1/exploring-culture-theory-globe-hofstede-and-trompenaars-25249040>



SYSTEM THINKING

Individuals we meet as leaders are always part of several systems. They create systems like families, communities, interest groups, organizations. System thinking is a method helpful in understanding complexity of our world (social, physical, economic and so on) for better decision-making. Below there is a list of resources introducing system thinking approach and showing its applications in social leadership.

Video introducing system thinking and presenting risks of social actions planned without systemic approach.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=17BP9n6g1F0>

A Group Demonstration of systems and system thinking – very similar to the activity that has been done during the workshop

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hE9XdaI56qw>

TEDx talk about system thinking, social entrepreneurship and innovation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N1fcYefOHN4>

Website and youtube channel with video resources introducing sustainability, explaining diverse aspects of systems and self-sufficiency.

<http://sustainabilityillustrated.com/en/>

<https://www.youtube.com/user/learnsustainability>

Useful leadership self-development resources

As a leader we not only enable people and communities to grow but to be able to grow with them it is good to learn and broaden our horizons constantly. The websites below are rich in diverse types of resources – articles, tips, tests, videos – helpful in getting the basics in leadership, management and communication, key topics for leaders around the world.

<http://www.mindtools.com/>

(please note that many useful resources especially concerning intercultural communication are under “career skills” section)

<https://www.boundless.com/management/>

Inspiring Leadership Video: Lead Simply™

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1eF9sb4ovF8>



Action! Create and implement your idea for a project!

Nina Macior

Working as a team and our strengths

Sometimes many organizations¹ and informal groups underestimate their skills to ‘manage projects’. For many of us it seems very serious task to do. Many people, when thinking about projects, thinks about big grants and donors giving a lot of money. Unfortunately it’s not exactly true – people hardly ever realize that even small activity, structured and planned, is a project. Sometimes, everyday activities become projects that have the aim and the way to reach it.

Work of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) – small or big – is to implement projects, whether they are big or small, financed by someone or non-involving costs. Most organizations, especially those small ones, have to understand that being active and diversifying activities they undertake, mobilizing and involving various resources and means, is the basis for the organization. Especially, when we take into account different types of not-for-profit organizations.

First of all, we must understand that NGOs and non-formal organizations have specific nature, aims and ways of working and legal framework in which they work (more in the chapter about legal requirements and main characteristics of an organization). What is more, they are created by people who believe in the same mission and are aware of the aim why they were founded. They also know each other to an extent that they know exactly what is the input of each member, what are the skills of each member and how they can contribute to the organization as a whole.

1) *By organisations in this chapter the author means formal and non-formal organisations, eg. youth groups, non-governmental organisations etc.*

Organisation	their members with individual and overall synergy capital
Human capital	members and partners with their skills, contacts, engagement and energy
Social capital	relationships, past interactions and cooperation history, previous activities
Physical capital	space and assets
Financial capital	financial assets

Most of people do not realize that most of the assets of organisations and non-formal groups are hard to measure and most of times they come as a synergy reaction.

Main values of our work are:

Efficiency – we have ability – by working together and using our skills - to accomplish a task or a project with the least waste of time and effort and with competency in performing the tasks

Accountability and (shared) responsibility – we are working close to the communities and beneficiaries, we often live in these environments and know what are the needs and the best way to do things – we feel responsible for our work and things we do and steps we take to aim our goals; when we work in a group we feel group identity and everything is shared – whether success or challenges

Equality and independence – each of us is equal and independent, but by working in a group we create a synergic object that can do even more

Transparency and visibility – not always visibility is needed but when we work in our own communities people know us and rely on us; our activities are transparent and independent because we have our organizational and group goals

Realism – of course we are idealists but in our work we want to make things done and we know how to do, what to do and how to get there even if the idea and plan is very creative

Creativity and innovation – this is sometimes our biggest asset – our fresh minds and a lot of different experiences and loads of energy!

Flexibility – sometimes we are very busy but it is not a challenge to be flexible for new ideas and new ways of doing things – especially when making our own projects and activities

CV Exercise:

1. My strenghs
2. My weaknesses
3. I am good at...
4. I need suport in....
5. I can share...
6. 3 setences about me:

This is a great exercise to conduct with members of your organisation or group – you can know each other better!. It is a good oppportunity to think individually about your strengths and areas that you need and want to improve, also it is amazing group exercise to see what skills we have and where are our assets as the group, we can exchange ours skills and know more about each other.

Projects – short introduction

What is a project?

The Oxford English Dictionary defines “project” as “an individual or collaborative enterprise that is carefully planned and designed to achieve a particular aim. For example the Incubator project aims at improving capacity of formal and non-formal migrant organizations in Poland through tailored trainings and support within the program.

A project is a series of activities aimed at bringing about clearly specified objectives within a defined time-period and with a defined budget. Normally during the planning phase we know what capacity we have, what resources we need and what will be the activities to achieve the goal. It can have the budget but not necessarily – we can organize a set of non-cost activities and we still can achieve the general objective of the project!

Main characteristics of a project:

Projects have a purpose – they should aim at something, ex. improving capacity, organize extra activities for children and enable them to spend their time in a creative and productive way, to support migrants and other groups of people (our target group), to organize activities aimed at improving intercultural dialogue between migrants and the host society

Projects are realistic – they are planned taking into account the environment we are working in and the needs of the target group, we know (should know) what is the way to implement activities and to know all the risks for the activities and how to react to some challenges (it makes the projects flexible)

Projects are limited in time and space – they are planned for the certain time and for the certain place/group of people and other conditions combined – this is the main characteristic of a project – they are planned and they have timeline and action plan

Projects are complex – even the smallest projects are based on the relations between the stakeholders, they need ideas transferred into activities done by people and for the target groups – they are so many factors and things we have to think about!

Projects are collective – they are done by people for the people. if there is no engagement we will never succeed. We have to know who will do what and for whom are we doing it.

Projects are unique – the main added value of a project is that it should be a unique idea, sometimes we add creative components and most of the time every project and specific activities are innovative products

Projects are an adventure – for all of the people involved! Both for the people involved in the implementation and for those being the target group or partners of the project.

Projects are made up of stages – even the smallest projects and ideas transformed into projects must go through different steps – from specifying the idea, designing, planning the implementation and implementing, monitoring and evaluating. Also, follow-up is very important. If we miss one of the steps we can probably succeed, but project is a learning process for the whole team and without engagement and process-focus we cannot make anything sustainable and lasting, also anything successful and as stated above – pleasant adventure and unique experience.



Obviously this is a distinction between basic stages of the project. Depending on the size and type of the project there may be more steps, they may be more distributed and more complex. They may be considered as a whole, or sometimes omitted. For example, when applying for grants most often you will be asked for very accurate description of the project and many elements of project management at the stage of submission of the application - and then to realize it right away. For larger projects monitoring is very important and permanently enters the planning stages from beginning to end. In the case of grants, we are also dealing with the evaluation and reporting.

There are many types of projects, there are many different groups and organizations that implement projects - depending on this there are some areas in which most of the problems occur or some of the factors that are extremely important in working with projects and in teams. Below there are some tips and useful advice why projects succeed or fail.

Why do projects succeed?

- 1 The organisational structure is suited to the project team and needs of the project (do we have enough capacity to do the project in terms of the organizational structures? for example accountant, experienced people to coordinate, good communication, volunteers support, own office or other available office/meeting place, support from top management)
- 2 The project team participates in designing and planning (if we do not engage the team in designing and planning, especially using their ideas, we will never succeed - they will not own the project if they do not see that the project and any activities are theirs and they are treated like the team members)
- 3 The project team is committed to establishing schedules and their own timelines (along with engaging them we need to create our own rules so that all of us can follow them and be responsible for the project at every stage)
- 4 The project is designed within the realistic budgets (if we do not have support from other partners and institutions we should plan the budget realistically to reach the balance between actual financial needs and possible contribution from team members and/or partners.
- 5 The project makes proper use of network planning and problem solving techniques. Conflicts in group are the biggest risk for whole project - we have to listen to each other and settle arguments in early stages.
- 6 Whole team is responsible for success of the project, therefore everyone must be engaged in achievement of the goals. If you can't do something tell others and ask for help.
- 7 There shouldn't be too much bureaucracy, politics or procedures - if there is too much, we should minimize their impact on the team involved in the project (this is one of the main threats to creativity and team spirit when even small steps cost too much effort and stress, also procedures costing more time and energy; there should be someone knowing the procedures and 'how the things work' but they should not impact the work of the whole team)
- 8 The target group is involved from the beginning - usually we know well our target group, but we should ask them how they would like to organize things and what they can add to the project.

Key elements
of a successful
partnership:

1. Recognition of the need for a partnership
2. Clear and agreed purpose and objectives
3. Commitment and ownership
4. Trust between partners
5. Create clear and robust partnership arrangements
6. Good communication with all partners
7. Mutual benefits for all partners
8. Conflict resolution and mediation
9. Systems to monitor, measure and learn
10. Outcomes that live on beyond the life of the partnership

Why do projects fail?

- 1 No problem solving mechanisms – accumulation of anger and mutual complaints undermines the project.
- 2 Lack of internal communication – tension around bad communication, including the multicultural one, are great danger for the project.
- 3 Inadequate technical and administrative skills – ask for assistance and help, ask questions and request guidance, check what experience and skills each of the team members have.
- 4 Too small overall capacity to implement project in the group.
- 5 Unrealistic project schedules.
- 6 Unclear project goals

All of that advice leads us to the moment when we can say that despite the human factors, organizational structures and of course type of projects and grants/funds, there are many factors that are related to project planning, putting the activities together in order to make them work together to achieve the general goal and specific objectives. The project objectives should be SMART:

Specific: clear about what, where, when, and how the situation will be changed
– well defined and clear to anyone that has a basic knowledge of the project

Measurable: able to quantify the targets and benefits to know if the goal is obtainable and how far away completion is and when it has been achieved

Achievable: able to attain the objectives (knowing the resources and capacities at the disposal)

Realistic: able to obtain the level of change reflected in the objective within the availability of resources, knowledge and time

Time bound: stating the time period in which it be accomplished fully (enough time to achieve the goal and not too much time, which can affect project performance)

While planning the projects, common steps would be:

- A needs analysis of the social reality and environment in which we are working and functioning
- An analysis of the organisation's or people capacities and interests
(people - members of the organization and people who are our target groups and partners)
- A pre-definition of aims and concrete objectives – in order to set a specific area of interest depending on our profile and area area of expertise
- An identification of possible/probable activities – so that we can avoid broad conceptions and it will make us specialized in some activities and topics
- The calendar of the project and activities
- The potential resources – human resources, financial and non-financial
(contacts, partnerships with institutions and other organisations)
- The people in charge of the project – also with emphasis on the volunteers and people willing to be involved
- The partners – people, institutions and other organisations
- Writing an outline of the project – so called concept note or a full proposal
- Possibly applying for funds

THE LOGICAL FRAMEWORK APPROACH

The LFA is an analytical process and set of tools used to support project planning and management. It provides a set of interlocking concepts which are used as part of an iterative process to aid structured and systematic analysis of a project or program idea.

What is LFA needed for?

- The project's hierarchy of objectives (Project Description or Intervention Logic);
- The key external factors critical to the project's success (Assumptions); and
- How the project's achievements will be monitored and evaluated

In other words: logical framework approach is a structured framework that enables us to plan all the project and to focus on different points while designing and planning. In practice it is also a core structure for various proposal forms because it takes into account all the aspects of project planning and implementation, also further monitoring and evaluation.

Problem and objective analysis is the most important part of the project planning. Sometimes it is called as overall needs analysis or needs assessment. They consist of the analysis of the problems and their roots and then we are planning our actions to respond to the roots of the problems. In many handbooks there are different graphs showing us the problem and objective tree and using it as the basis for planning exercises.

Needs analysis is the most important process and in this stage we have to involve our target group, discuss with them. For big projects and programs needs assessment is a complex research project. Of course we do not need to make research, but we have to know what are the problems, what we are going to do with them to solve/minimize them and why this is going to help.



The most useful tool for planning a project is to structure the project along “W-questions” (inspired from the Laswell method)¹. In this method we use questions to identify individual elements of the project and how they interrelate. Your answers will give you an overview of the project and let you see how its constituent parts are linked.



WHO?
FOR WHOM?
WITH WHOM?



WHAT?



WHY?




WHERE?




WHEN?




HOW?

- 
- identification of project partners and/or target groups
 - their roles and relationships in the project
 - background of participants if it affects the project
 - their views on the project
 - strengths and weaknesses rooted in these relationships and views

- 
- the main project activities – spontaneous, organised and institutional
 - social, economic, cultural, political and educational dimensions
 - the project's impact on these dimensions (short term and long term)

- 
- needs and wishes satisfied by the project/project activities
 - motivation and interests of participants
 - relationship between participants' objectives and our objectives

- 
- social context of the project and situation of participants possibility of organizing activities/implementing project in a given place or places

- 
- what period of time is enough/appropriate?
 - what about the timeline for particular activities?
 - short, medium or long-term?

- 
- how will it be done? (organizational aspects – inside, participation process – outside)
 - techniques and instruments used, methods of work and types of activities
 - input of participants' experience, skills, other projects, partners and stakeholders

After finishing the analysis stage, we should start planning!

One of the most common tools for successful project planning is logical framework matrix, helping to visualize the logic of the project. It aims at organizing activities and results in a chart that clearly shows how the project should work (from the bottom) to achieve its specific objectives and general goal (at the top). The table consists of many cells and requires to focus on many details, also quantifying the results and outcomes and identifying means of verification. We need to focus also on risks and assumptions of the projects so that all the process would work as planned. The sample logical framework matrix is presented below:

A PROJECT DESCRIPTION

B OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (OVIs)

General objective (impact)

Measures (direct or indirect) to verify to what extent the OO are fulfilled (benefits for indirect beneficiaries)

Specific objectives (outcomes)

Measures (direct or indirect) to verify to what extent the SO are fulfilled (benefits for direct beneficiaries)

Intermediate results (outputs)

Measures (direct or indirect) to verify to what extent the results are produced

Results that the projects needs to deliver (sufficient and necessary) to ensure the accomplishment of the specific objective

1.1.
1.2.
2.1.
2.2.
3.1.
3.2.

1.

2.

3.

Activities

The activities (sufficient and necessary) that have to be undertaken by the project in order to produce results.

Means

Main resources (physical and non-physical necessary to carry out activities).

Creating the chart like this for planning every project, whether small or bigger, is very useful because especially during the planning exercise we are able to identify some gaps or some activities that are not related to the general objective. Also it is possible to quantify our activities and impact.

While planning we have to be aware of the risks and challenges which we can meet during the project implementation. The most realistic attitude is not to think that everything goes good but always to have plan B in case of an emergency or small challenges. Some of them depend on us (team integration, communication skills, information and promotion of the event, management mistakes, tight schedule and delays) and some of them not directly (the weather, how many people will come, delays in transportation of goods and people etc). The best way to cope with them is to be prepared for them or at least know that something can happen :)

C SOURCES OF VERIFICATION (SOV)

D ASSUMPTIONS AND PRE CONDITIONS

The sources of data / information necessary to verify status of OO level indicators

The sources of data / information necessary to verify status of SO level indicators

The sources of data / information to verify status of result level indicators

- 1.1.
- 1.2.
- 2.1.
- 2.2.
- 3.1.
- 3.2.

Costs

Means translated into costs.

- investment costs
- travel costs
- per diem
- administrative costs

TOTAL:

Important events, conditions or decisions outside control of the project which must prevail

Important events, conditions or decisions outside control of the project which must prevail

Important events, conditions or decisions outside control of the project which must prevail

Pre conditions
Conditions that need to be fulfilled before the project can start.

Exercise:

Make a group exercise with the project team and fill in the table trying to add some ideas for mitigating the risks or once it happens to transform them into capacities.

Hazard/risk/challenge	Mitigation means	Ways to transform them into capacities
Bad weather	Not possible, only checking the weather and prepare plan B (changing the dates or limit the outdoor activities)	Use our experience form indoor activities Doing indoor event and invite someone for cooperation (maybe institution or school if it is on Sunday)
Mistakes in budgeting/overspending	Budget monitoring Relocating the savings to underbudgeted budget lines and inform the donor if needed	Ask for help other institutions (maybe local authorities for giving us space or conference room, asking restaurant for discount for promotion possibility or having their show) Change the activity for low or non-cost activity in an innovative way

Monitoring and evaluation – why do we need them?

Most of people implementing the projects underestimate the meaning of monitoring – they think that it is more about controlling than checking if everything is going well. Monitoring is done during the project and is a really good opportunity to see small gaps and mistakes to learn for the future or improve during the same project.

Why do we need to monitor?

- Ensure that we are doing everything according to the plan (and proposal)
- Review our strengths and weaknesses in different parts of project management or activities implementation
- Make sure we are not wasting money and resources
- Ensure that people are involved and satisfied
- Help look for areas for our own learning and making notes from our experience, list-to-do and lessons learnt
- Identify other possible projects as a follow-up – during the implementation
- Create a record for activities – depends on the donor regulations

Sometimes also we have different opinion about evaluation. We have conduct mid-term evaluation – answering the question: where are we and why it is bad/good? There is also final evaluation or partial evaluations of the activities. The main aim of evaluaton process is to check how well was the project designed and implemented and to what extent did the project meet the overall needs.

Why do we need to evaluate?

- To know whether it's working or not (the general idea with this target group)
- So you can be adaptable - discover problems or needs early to prevent serious problems later
- To know how things are working and why (or not working and why)
- So you're aware of unintended outcomes
- To know whether there was any significant change and to what extent was it attributable to the project
- To be able to better communicate the value of your work & to provide information to stakeholders and sponsors such as the effects, potential limitations, or apparent strengths of the program
- Build organisational resilience to future risks and challenges
- Indicate the program's impact on participants and stakeholders
- Reveal which program activities to continue and which ones to end - was there another alternative that may have represented a better investment?
- Recommend improvements for the future
- To know whether the project can be scaled up or replicated elsewhere
- Assist in prioritizing resources by identifying program components that are most effective or critical and which one are not

