

Grant provider:	Dům zahraniční spolupráce
Name of the project:	Sharing good practice – way to the success in the vocational education
Number of the project:	EHP-CZ-VETP-2-005
Funding programme:	Fondy EHP/Norska
Key action:	2. call of the VET projects
Project period:	1. 8. 2020 - 31. 8. 2022

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Brief methodical manual – Best practice in student companies guidance in warm-up stage

Exercises in:

- Creating groups
- Creativity
- Evaluation of ideas
- Formulate the idea



Introduction

This workbook is designed to be a support for the teachers who use entrepreneurship as a method in their teaching. The book is made for participants in the EEA-project “Sharing good practice – way to be successful in the vocational education”

The workbook consists of exercises that target the start-up phase of a student project. The overall objective is to put students in a position to develop their own idea based on their own creative thoughts. This will give students a sense of ownership for the project that will be the driving force throughout the project period.

The workbook is divided into 4 sections with the headings:

1. Creating groups
2. Creativity
3. Evaluation of ideas
4. Formulation of an idea

All topics are important to get a fruitful start of the project.

The exercises are selected and based on years of experience in using entrepreneurship as a teaching method.

The exercises are described how they can be implemented, and you will find forms to be published in the appendix

Good luck!

Askim, Norway

02.10.21

The Norwegian team

1. Creating groups

Group exercise:

Goal: By doing the icebreaking exercises you achieve that the students become more familiar with each other and that they feel safer in the group. These are important assumptions for being able to carry out a fruitful creative process. The teachers can assemble groups, or you can let the students do it themselves. There should not be more than 8 students in each bounding group.

1.1. Would you rather ...

Start out by posing a harmless would you rather question that prompts people to choose a side. Here are some examples:

- Which food is better: pizza or tacos?
- Would you rather go on a hike or to a movie?
- What skill is more valuable: creativity or logic?
- Which is worse: being bored or being too busy?

Have everyone physically divide into sides—pro pizza to the right, pro taco to the left. Let all the like-minded people discuss the virtues of their position for a while, and then have a representative try to sell the other side of the room. This will give everyone a chance to see things from different perspectives and learn something harmless about the others.

1.2. Logo inspiration

During this icebreaker participants choose a brand logo they identify with and explain why. Here's how to play:

- Hand out name tags and pens.
 - Have participants write their names and draw logos they love.
 - Have everyone share why they chose their logos.
- Share in a group or have everyone share thoughts with their neighbours.

1.3. Trading cards – personality check

Kick off new groups by having everyone make trading cards to represent their personalities.

- Hand out index cards and markers.
- Tell everyone to draw a self-portrait and write their names, their nicknames (real or imaginary), and a fun fact.
- Everyone jumps up and trades cards. People can trade as many times as they want, but they must read each card they get before they trade.
- After a few minutes, have everyone announce the name on the card they ended up with. People can even ask questions of the card's owner if they want.
- Let the conversations flow!

1.4. Lost at sea

You have chartered a yacht with three friends, for the holiday trip of a lifetime across the Atlantic Ocean. Because none of you has any previous sailing experience, you have hired an experienced skipper and two-person crew.

Unfortunately, in mid Atlantic, a fierce fire breaks out in the ships galley and the skipper and crew have been lost whilst trying to fight the blaze. Much of the yacht is destroyed and slowly sinking.

Your location is unclear because vital navigational and radio equipment are damaged in the fire. Your best estimate is that you are many hundreds of miles from the nearest landfall.

You and your friends have managed to save 15 items, undamaged and intact after the fire. In addition, you have salvaged a four man rubber life-craft and a box of matches.

Your task is to rank the 15 items in terms of their importance for you, as you wait to be rescued. Place the number 1 by the most important item, the number 2 by the second most important and so forth until you have ranked all 15 items.

Instructions

- Provide a 'lost at sea ranking chart' for every member of your group.
- Ask each person to take 10 minutes to decide their own rankings, and record the choices in the left-hand **Step 1** column.
- Invite everyone to get into teams of 3/4. Encourage the group to discuss their individual choices and work together to agree on a collaborative list. Allow 20 minutes for this section. Record the group rankings in the second column (team rankings).
- The US Coastguard suggested the correct answers. Display the 'expert' rankings on a PowerPoint presentation, whiteboard or photocopy. Compare your individual and group answers with the correct answers and determine a score.
- For each item, mark the number of points that your score differs from the coastguard ranking and then add up all the points. Disregard plus or minus differences. The **lower** the total, the better your score.
- As the groups work together, sharing thoughts and ideas, this *should* produce an improved score over the individual results. Discuss in your group: why are the scores different? What changed your minds? And, was this enough to survive?

Use the lost at sea ranking chart – appendix 1

Coastguard expert analysis

According to the experts, in this case the US Coastguard, the basic supplies needed when a person is stranded mid-ocean are articles to attract attention and aid survival until rescue

arrives. A transatlantic trip takes roughly 20 days, significantly less with good winds and significantly more without them.

Articles for navigation are of little importance since even if a small life raft were capable of reaching land, it would be impossible to store enough food and water to survive for that amount of time. Without signalling devices, there is almost no chance of being spotted and rescued.

Therefore, the list below is the ranking order of the items according to their importance to your survival:

Item	Coast Guard Ranking	Coastguard Reasoning
A sextant	15	Useless without the relevant tables and a chronometer.
A shaving mirror	1	Of all the items, the mirror is absolutely critical. It is the most powerful tool you have for communicating your presence. In sunlight, a simple mirror can generate five to seven million candlepower of light. The reflected sunbeam can even be seen beyond the horizon.
A quantity of mosquito netting	14	There are NO mosquitoes in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean and the netting is useless for anything else.
A 25 liter container of water	3	Vital to restore fluids lost through perspiration. 25 liters will supply water rations for your group for several days.
A case of army rations	4	This is your basic food intake
Maps of the Atlantic Ocean	13	Worthless without navigation equipment.
A floating seat cushion	9	Useful as a life preserver if someone fell overboard.

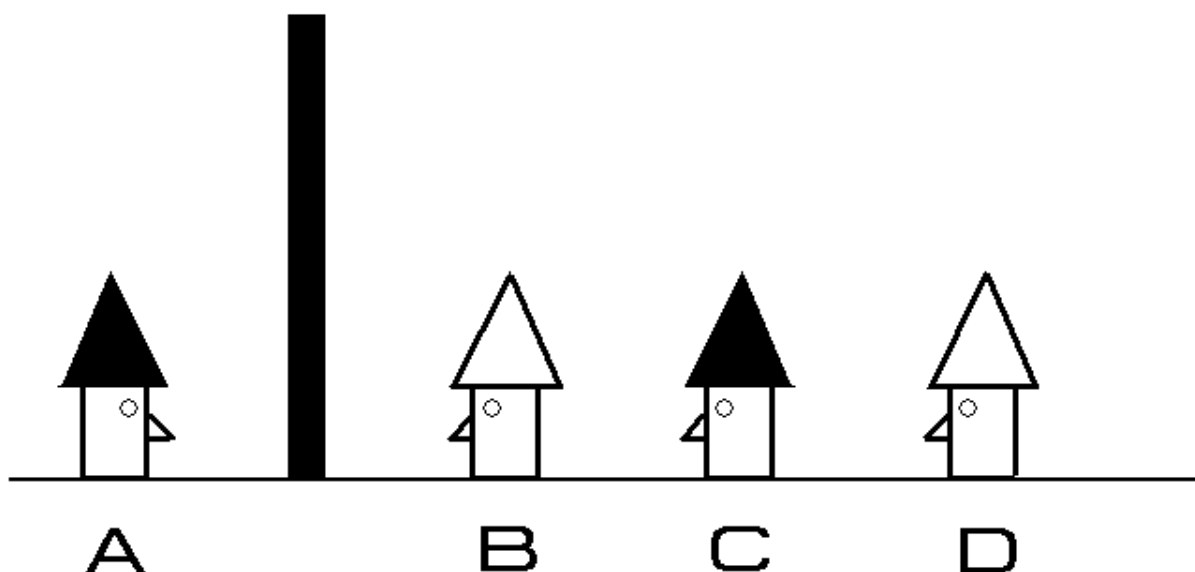
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A 10 liter can of oil/gasoline mixture	2	The second most critical item for signaling. The mixture will float on water and can be ignited using the matches.
A small transistor radio	12	You would be out of range of any radio station.
20 square feet of Opaque plastic sheeting	5	Can be used to collect rain water and shelter from the wind and waves.
A can of shark repellent	10	To repel sharks, of course!
One bottle of 160% proof rum	11	Contains 80% alcohol, which means it can be used as an antiseptic for any injuries, otherwise of little value. Very dangerous if drunk, as it would cause the body to dehydrate, the opposite of what you need to survive.
15ft nylon rope	8	Could be used to lash people or equipment together to prevent being washed overboard. There are a variety of other uses, but none high on the list for survival.
2 boxes of chocolate bars	6	Your reserve food supply
An ocean fishing kit with pole.	7	Ranked lower than the chocolate as there is no guarantee you will catch any fish. The pole might be used as a tent pole.

Scores

00 - 25	Excellent.	You demonstrated great survival skills. Rescued!
26 - 32	Good.	Above average results. Good survival skills. Rescued!
33 - 45	Average.	Seasick, hungry and tired. Rescued!
46 - 55	Fair.	Dehydrated and barely alive. It was tough, but rescued!
56 - 70	Poor.	Rescued, but only just in time!
71 +	Very poor	Oh dear, your empty raft is washed up on a beach, weeks after the search was called off.

1.2. Digged down men



Shown above are four men buried up to their necks in the ground. They cannot move, so they can only look forward. Between A and B is a brick wall which cannot be seen through.

They all know that between them they are wearing four hats -two black and two white - but they do not know what colour they are wearing. Each of them know where the other three men are buried.

In order to avoid being shot, one of them must call out to the executioner the colour of **his** hat. If they get it wrong, everyone will be shot. They are not allowed to talk to each other and have 10 minutes to find it out.

After one minute, one of them calls out.

Question: Which one of them calls out? Why is he 100% certain of the colour of his hat?

This is not a trick question. There are no outside influences or other ways of communicating. They cannot move and are buried in a straight line; A & B can only see their respective sides of the wall, C can see B, and D can see B & C

Let the student start individually. After 10 minutes let the group try to find the solution together.

Correct answer:

2. Creativity exercises

Goal: By using known techniques the groups will manage to start the creative process leading to a sketch or a prototype that forms the basis for a business idea.

2.1. Champion

An exercise in free and crazy thinking!

Split the pupils into groups of four, and ask them to stand facing each other in pairs. The roles are as follows:

- One reporter
- One world champion
- Two word finders

One of the pairs consists of a world champion who knows everything about a subject and a reporter who will interview the world champion.

The other pair will decide the words. This second pair will each think of a word and say it loud simultaneously when the teacher counts to three.

Example: If the words are monkey and house, then the word is *monkey house*.

This is the word that the world champion is the expert of and knows everything about. The reporter will now interview the expert about this issue while the others listen.

Ask questions such as:

- ✓ How much does it cost?
- ✓ Areas of use
- ✓ Distinctive features
- ✓ Appearance
- ✓ Who would use it
- ✓ Etc.

After 2-3 minutes, reverse the roles within the groups of four.



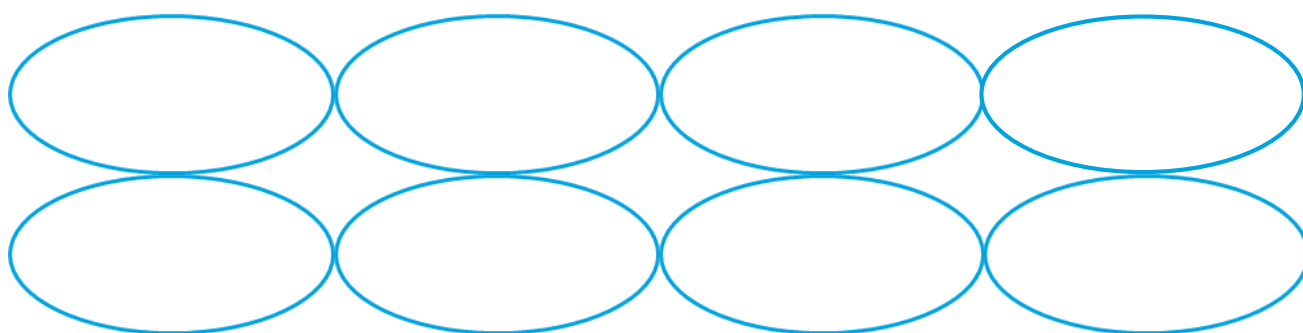
2.2. Creativity circles

In this exercise you have to let the students have a strong focus on a special situation – a interest, a hobby, or things they do – for example:

BE TOURISTS IN Amsterdam

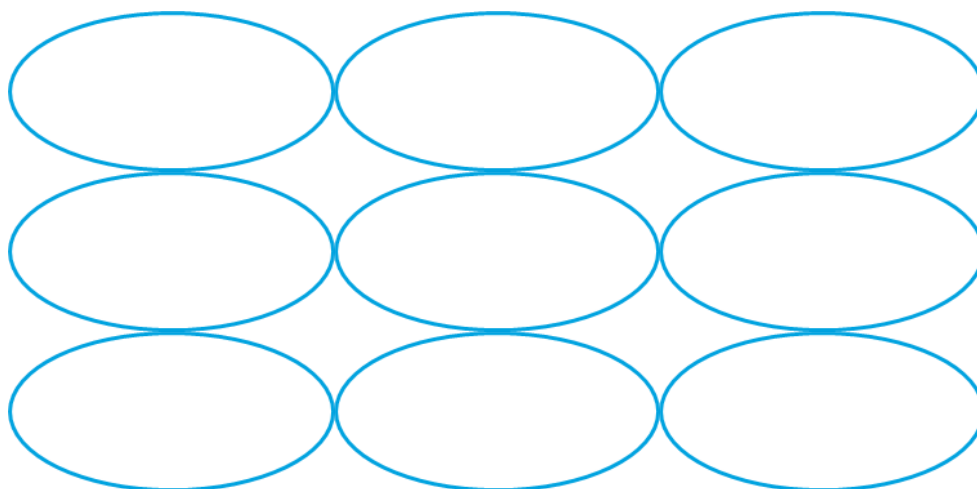
“Come up with a product or service that is useful to tourists in Amsterdam”

Places (where do tourists go in Amsterdam?):



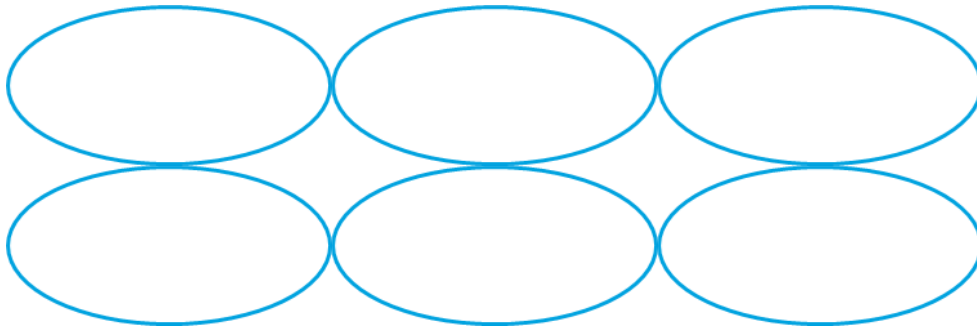
Choose one of the places

Activities (what they can do there?):



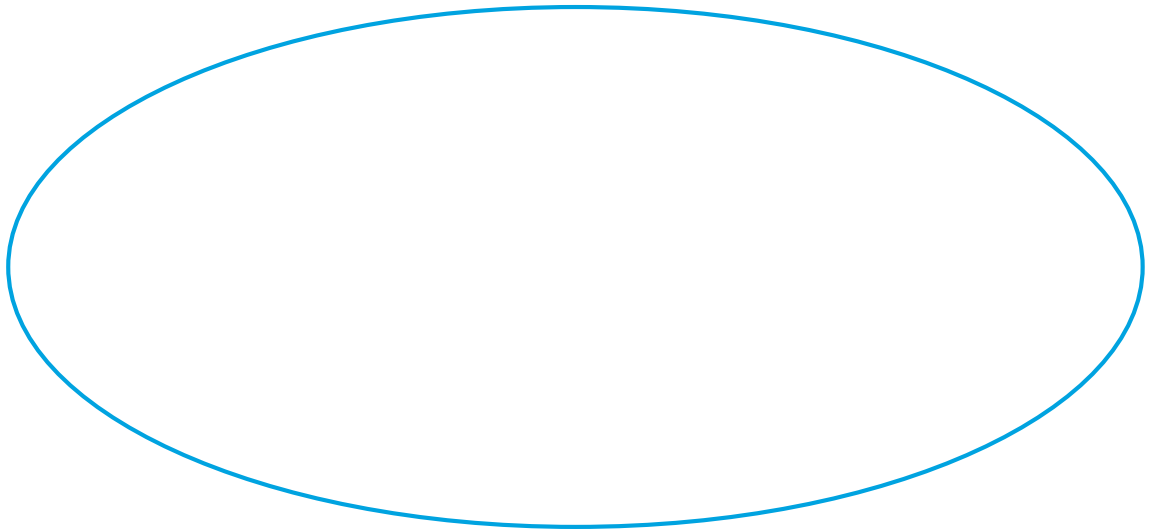
Choose one of the activities

Problems (what problems might they encounter?):



Choose one of the problems

Solution(s) to the problem:



By filling out the circles, the students might find a solution on a problem that transforms into an idea to include in the city walk, biking tour or WEB-site in the project.

2.3. Random word technique

AN APPROACH TO CREATING NEW IDEAS

Identify an area for which you wish to come up with new ideas, for example, “entry door”. If you cannot come up with anything, you can choose a word from the random word list below by moving your finger over the page until someone says stop.

There are 60 words on the list, and you could use the second hand on your watch in choosing a word.

Place the word that you pick in the box labelled “focus” (see the model below). Then choose a new word from the random word list.

Assume that you have chosen the word “eye”.

The task now is to associate the word “eye” with “entry door”. What thoughts generates when you associate the word “eye” with “front door”? Perhaps a door that you don’t use a key to open, but that uses the iris of your eye to identify you – or perhaps a key catcher that is placed in the lock so that it is easier for a blind or visually-impaired person to open the door.

This is an example of how we can play with our thoughts and come up with new dream products.

Random word template

Random word

EYE

DOOR

Focus

Ideas

The iris is scanned and replaces the key.

Key catcher for the blind or visually impaired.

Random word list:

telephone	music	hat	door
scissors	office	frog	car
house	water	soda	crane
taxi	diving	sofa	book
cloud	sun	bicycle	kitchen
cinema	hole	punch	cookie
nose	elephant	wine	rose
snow	PC	egg	forest
clutter	smoke	treasure	TV
soup	boat	wave	football
eye	underpants	cigarette	wall
mask	ruler	mug	blood

You can add or change these words as you wish.

2.4. Lateral thinking

You will split into groups of four and work with the theme “Lateral thinking”.

Each person, entirely at random - and without discussing with the rest of the group - will choose a word from the lists in the template. You must not influence each other's choice, but you must agree the row from which each person will choose a word, i.e. person number 1 will choose a word from row 1 (old business idea), number 2 will choose a word from row 2 (target group) and so on.

The more words that break with traditional thinking patterns, the better.

After each person in the group has chosen their word, you must then use the four words to come up with a new business idea. Work for 15 - 20 minutes and think up several business ideas.

When you have 4 - 5 ideas, you will then present each one briefly to the other groups. (In the template, you can add and replace as you wish).

OLD BUSINESS IDEA	TARGET GROUP	PROBLEM TO SOLVE	DISTRIBUTION CHANNELS	MY IDEA
Laundrette	Women	A long journey to work	Internet	
T-shirt	Company founders	Expensive school text books	Cycle courier	
Food service	Students	No time for training	Sports clubs	
Advertising services	Dog owners	Doing laundry is tedious	Mail order	
Laptop computer	Sports enthusiasts	Scared of illness	TV	
Charter travel	Mountain climbers	Tired in the morning	Clothes shops	
Music video	Teachers	Not allowed out late	Mobile telephones	
Razor blades	Young boys	Want more friends	Friends	
Condoms	Nurses	Cannot read	Café	
Video films	Theatre lovers	Not much money	Chemist	
Aerobics	Pensioners	Environmental problems	Teen magazines	

3. Evaluation of ideas

Goal: Learn students how easy they can evaluate their ideas

3.1 Six thinking hats

Six Thinking Hats offers a practical alternative to thinking. The process encourages your people to separate fact from opinion, to look fully at both positive and negative opinions and to get hidden agendas that can sabotage any meeting on the table. It stimulates their innate creativity and helps them discover how to turn seemingly insoluble problems into real opportunities.

We should have the hats in different colours, or at least papers in these colours.

White - considering purely what information is available, what are the facts?

Red - instinctive gut reaction or statements of emotional feeling

Black - logic applied to identifying problems or barriers, seeking mismatch

Yellow - logic applied to identifying benefits, seeking harmony

Green - statements of provocation and investigation, seeing where a thought goes

Blue –the hat worn by those facilitating and directing the process.

Use the six thinking hats form to do the evaluation of the idea – Appendix 2



Pure information hat.
What are the facts?
What do we know? What kind of information / facts do we have?

The positive hat!
What is good about the idea? What are the benefits?



Feelings and intuition, not rational.
What do you feel about this? What is your gut feeling?

The creative hat! Is there a different way of looking at this? What kind of / new ideas can we generate?



The "black" hat – problems, risks or danger? What can go wrong? What are the risks?

Rational and overview hat. From what we know so far, what is the most logical move? What are the findings so far?



3.2 Sort and prioritize

This is another simple method for evaluation of an idea:

SORT AND PRIORITIZE

EVALUATION FORM



Evaluating ideas

	Very important	Not very important
Unique		
Familiar		

Draw this grid on a flip chart.

1. Split into groups of 4-7. The group then decides on a number of ideas and the order in which they should be considered.
2. Each participant should write an idea on a Post-It note.
3. They should then place the Post-It on the grid, in what they consider is the appropriate box.
4. Then ask the group members in turn to reflect on/argue why they have chosen this box for their idea.



4. Formulate the idea

Some criteria for a good idea/product in a project:

- Easy to make and store
- Labor intensive
- Market demand
- Financial considerations
- Evaluate product ideas

The idea formulates short and concise. It should read:

- Which customers / markets the pupils want to work with
- What needs the concept covers
- What products (goods or services) the students should offer to meet the need
- What competitive advantage the project group has (Low price, good quality, unique, personal, etc.)







Appendix




1. Lost at sea ranking chart
2. The six thinking hats – form

Lost at Sea Ranking Chart

Items	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
	Your individual ranking	Your team ranking	Coast Guard ranking	Difference between Step 1 & 3	Difference between Step 2 & 3
A sextant					
A shaving mirror					
A quantity of mosquito netting					
A 25 liter container of water					
A case of army rations					
Maps of the Atlantic Ocean					
A floating seat cushion					
A 10 liter can of oil/petrol mixture					
A small transistor radio					
20 square feet of opaque plastic sheeting					
A can of shark repellent					
One bottle of 160 proof rum					
15 feet of nylon rope					
2 boxes of chocolate bars					
An ocean fishing kit & pole					
			Totals	Your score	Team score

Evaluation of the idea with The six thinking hats

The six thinking hats	
	The "black" hat – problems, risks or danger? What can go wrong? What are the risks?
	Feelings and intuition, not rational. What do you feel about this? What is your gut feeling?
	Rational and overview hat. From what we know so far, what is the most logical move? What are the findings so far?
	The creative hat! Is there a different way of looking at this? What kind of / new ideas can we generate?
	The positive hat! What is good about the idea? What are the benefits?
	Pure information hat. What are the facts? What do we know? What kind of information / facts do we have?

Evaluation of the idea – using the six thinking hats	
Which advantages do the idea have? (3 min.) 	
Which advantages do the idea have disadvantages? (3 min.) 	
What are your feelings for the idea – what do you think? (1 min.) 	
What do you do with the idea? Something to go on with? (2 min.) 