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empowering LTU older workers  
through coaching & personal branding

## **EMPOWERING LTUs**

### **Empowering long-term unemployed older workers through coaching & personal branding**

**Part 2: Handbook on empowerment strategies and training tools to motivate  
and activate long-term unemployed workers back to work.**



## TOPIC 1.2

### Peer Coaching Circles

*“An idea not coupled with action will never get any bigger than the braincell it occupied.”*

*Arnold H. Glasow*

*Author of Glasow's Gloombusters*





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## INTRODUCTION

Searching for employment can be long a process which can put pressure on your self-esteem and make you anxious for taking actions to face the challenges ahead. Peer Coaching Circles is a methodology developed within the Empower LTU project and is based on the experience-sharing and action learning. By being in a group of peers who are facing similar challenges, the participants get the opportunity to share the difficulties they face with people who can relate to them and share their vision on the situation.

The goal is to understand better what actions could be taken to increase the chances of the participants to find their way on the job market. It can be a daunting task to find a job, which is why the facilitators of Peer Coaching Circles listen to all participants and guide them through the process of how they can improve their situation step by step in between sessions and after the final session.

## 1. OVERVIEW OF PEER COACHING

Peer Coaching Circles are based on a method of learning called *action learning*. It is a method that uses real life and real time problems, issues and opportunities as a basis for your learning. The people in the circle are a community of learners and help generate new insights by asking questions to each other about the situation they are facing with the help of a facilitator. By suspending judgment and offering questions, there is time and space for ideas to develop and for reflection to take place. Sometimes it can be tempting to offer advice, but this can close down the learning too quickly. At the end of the session participants can think of ways and solutions to act upon the reflections they have made during the session.

### The benefits of this action learning approach are:

- Peer coaching enables the participants to generate more insight into the situation they are facing, perhaps helping them to generate more options and solutions. The individual participant shares their problems, issues, opportunities and challenges with others;
- Peer Coaching provides a safe yet challenging environment where ideas can be explored and tested;
- By bringing more brain power to look at issues, participants have more opportunity to spot issues which they haven't already thought of; it can help expose blind spots. Other participants may help them look at potential consequences or outcomes, this may help them generate more innovative and creative ideas or find new ways to approach situations. The individual is helped to find the next steps forward;
- Encouraging development of self-reflection and self-belief;
- Opportunities to network with others facing similar issues, making new contacts and expand their network.

After each session, participants will complete an evaluation form (see Annex I of this chapter for example) and the facilitator will write up their working notes from the facilitator's perspective. In addition, during the first session participants will complete a soft skills audit form (see Annex II of this chapter for example). The facilitator will keep all evaluation forms at the end of each session. At the end of final session, participants will complete a second soft skills audit form (see Annex III of this chapter for example), a final outcome evaluation form and the facilitator will write up a summary report which summarises the individual evaluation forms per session, the final outcome forms and their own facilitator's notes/experiences. The report should contain interesting quotes from participants and audio files/photos of the Peer Coaching project, where possible.

We recognise that the process of looking for work or trying to make the first steps to developing a career can be full of anxieties and uncertainties for many people especially if they have been unemployed for some time. Inova has developed a unique group mentoring process within the Empowering LTU project which brings together skilled facilitation using action learning techniques,

coaching and mentoring, combined with career development/self-reflection tools. In order to support LTUs to increase their career options and develop valuable soft skills, the Peer Coaching training methodology will be delivered to them directly whilst additional courses will be delivered to careers advisors and guidance workers, supporting understanding of the issues faced by LTUs.

The facilitator will work with approximately 5 learners in a group setting. The learning blends group discussion and individual airing of issues, reflection, goal setting and personal action planning.

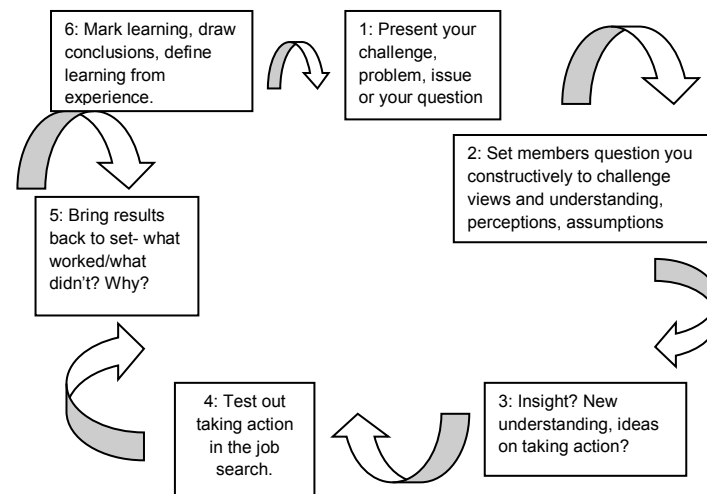
## 2. PEER COACHING

Peer Coaching are learner led and learner focused. The concept is built on the process of learning as a journey which requires that the individual can be helped to reveal what they need to know, that some knowledge is already within and needs to be brought forward, and that shared knowledge and learning from others can be valuable.

The focus is very much on questioning to reveal insights- whether this is through group discussions, completion of exercises and guided questioning from other participants. For example, through guided questioning sections within the Peer Coaching session, participants take it in turns to have a time slot to talk about their problem or opportunity and the other group members offer questions. The focus is on questioning rather than advice giving. Similarly when completing exercises regarding self-development or self-reflection, participants are encouraged to question their responses and to support other group members in questioning why they responded to an exercise in a certain way. This process strengthens the development of self-reflection.

The model below (Action Learning Process) is useful in further explaining the purpose and process of Peer Coaching.

Fig 1. Action Learning Process



- 1) Starting point: Present your challenges and questions you have about your situation to others in the group.
- 2) The other participants will also be facing challenges with unemployment and can give their view on the situation you have presented.
- 3) You reflect on what others have said about your situation, through exercises you reflect on what you can do about it and the actions you can take by the next session or in the future.
- 4) After the session you test out the actions you have planned to face your challenges and see what results they give.
- 5) You bring the results of your action back to the next session, reflect together with the others on what went right and/or wrong. You think about how you can improve the action or what other action you can take.
- 6) You draw conclusions from the actions you have been taking throughout and in between the sessions. This will prepare you better for the next time you face challenges or questions when you are in a similar situation.

#### PEER COACHING- FACILITATION AIMS

- Exploration of what may cause particular conditions or consequences; reviewing decisions or actions and reveal how this has led to the current situation. What have they learned from this situation?
- Examining their own thinking that led them to believe something or act in a certain way. Is a decision built on fair assumptions? Have assumptions been tested?
- The facilitation should also be **future focused and solution focused**. It is useful to assist members in predicting possible outcomes. Have they taken everything into account? What is the back up or contingency plan? Have they considered all the options in a situation?
- Your facilitation will explicitly get people to **commit to goal and action plans**, report on their own progress, redefine goals and review outcomes.
- The facilitation should involve awareness of **group dynamics and group process**; this may occasionally require that the facilitator may have to intervene to protect someone's time, to keep issues on track when challenge may be causing distress, when someone is perhaps using power inappropriately or behaving in a way that frustrates or blocks the group's learning.

- Encourage group members to be creative, to work outside comfort zones and to maximise opportunities.

Contracting: defining an agreement with the members about roles and responsibilities in order that a) you can best facilitate: b) they can get most out of the process in a climate which is helpful to learning. Agreements need to be revisited frequently and rules of operation need restating at the start of each session.

### OUTLINE OF SESSION CONTENT

<p>SESSION INDICATIVE CONTENT</p> <p>(The different points mentioned here are explained more in detail on the following pages.)</p>	<p>SUGGESTED TOOLS/EXERCISES</p> <p>(tools explained further in this chapter)</p>
<p><b>MEETING 1</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Before session 1: Signing of learning agreement;</li> <li>2) Introduction phase of session 1: Administration and materials signatures on attendance record, check agreements signed, show and explain learner pack, ground rules agreement;</li> <li>3) Personal introductions-your introduction and learner introductions;</li> <li>4) Introduction to Action Learning peer coaching principles;</li> <li>5) Completion of audit skills form;</li> <li>6) Go through examples- approach, difference between advice giving, using questions, turning questions into statements, outline way of working;</li> <li>7) Exploration of issues;</li> <li>8) Goal setting and action planning;</li> <li>9) Summary of actions and learning;</li> <li>10) Evaluation forms;</li> <li>11) Ensure you have agreed next session, date, time, venue (may be prescheduled).</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tool 1: Choosing an animal</li> <li>• Tool 2: Jelly baby exercise</li> <li>• Tool 3: Mind Mapping</li> <li>• Tool 4: Wheel of Skills</li> <li>• Tool 5: SMART Action Planning</li> </ul>



## MEETING 2

- 12) Re contracting- checking agreement on ways of working;
- 13) Progress review: discussion of successes, difficulties;
- 14) Articulation of new challenges and opportunities;
- 15) Exploration of issues;
- 16) New Goal setting and action planning;
- 17) Summary of actions and learning;
- 18) Complete audit skills form (discussion of outcome);
- 19) Evaluation forms;
- 20) Exchange contact information, agree any further informal networking.

- Tool 6: One lie, one truth
- Tool 7: Collaging
- Tool 8: Signposting

## INTRODUCTION PHASE OF SESSION 1

The introduction of the first session to start would include:

- a) Personal introduction;
- b) Learners introduction;
- c) An introduction concerning EmpoweringLTU project, how the meetings work, why this methodology has been chosen;
- d) Develop ground rules;
- e) Establish the meeting process, give a model for how each meeting will work;
- f) Communicate expectations about evaluation and commitment;
- g) Communicate needs regarding administration procedures: initial agreement signing, attendance register, evaluation materials;
- h) Elicit any expectations the group members have of you as facilitator;
- i) Exchange any expectations you have of them in terms of contribution or behaviour or the way meetings run;
- j) Introduction to the method and ways of working, trying out the method.

### a) Your personal introduction will probably include:

- Your name.
- Personal history, how you got to where you are in life.

- Fields you have worked in, career trajectory.
- Professional qualifications if relevant, credibility to be able to facilitate.
- How you like to work, anything in particular that you value e.g. openness, honesty, sharing.
- Explain your role- process expert rather than technical expert.
- Finally give the mentee pack to all members. Ensure all attending have signed the attendance sheet and mentoring agreements have been signed.

### **b) Engaging learners to introduce themselves to one another**

This need only be brief at this initial stage. It can help to give people a framework to contain their introduction and a set time e.g. two minutes per person. It is also good practice to ask how they are feeling and ask if they can give a one word answer, e.g. Good, Anxious, Tired, Interested etc. This helps with supporting individual needs and to easing any anxieties.

Write headings on flipchart paper and ask them to summarise their introduction by asking the following:

- Name.
- Background (only what they are comfortable sharing – perhaps interests).
- Career development ideas e.g. are they wanting to enter employment full time or part time
- Have they considered self-employment
- Three key challenges you face when thinking about future jobs/career at the moment.
- What you want to get out of attending the Peer Coaching.

It is also useful to check any prior exposure of participants to action learning or coaching and mentoring, and to introduce the concept of developing self-awareness and self-diagnosis as an important part of being involved in the training.

### **c) The benefits of this Action Learning approach are:**

- It enables you to generate more insight into the situation you are facing, perhaps helping you to generate more options and solutions.
- It tests assumptions on which your plans are built.
- It enables you to reality check plans, ideas and solutions; are they appropriate, comprehensive and appropriate to your context?

- Your colleagues may help you look at potential consequences or outcomes; they may help you generate more innovative and creative ideas or find new ways to approach situations.
- It offers a way of constructively challenging your ideas, in order to help you develop them to maximise your chance of success.

#### **d) Develop ground rules**

Developing ground rules with each new learning group is a crucial way of ensuring that the group starts off working in a way that fits with the methodology.

An example of pre prepared ground rules is given on the next page but feel free to use your own ideas and to also consider including learners in the process.

*Ground rules example:*

- Confidentiality and respecting others' intellectual property/ideas
- Attendance and commitment
- Use of time
- Questioning and levels of challenge
- Giving feedback
- Respect
- Communication style
- What helps? What hinders? What hinders?

Invite a brief discussion around the Ground Rules and invite people to articulate their thoughts around topics. Write up any additional items, checking all the time that everyone feels able to sign up to what has been agreed. Probe to check that issues resonate with all participants. Pick up on any body language or discomfort that might suggest there is covert disagreement. Summarise the consent. This flipchart can then be taken by the facilitator to the following sessions.

Alternately invite a brief discussion around the above question. Invite people to share their thoughts around topics. Identify themes and agreement. Write up notes, checking all the time that everyone feels able to sign up to what has been agreed. Probe to check that issues resonate with all. Summarise the consent. Check your list in the guidance to see all angles have been covered. Introduce new ideas if anything has been missed.

#### **e) Establish the meeting process; give a model for how each meeting will work.**

A trained facilitator helps to shape the sessions. You meet for 3 hours each session. Each person has allocated time to use to explore an issue they are facing in finding employment or complete tools as guided by the facilitator. The facilitator will help participants develop action plans and goals to go

forward and test out new ideas or implement solutions. Participants then return to the second meeting to feedback on Action taken.

Peers in the group can help hold individuals to account, offer support and give them confidence to push themselves out of their comfort zone. Learning is about being resilient in the face of difficulty. Participants may not achieve everything that they set out to achieve, however they will be encouraged to review difficulties and learn from them and find ways forward or new paths for action.

You may wish to refer them to the diagram of the action learning model or draw one of your own on a flip chart.

Fostering peer support has additional benefits in that participants have shared experience of being long term unemployed and shared experiences of the barriers and issues faced in trying to find work.

**f) Communicate expectations about evaluation.**

It is a requirement of participating of the Empowering LTUs programme that members agree to take part in evaluation. At the end of each session, evaluation forms are required. It is helpful if you can get them completed at the end. The response rate is not as good if you allow people to take the form home. Allow ten minutes at the end of the session for them to be completed.

**g) Communicate needs regarding administration procedures: initial contract signing, attendance register, evaluation materials.**

At the start of each meeting participants are asked to sign in on the attendance register. This is an important record for the administrators and provides evidence to funders that the event has taken place. If possible please also record the session and take photos if participants agree to this.

**h) Elicit any expectations the group members have of you as facilitator.**

This will vary according to your facilitation style and experience, but you might check the following:

- What level of challenge are people comfortable with?
- What experience do they have of self-regulating in a group and therefore how much do they expect you to intervene?

- What would be a useful role for you regarding time keeping, enabling time to be shared?
- Do they require group or individual feedback from what you observe of behaviour in the group?
- Do individuals have any particular requirements or sensitivities?

**i) Exchange any expectations you have of them in terms of contribution or behaviour or the way meetings run.**

It is worth reiterating your expectations about confidentiality.

- What do you expect about openness and honesty?
- What level of awareness do you expect people to aspire to?
- What are your expectations about people being responsible for what they find useful and unhelpful in the group and asking for help?
- Attendance: explain any expectations you have regarding attendance, informing of non-attendance, timekeeping, communicating with you or others if there are problems, getting messages to one another in emergencies.
- Explain your expectations about doing work between meetings whether that is logging progress, reflecting, preparing for next sessions.

**j) Introduction to the method and ways of working**

In your first session you need to give people experience of trying out the method and draw attention to:

- The role of the presenter and conventions- e.g. asking for input
- The focus on questioning rather than advice giving; an exercise or examples may be needed to communicate how to question and how to avoid advice giving.

During your first session you will need to outline not only the general process of working but the behavioural elements of your role and the roles of participants.

Explain that the Peer Coaching way of working is learner led and therefore learner led. This is the person speaking explaining their issues in their time slot. Each learner is encouraged to state what they need and to regulate contributions from others if too directive or unhelpful.

If input is required the learner is expected to initiate it, asking for input from others when required. Ensure that people understand your definition of 'advice giving', in its unhelpful sense of directing

the presenter towards a particular way of thinking or course of action. . Look for sentences starting with:

‘Have you thought about....?’ ‘Have you tried...?’ ‘You could try.....’

Also explain how statements may be focused on a questioner’s experience when the focus should be on the learner.

‘When I managed the restaurant we used to....’

‘When I worked as a Manager in London I always found ...’

Give examples of how advice can take the presenter’s time and be detrimental to personal learning, bypassing an opportunity for the presenter to learn and explore for themselves. Explore unhelpful comments such as:

‘If I were in your situation I’d...’

However also give an example of when advice, if asked for, might be constructive.

### *Example*

A presenter might ask for advice about contacts.

‘I’m looking for a recruitment agent in my local area. Does anyone know one to recommend?’

## **START OF ACTUAL COACHING/MENTORING INTRODUCTION**

This is the introduction when you find out how people are, what they have been working on, what challenges they have been facing, what progress they have made, their review of any changes. It helps to structure a format.

You might wish to write the following on the flip chart to help structure the individual presentations.

- How are you feeling?
- What’s been happening?
- What actions did you take?
- What progress have you made?

## **DESCRIBE CURRENT ISSUE(S)**

At this point the individuals have separate time slots for airing issues. Allocate equal time for each person leaving enough time for a summary and evaluation at the end. Establish a turn-taking order. Then in this section the ‘presenter’ talks about the issue they wish to discuss at the moment. The

'presenter' (the person airing the issue) gives enough information to give learners an understanding about what they are facing.

Materials which can be used for this include the sheet '*My **problem or issue I want to talk about is...***'. Individual thinking time can be given prior to starting this stage.

Then the learner questions the presenter. At the early stage questions are probably information questions to provide enough understanding to grasp the context. Decide if it's best to combine the check in with the airing of the issue. This will depend on a number of factors, numbers in the group, time available, and talkativeness of the members. If this is your approach add other questions on the flip chart to structure the format. You are enabling the presenter to articulate and describe their issue at this stage.

It can sometimes be difficult for participants to prioritise which issue is requiring work. Some questions that may help include:

- What's the issue?
- Who owns this issue/problem?
- How important is it on a 1-10 scale?
- How much energy do you have for a solution on a 1-10 scale?
- Are you concerned with a number of issues, if so what does it make sense to tackle first?
- What's your priority/challenge now?
- What do you need help with today?

You will use your judgment as a facilitator when to probe usefully to maximise learning. There can be value in exploring why actions have worked and why things don't work at the check in stage too. Be aware when a participant is flitting from one issue to another that it might be symptomatic of other issues which may need tackling, confidence, poor self-organisation, fear of failure, or procrastination in avoidance of committing to one decision.

#### ISSUE EXPLORATION

By now the participants should have a grasp of the situation and be able to question to probe and explore. Questions are used to create more options, to probe more deeply, to ask discovery questions which might lead to insights or new ways of seeing things or more alternatives for action.

Judge whether or not you need to offer some input on how to question here, particularly in the early stages. It may be necessary to explore closed and open questions, hypothetical questions, discovery questions and leading questions. Discovery questions help uncover the hidden assumptions and limiting beliefs that may be preventing the individual from taking useful action. As part of issue exploration, a series of tools/resources are available in the mentee pack for the facilitator to choose to work with in order to support participants.

### DEVELOP SOLUTIONS, OPTIONS, ALTERNATIVES FOR ACTION

Following questioning, discussion or completion of tools, the process then moves onto resolving issues. Issues may only be resolved slightly; sometimes opportunities may have been explored so there may be further actions identified rather than solutions. This stage is characterised by people moving from 'not knowing' to 'knowing what to do next'.

### SUMMARISE ACTION AND LEARNING

At this stage ask the individual members to summarise their actions and verbally commit to goals or actions. The Goal and Task Worksheet is the key tool to help participants make sure they have concrete goals recorded after the first session which they would like to focus on during the Peer Coaching programme.

In session 1 you may also need to pay some attention to SMART goal setting which will help them undertake credible actions which can be measured (using the Goal Setting Worksheet in Tools).

### GOAL SETTING TIPS

If you write your goals down you have more chance of achieving them. Visualising goals also helps to make them come alive. Before participants start them to think about the following questions:

- What time do you have available?
- What's your energy and appetite for achieving this goal?
- What level of knowledge does it require?
- Will you need any new knowledge?
- How are you going to achieve that?
- Is it a very large goal that needs to be split into sub goals?
- What's the timescale?
- Are there any quick wins?
- Do you need to gain support to achieve your goals? Who from- friends and family? How will you do this? Can you organise goals into a framework- Short term, Medium term, and Long term?



ENCOURAGE LEARNERS TO WRITE YOUR GOALS USING THE **SMART** FORMAT

<b>Specific</b>  S	Defines exactly what is your focus.
<b>Measurable</b>  M	Capable of being measured and has a clear outcome described.
<b>Attainable/ agreed</b>  A	It is achievable.
<b>Realistic</b>  R	Expresses a goal which is achievable but which may have some element of stretch and challenge.
<b>Timed/time specific</b>  T	Specifies an end date or a date by which the objective will be achieved.

**POTENTIAL EXERCISES SESSION 1:**

**Tool 1 – Choosing an animal:** This exercise usually is an icebreaker to get to know more on the personality of the participants. Before everyone presents themselves the facilitator puts images of different animals on the table. Each participant chooses an animal (multiple participants can choose the same animal) that they feel their personality connects with the most. After this, all participants introduce themselves and briefly explain why they choose this particular animal and how they think this fits with their character.

**Tool 2 - Jelly baby tree exercise:** This is an ice breaker where participants already show to the others how they are feeling on their journey in finding a job. Participants look at the picture and colour in one of the figures on the tree to show where they feel where they are currently with their confidence levels in their journey. This encourages conversation as part of the opening round.



The jelly baby tree exercise template can be easily found when looking it up on google.

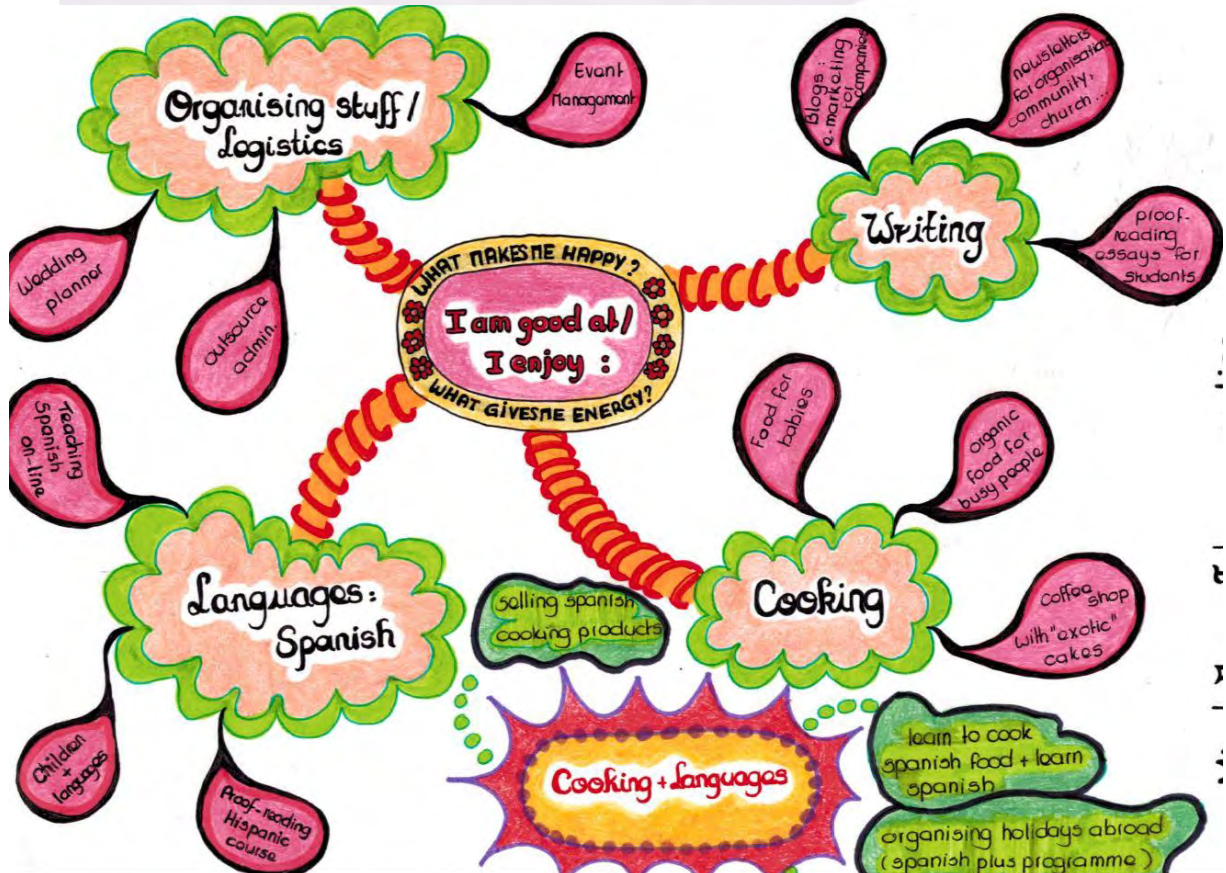
### **Tool 3 – Mind Mapping**

Participants will draw a mind map based on the ideas they would like to generate about their business ideas. For an online version, participants can go to [mindmup.com](https://mindmup.com) and 'create a new map' on Google Drive which can then be shared with the group once finished.

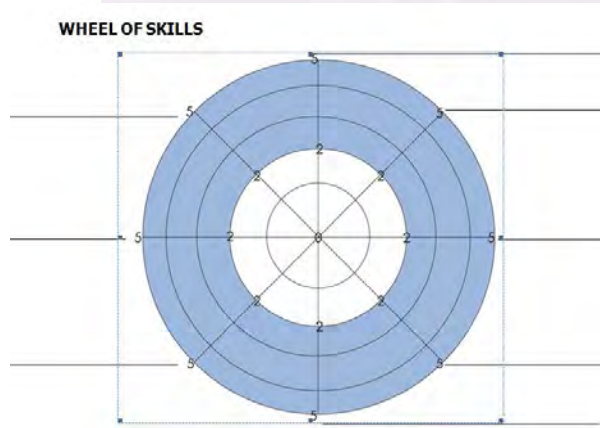
Drawing their own thoughts as a mind map is a good way to express the uniqueness of their skills for their business idea. Here are some tips to give to participants. An example mind map is in the mentee pack.

- Use key words, or wherever possible images.
- Start from the centre of the page and work out.
- Make the centre a clear and strong visual image that depicts the general theme of the map.
- Create sub-centres for sub-themes.
- Put key words on lines. This reinforces structure of notes.
- Use colour to depict themes, associations and to make things stand out.
- Anything that stands out on the page will stand out in your mind.
- Use arrows, icons or other visual aids to show links between different elements.
- Don't get stuck in one area. If you dry up in one area go to another branch.
- Put ideas down as they occur, wherever they fit. Don't judge or hold back.
- Break boundaries. If you run out of space, don't start a new sheet; paste more paper onto the map.

EXAMPLE OF MIND MAP



**Tool 4 – Wheel of Skills:**



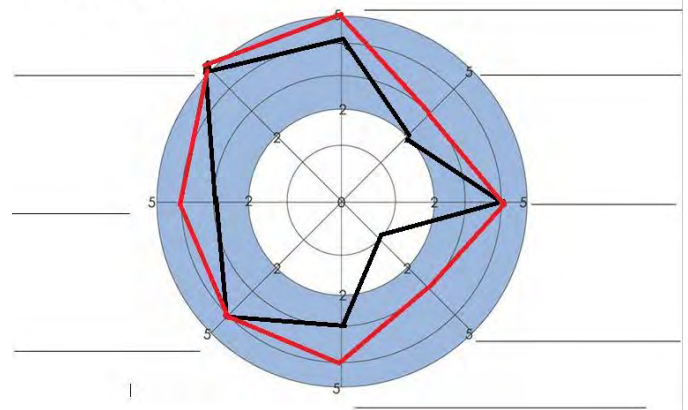
The aim of this exercise is to help participants to understand what skills are useful in a job/career they are interested in and to think about how they would rate themselves on their confidence level in this skill currently. Participants add new skills to the general list of business skills and then choose the 8 skills they think are most important and write each skill on each of the lines by the side of the wheel. For each skill, ask participants to rate how confident they feel in this skill from a scale of 0-5 where 0 is not confident at all and 5 is extremely confident. Then ask participants to join up the Xs on the wheel.

confident at all and 5 is extremely confident. Then ask participants to join up the Xs on the wheel.

After this you ask them to rate those same skills again, but how they would like to realistically see themselves in 6 months.

A general group discussion following the exercise helps participants to see ways they could increase confidence in their skills where necessary, what actions they could possibly take to improve upon these skills to reach their 6-month target or to see what skills they have confidence in currently to use these to their best effect.

**WHEEL OF SKILLS**



### Tool 5 – Goal Setting Worksheet:

Participants can be led through the information on setting goals before choosing 3 goals to work on before the next session. Participants will be introduced to the SMART methodology when setting goals and make sure they are clear of the breakdown of tasks in order to achieve each goal.

Action planning worksheet: Participants can use an Action Plan Template to transfer key areas of action identified in the SMART objectives. In the first session learners could identify at least one key issue that they will work on before the next meeting and write it on a footsteps template, the footsteps being part of their journey.



The form is titled 'SMART Goals Worksheet' and is enclosed in a decorative border. It contains the following sections:

- Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- S** Specific: What goal do you want to accomplish?
- M** Measurable: How will you know when you have reached this goal?
- A** Attainable: Is it possible to achieve this goal within your time frame?
- R** Relevant: Why is this goal important to you?
- T** Timely: What is the time frame you need to complete this goal?
- Goal:** \_\_\_\_\_
- Write a brief goal plan using the information above.

Source:

<https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/SMART-Goals-Worksheet-for-Students-MULTIPLE-COLORS-1655061>

## POTENTIAL EXERCISES SESSION 2:

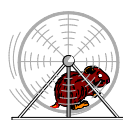
### Tool 6 – One lie, one truth:

This serves as a good icebreaker for a second session when the participants already know each other a bit better. The participants tell two stories about themselves, one is the truth and the other is a lie. Once they have told their stories, the other participants guess which one is true and then the storyteller says which one was the truth.

This exercise serves as a way for the participants to tell an interesting story about themselves to increase their self-esteem.

### Tool 7 – Using metaphors:

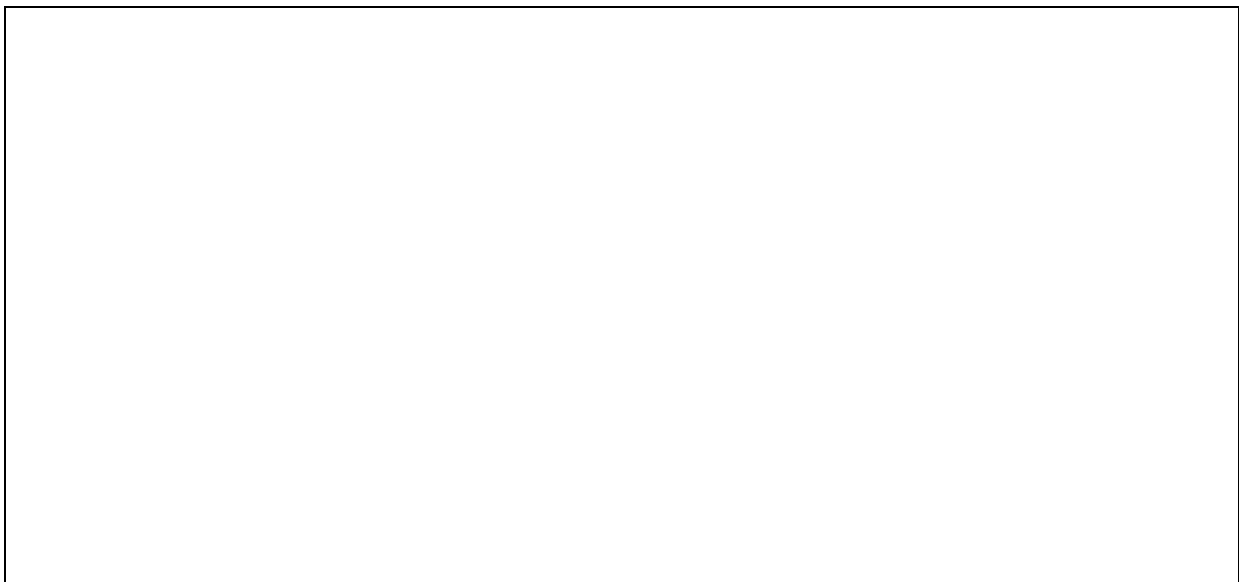
Metaphors are ways to compare two different things that don't seem like each other, but actually have something more important in their *meaning* in common. It's a useful way of 'carrying' a meaning from one idea or word to another. For example, if you feel like you're running round in circles and getting nowhere with your business idea at the moment, you might use the metaphor of a hamster on its wheel!



Think of a metaphor for how you feel about yourself and your business idea now. You could draw a picture to make the image more powerful– try not to use words.



How would you like to see your business and yourself in the future?  
Think/draw another metaphor for this and focus on the 'future' image. How does it make you feel?



Look back at the 'now' image. How does this make you feel?  
Images can be very powerful tools for helping us to quickly get into certain thoughts or feelings.

Thinking of positive images or inspirational quotes that mean something to you, could make it easier to tap into confident and positive feelings within yourself.

### **Tool 8 - Signposting:**

At the end of the final session of coaching circles, you ask your participants again what their overall ambitions are. As the facilitator you have heard and gotten to know them over the sessions you have had with them and you could give them advice on how they could proceed at that point. Either by providing guidance on how they could improve their current course of actions, or try to steer them in a different direction where you think they might be more talented in and get more opportunities. No handouts are needed for this exercise, although it could be useful if you bring leaflets or brochures as a facilitator on different (free) courses that they could follow or where they could get more information.

### **OTHER POTENTIAL EXERCISES:**



**Seeing Yourself Differently... Step 1. Ask participants what do they see when they look at the picture?** An old lady or a young lady?

Most people look at the picture and can see one thing first- the old or young lady. If participants can't see both, ask someone else to take a look and see what they can see. Ask another group member who can see both to explain how. Discuss the following questions with the group: How did they feel if someone else saw something different to you and you couldn't see it? Maybe they felt frustrated, annoyed, stupid, curious, amused? Can they see both now? Could they go back to only seeing one?

The meaning of this exercise is that we often get 'stuck' seeing ourselves or our lives in certain ways. Ask participants to try and look at hobbies and interests and see if any of them could be turned into a business. Encourage participants to look at themselves differently- as someone would who didn't know them very well. What skills/passions would they see?

### **My Fantasy Job**

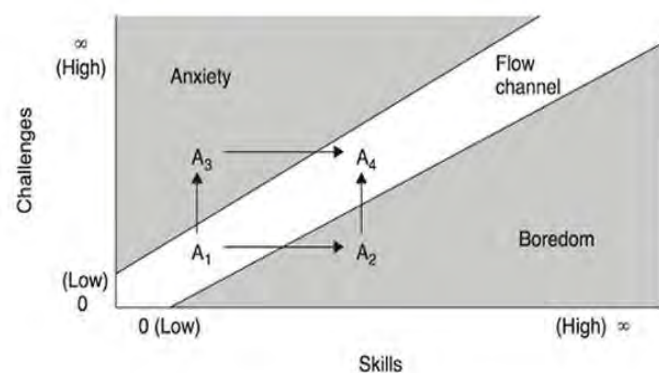
Ask participants to visualise their ideal business and try and see as much detail as possible- not thinking of any constraints or difficulties in reality. Ask them to write down the vision using words, pictures, quotes, cut outs from magazines etc. A general group discussion follows regarding reflections on the exercise and how it can be useful to visualise what you want to get out of a job/career in order to help you connect with your end goals.

### Motivators

Encourage participants to engage in a discussion about what motivates them in general and to start thinking about what would motivate them in a job. Look at internal and external motivators and encourage participants to complete the table thinking about their own personal drivers and motivators.

### Finding Flow

After explaining the theory ask participants to engage in a discussion about their anxiety and boredom and the impact this has with regard to procrastination? Ask them to think about strategies to move into flow? Ask them to provide you with examples of times when they have been in flow and how they could look for job opportunities that could provide them with flow experiences.



### Skills Audit

Participants to look at current skills level and celebrate the skills they already have along with their qualities, achievements and experiences. Dependent on learners' ability, this could be done as a simple exercise whereby learners draw round their hand, and write in the finger section key skills that they feel they have already.

### Skills Development

Participants to identify the skills they would like to develop along with brainstorming keywords such as Respect, Aspirations, Motivation and Ambition. Additional words can be added dependent on the needs and confidence levels within the group.

### Interview Questions

Participants work in pairs to try out the example interview questions and think of possible answers. The group shares in discussion regarding past interview questions they have been asked and how to come up with answers that reflect their strengths.

### Resources

As the facilitator it is your decision how much you guide learners through the resources section or whether you ask learners to read and reflect on certain resources for homework tasks in between



face to face sessions. Brief information about each resource is provided below. However flexibility should be used with regards to resources dependant on the learners needs.

- Learners should be encouraged to keep a reflective learning log to track progress
- Mind mapping for focus and to identify needs (examples of mind maps can be taken to the sessions.
- Tips for increasing confidence and self esteem
- Get inspired, quotes for increasing positivity. Learners may have their own mantra.
- Resilience at Work (Information on what it means to develop resilience at work and the different things learners can be aware of in this area)
- Look at Yourself Differently
- Setting Goals (Information on how to set goals and the SMART)
- Writing Application Forms: (Tips on how to write application forms and prepare for job interviews using your Knowledge, Skills and Aptitudes)
- Voice Control Techniques and Communication skills

## ENDING SESSIONS

Finally ascertain what people have learned in the session. What have they learned about themselves; and about their problem or issue? Have they learned anything from others? What were the most useful questions? What impact did they have? This helps participants to have time to reflect on the outcomes of the session prior to completing the evaluation forms. Evaluation forms should be completed at the end of each session.

## CLOSING MEETING 1

- Ask people to summarise their actions and comment on any learning for the session.
- Explain any arrangements for encouraging group members to hold one another to account. You may decide to ask people to allocate a 'chasing buddy' to their left around the table. This person chases them up, asks about progress and generally checks informally on their success in between meetings. This can also help to build relationships more strongly within the group.
- Ensure everyone has the date of the next meeting diarised and has venue information.
- Confirm any action you will take e.g. e mailing the ground rules agreed.
- Close the session by asking people to complete the relevant evaluation form.

#### CLOSING THE FINAL SESSION

- Ask people to summarise their actions and comment on any learning for the session.
- Ask participants to score themselves on the soft skills form and analyse any changes since the first session.
- Confirm any arrangements for continuance or informal networking outside of the group.
- Distribute leaflets of other activities in the area, training etc
- Discuss sustainability plans for the group e.g. can they continue to meet at your premises or at a local cafe to continue to offer each other peer coaching.
- Close the session by asking people to complete the relevant evaluation form and a final outcomes form

**ANNEX I**

**EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE:**

**To be completed by facilitator:**

Peer Coaching Circle No:  Session No  Date:

**To be completed by mentees:**

1. What were your expectations for today's session and have they been fulfilled?

2. What are the three things you have learned about your unemployment issues today?

>

>

>

3. What was the most worthwhile thing about your group session today?

4. Please add any further comments in the space below:

**Name:** ..... **Date:** .....

Thank you! Please return this to your facilitator.

**Facilitator's Name:** .....

Your comments may be included in future promotional/marketing material. If you are not happy for your comments/quotes and name to be used for these purposes, please tick this box

**ANNEX II**

**Peer Coaching Circle Profile Evaluation (At the start of the Journey)**

**Name:** .....

**Date:**.....

Please Evaluate yourself at this present time

1 = Poor

5 = Excellent

Skills and Attributes		Please Tick Box				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Self-Motivation					
2	Networking Skills					
3	Efficiency					
4	Communication Skills					
5	Knowledge of how to motivate others					
6	Negotiation Skills					
7	Confidence					
8	Knowledge about mentoring					
9	Knowing how and where to get support when needed					
10	Knowing what I want next					
11	Sense of achievement at work					
12	Assertiveness					
13	Entrepreneurial spirit					
14	Leadership Skills					
15	Problem Solving Skills					
16	Sensitivity to others					
17	Enthusiasm					
18	Management of Stress					
19	Delegation skills					
20	Presentation Skills					
21	Sense of humour					
22	Building new relationships					
23	Time Management					
24	Goal Setting					
25	Getting things done					
26	Understanding what's important to me					
27	Knowing clearly what I want to achieve					
28	Knowing clearly what my limitations are					
29	Work life balance					

**ANNEX III**

**Peer Coaching Circle Profile Evaluation (At the end of the Journey)**

Name: .....

Date:.....

Please Evaluate yourself at this present time

1 = Poor

5 = Excellent

Skills and Attributes		Please Tick Box				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Self-Motivation					
2	Networking Skills					
3	Efficiency					
4	Communication Skills					
5	Knowledge of how to motivate others					
6	Negotiation Skills					
7	Confidence					
8	Knowledge about mentoring					
9	Knowing how and where to get support when needed					
10	Knowing what I want next					
11	Sense of achievement at work					
12	Assertiveness					
13	Entrepreneurial spirit					
14	Leadership Skills					
15	Problem Solving Skills					
16	Sensitivity to others					
17	Enthusiasm					
18	Management of Stress					
19	Delegation skills					
20	Presentation Skills					
21	Sense of humour					
22	Building new relationships					
23	Time Management					
24	Goal Setting					
25	Getting things done					
26	Understanding what's important to me					
27	Knowing clearly what I want to achieve					
28	Knowing clearly what my limitations are					
29	Work life balance					



