MANUAL

for

Coaches of Young Changemakers:

Guiding Growth, Purpose and Impact

CHANGEMAKERS • COMPETENCE-BASED COACHING FOR YOUNG

Lead To Succeed

A practical guide for shaping youth initiatives
through coaching foundations and hands-on tools

Disclaimer

This project has been funded thanks to the support of the European Commission within the Erasmus+ programme. This manual reflects the view points of theauthors, the Commission cannot thus be held responsiblefor any use of the information contained therein.

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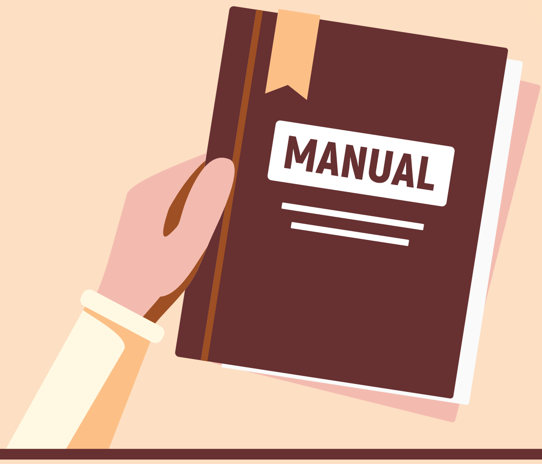


Getting started with this Manual

Who is this Manual for?

In an ever-evolving world, young changemakers face complex challenges, but also extraordinary opportunities to become leaders committed to society and sustainability. To fully realise their potential, they need guidance, support, and the right tools. This is where coaching plays a crucial role: empowering young changemakers to grow, inspire others, and make a lasting impact.

This Manual is a practical guide for youth workers and coaches dedicated to supporting the comprehensive development of young changemakers. Whether you are new to this role or experienced, it offers concrete methods, exercises, and strategies to help you accompany young changemakers as they navigate challenges, deepen their self-awareness, and bring their visions for sustainability to life.

As a coach, your role is to empower these changemakers, offering tailored support and fostering their growth as leaders in sustainability. A changemaker's ability to thrive is deeply connected to the space you create, one where they can be themselves, express their ideas openly, and engage without fear of judgment.

What does this Manual cover?

This Manual is a practical toolbox designed to help coaches support young changemakers as they develop the skills, confidence, and mindset needed to bring their sustainability ideas to life. It focuses on real-life challenges and concrete, ready-to-use methods rather than abstract theory. The Manual is structured in two main, interconnected parts.

- Part 1 - Coaching Foundations: this part focuses on the core pillars of coaching, namely establishing trust, working with integrity, and developing personalised approaches based on individual needs. It also explores key topics such as cultural sensitivity, professional ethics, and self-care for coaches and youth workers, which is essential for maintaining healthy and sustainable coaching relationships.
- Part 2 - Tools for Coaching Young Changemakers: this part is dedicated to practical tools, offering specific techniques to guide young people in areas such as project management, fundraising and resource management, marketing, and more. It also addresses essential competencies like leadership, conflict resolution, and emotional well-being, key elements for developing resilient and conscious leaders.

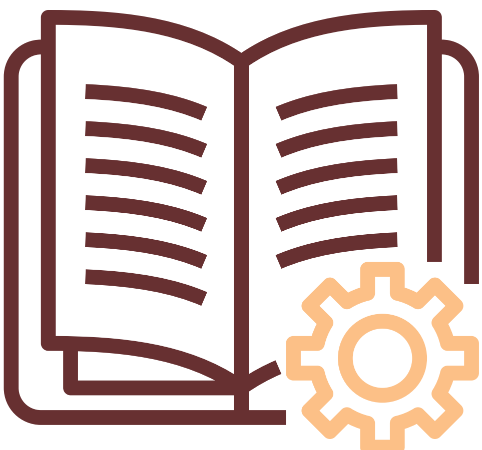
Through a coaching-based approach, this Manual provides effective techniques to enhance personal growth and unlock the collective potential that young changemakers can achieve when they work together. From building trust and managing emotions to developing sustainable projects, each chapter blends theory and practice to create transformative learning experiences.

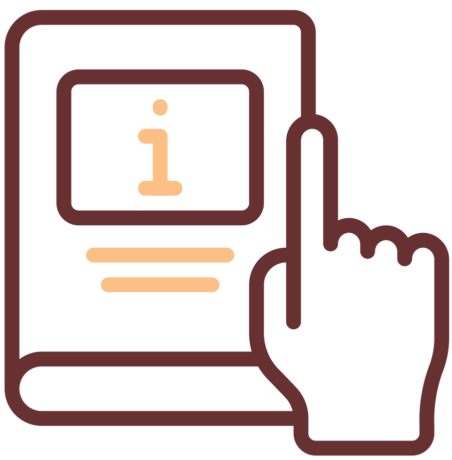
What does the Manual *not* cover?

To stay focused and practical, the Manual intentionally avoids:

- In-depth theoretical frameworks: while concepts are introduced, the focus remains on applicability. "Educate Yourself" boxes and "Resources" sections guide you toward deeper study if desired.
- Technical business training: this is not a business course. It gives changemakers the tools to design and implement initiatives, but does not replace professional training in areas like project management, marketing, financial accounting, etc.
- Professional mental health services: guidance on wellbeing is included, but this Manual is not a substitute for licensed mental health support. When you encounter situations outside your expertise, refer changemakers to qualified and licensed professionals.
- Legal matters: the Manual does not address legal aspects of initiatives. For questions relating to contracts, regulation, or legal responsibility, consult professional legal expertise.

The Manual is meant to be a starting point, not an endpoint—supporting your coaching while directing you to additional learning when appropriate.





How to navigate this Manual?

More than just another manual, this guide is a practical resource designed for action. Each section blends theory and practice, including exercises, case studies, and ready-to-use techniques that can be directly applied in real coaching sessions. It adapts to diverse youth realities and contexts, inviting you to explore it with dedication and creativity, using each tool to create meaningful experiences and guide young changemakers toward a future full of possibilities.

You can use this Manual in a linear way or as a reference guide. Each chapter is built to stand alone, while still contributing to a coherent overall framework. Here are the elements that help you move through it effectively:

1. Start with Part 1 (Coaching Foundations)

Before using the practical tools in Part 2, it is essential to understand the mindset, responsibilities, and relational foundations of youth coaching. Part 1 equips you with:

- the approach needed to help changemakers feel safe, motivated, and understood;
- the ability to personalise tools to individual needs;
- clarity on ethics, boundaries, and your own wellbeing;
- strategies to avoid common coaching pitfalls;
- communication skills to support reflection and growth.

Part 1 gives depth and sensitivity to the work you will do in Part 2. It ensures that tools are used *with* the coachee rather than on the coachee.

2. Use Part 2 (Tools for Coaching Young Changemakers) as a flexible toolkit

Each topic area in Part 2 is broken down into practical tools you can apply directly in coaching sessions. You can:

- follow chapters in sequence;
- go immediately to the tool you need;
- adapt tools to group or individual settings.

The structure helps you work quickly while maintaining clarity and purpose.

3. Look for the support elements in each chapter

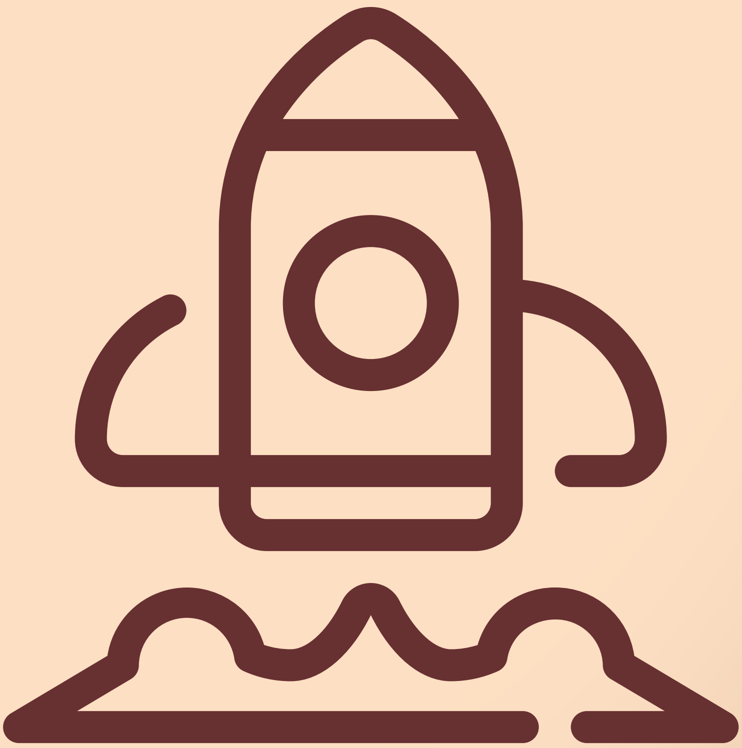
- Educate Yourself boxes: short, curated guidance for deepening your knowledge when you want to go further. These are not required reading, but help you grow as a coach.
- Case Studies: concise, realistic scenarios showing how tools can be applied with young changemakers. Use them to inspire your own approaches or spark discussion.
- Tools: concrete exercises that you can use in your work with young changemakers. The tools includes a clear purpose, step-by-step instructions, notes for coaches, and a short resource list.
- Tips & tricks: practical, tried-and-tested advice that helps you navigate common challenges or mistakes.
- Reflection sections: these prompt you to slow down, integrate what you've learned, and consider how to apply it ethically, sensitively, and effectively.

PART 1

Coaching foundations

1.

Getting started as a coach



Becoming a coach for initiatives is both a rewarding and challenging endeavor. As a coach, you guide and empower individuals or teams to achieve their goals, overcome obstacles, and build essential skills. The role is not about having all the answers but about helping coachees unlock their potential through guidance, support, and constructive feedback.

1.1 Defining the role of a coach

A coach wears many hats: mentor, facilitator, motivator, and sometimes even a counselor. The goal is to support coachees in achieving their objectives while encouraging personal and professional growth. Key roles include:

- Mentor: Share knowledge, experience, and insights that can help coachees grow.
- Facilitator: Guide conversations and processes that help coachees solve problems and make decisions.
- Motivator: Inspire coachees to stay focused and motivated, even when challenges arise.
- Support system: Provide encouragement and reassurance that help coachees build confidence.

Key coaching skills

While each coach has a unique style, several core skills are essential for success:

- Active listening: Active listening means paying full attention without interrupting. Listen not only to words but also to the emotions and motivations behind them. This helps you understand deeper issues that may affect the coachee.
- Asking powerful questions: Great coaches ask questions that help coachees discover their own answers. Open-ended questions such as “What would success look like for you?” or “What challenges are you facing?” encourage reflection and growth.
- Empathy: Understanding and relating to your coachee’s emotions builds trust and strengthens the coaching relationship. Empathy allows you to provide better support by acknowledging feelings and validating experiences.
- Constructive feedback: Provide feedback that is actionable and motivating. Use the “sandwich” approach - start with a positive comment, give the critical feedback, and end with encouragement.
- Adaptability: Each coachee has different needs and learning styles, so it’s important to stay flexible. Adaptability allows you to tailor methods to each individual.

1.2 Tips and tricks for the coaches

In order to help your coachees, you will need to use different tools, including tips and tricks. Below are provided some of the most common tips that can be used during the coaching process.

Build trust early
Tip: spend time getting to know your coachees and understanding their goals, challenges, and expectations. Be transparent about your coaching approach and set clear boundaries from the beginning.
Trick: use icebreakers or open-ended questions in the first few sessions to create rapport and establish a comfortable environment for open communication.

Create a safe, non-judgmental space
Tip: encourage your coachees to speak freely by assuring them that your coaching space is free of judgment. Create an environment where they feel safe discussing both successes and challenges.
Trick: start each session with a question that focuses on positive achievements or personal victories, which can help set an encouraging tone

Listen actively
Tip: active listening is more than just hearing words. Pay attention to the emotions, body language, and tone behind your coachees' words to fully understand their perspective.
Trick: practice paraphrasing what your coachee says to confirm your understanding and make them feel heard: "So, what I hear you saying is..."

Ask open-ended questions
Tip: instead of offering solutions right away, ask powerful, open-ended questions that prompt your coachees to reflect on their situation and think critically.
Trick: use questions that begin with "What" or "How," such as "What are the possible solutions you see?" or "How do you feel about the current approach?"

Focus on goals and outcomes
Tip: collaboratively set SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) goals with your coachee to provide direction and clear outcomes.
Trick: use visual tools like mind maps or progress charts to keep track of the coachee's progress and help them visualize their development.

Be patient and empathetic
Tip: progress can sometimes be slow, and coachees may encounter setbacks. Demonstrate empathy by acknowledging their feelings and offering emotional support while encouraging them to keep moving forward.
Trick: incorporate phrases like "I understand that this is challenging, but how can we look at this from another perspective?" to show empathy and inspire positive thinking.

Provide constructive feedback
Tip: always give feedback that is specific, actionable, and focused on improvement. Use the "sandwich" method: start with positive feedback, provide the critical feedback, and end on a positive note.
Trick: instead of saying, "You didn't do this correctly," say, "You did great on X, and to improve Y, you might want to try..."

Foster self-reflection
Tip: encourage your coachees to reflect on their own actions and experiences as a way to promote self-awareness and personal growth.
Trick: use reflective questions like "What do you think went well in that situation?" or "How would you approach this differently next time?" to promote insight.

Balance guidance with independence
Tip: while your role is to guide, don't do the work for your coachees. Let them take ownership of their journey by making decisions and solving problems independently.
Trick: when your coachees ask for help, redirect them with questions like "What options do you see?" or "How do you think we should approach this?"

1.3 Common pitfalls to avoid as a coach

As a coach, it's easy to fall into certain traps that can hinder the coaching process. Here are some things to avoid:

- Taking control: a coach should never dictate solutions. It's tempting to want to solve problems for your coachees, but doing so robs them of the opportunity to grow and learn. Instead, guide them towards finding their own solutions.
- Overloading with information: while it's important to share your expertise, overwhelming your coachee with too much information at once can be counterproductive. Focus on providing the right amount of knowledge, at the right time, that directly relates to their current needs.
- Neglecting to follow up: coaching is an ongoing process, not a one-time intervention. Follow up regularly with your coachees to track progress, provide feedback, and make adjustments to the coaching plan as needed.
- Not setting boundaries: it's important to establish clear boundaries around the coaching relationship. Be clear about when and how you're available, and make sure to protect your time to avoid burnout.
- Failing to adapt: every coachee is different, and a one-size-fits-all approach won't work. Be mindful of the unique needs and learning styles of each person you coach.

1.4 Building an effective coaching plan

A structured coaching plan ensures your sessions stay productive and goal-oriented. The following steps can help you build an effective plan:

- Initial assessment: start by understanding where your coachee currently stands—what are their strengths, challenges, and aspirations? An initial assessment can help you identify key areas for improvement and set a baseline for progress.
- Goal setting: work collaboratively with the coachee to set clear, achievable goals. These should be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART goals).
- Action plan: break down the goals into smaller, actionable steps. Create a timeline for each step, and ensure that the coachee has the resources and support they need to accomplish each task.
- Regular check-ins: schedule regular check-ins to review progress, provide feedback, and make any necessary adjustments to the plan. These sessions can also be a great time to celebrate achievements and milestones.
- Reflection and adjustment: encourage your coachee to reflect on their progress at key intervals. What have they learned? What obstacles have they faced? Use this reflection to adjust the coaching plan as needed.

Remember that coaching is a journey of shared learning and growth. As a coach, you have the opportunity to positively impact others, helping them reach their potential. Success in coaching lies in trust, powerful questions, constructive feedback, and a growth mindset. Above all, coaching is about the coachee, not the coach. Stay curious, patient, and adaptable, and always keep your coachees' best interests at heart.

2.

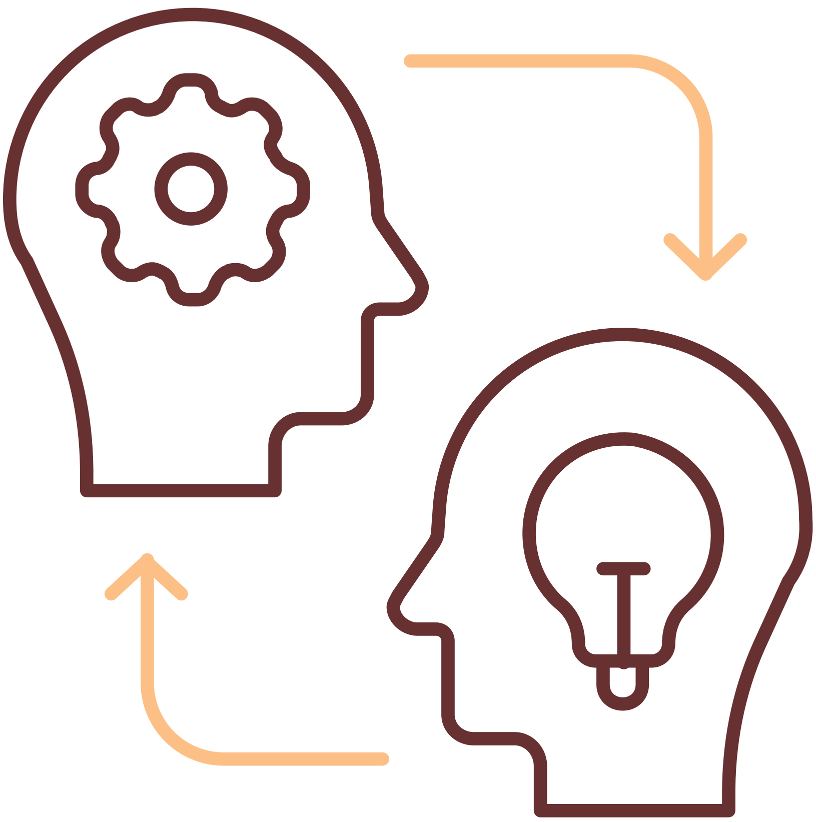
Ethics and integrity in coaching

Ethics and integrity are critical components of effective youth coaching, guiding coaches in fostering a supportive and positive environment for young individuals. These principles help ensure that youth coaches act in the best interests of those they support and maintain a standard of conduct that promotes trust, safety, and respect. Ethics and integrity in youth coaching extend beyond adhering to rules; they embody a commitment to values such as fairness, transparency, respect, and empathy. These values are crucial in shaping the experiences and development of young people, providing a stable and positive framework that influences their growth and learning.

DO's	Don'ts[1]
✔ Maintain a professional distance while being approachable and supportive.	✘ Don't use your position to influence coachees unduly or for personal gain.
✔ Ensure that all activities and interactions are transparent and open to scrutiny.	✘ Don't disclose personal information about the coachees without a valid reason or consent, except in cases where it's necessary to prevent harm.
✔ Keep informed about the cultural backgrounds and individual circumstances of the coachees to tailor your approach to their specific needs.	✘ Don't ignore signs of abuse or neglect; report them according to the protocols of your organization.

2.1 Establishing trust and rapport

Building trust and rapport is a foundational element of effective youth coaching. It involves creating a safe, supportive environment where young individuals feel valued, understood, and motivated. Establishing trust and rapport not only enhances the coaching relationship but also significantly impacts the coachee's growth and success.



1 Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council (n.d.) *Guidance for Safe Working Practice for Adults Who Work with Children and Young People*.

Tips & tricks

Be consistent[2]

Tip: always be consistent in your words and actions. Consistency in following through on promises and maintaining pr edictable behavior helps build trust.

Trick: use a planner or digital calendar to keep track of commitments and appointments with coachees to ensure you never miss a scheduled session or promise.

Share personal experiences[3]

Tip: sharing appropriate personal stories can make you more relatable and approachable, helping to bridge gaps between you and the coachee.

Trick: share experiences that are relevant to the challenges or successes that the coachees are experiencing. Ensure these stories are age-appropriate and help convey understanding and empathy.

Respect privacy

Tip: always respect the privacy and boundaries of the coachee. Trust is quickly eroded if they feel their personal space or privacy is being infringed upon.

Trick: establish clear guidelines about confidentiality and privacy from the start, and remind them occasionally, which reassures coachees that their personal information is safe with you.

Language sensitivity

Tip: avoid leading questions: Ensure your questions do not suggest an answer. Positive language helps create an environment where coachees feel open and empowered to express themselves.

Trick: when asking a question, use open-ended phrases like "How do you feel about...?" or "What are your thoughts on...?" This avoids guiding them to a specific answer and encourages more genuine responses.

Building trust and rapport with coachees involves several strategic approaches. Active listening is fundamental; coaches should show genuine interest in coachees' thoughts and feelings, using open-ended questions and providing feedback without interrupting. Consistency and reliability are also crucial—coaches must keep appointments, be punctual, and consistently follow through on commitments, as this behavior builds trust over time. Empathy is another key strategy; coaches should acknowledge and validate coachees' feelings and experiences, sharing similar experiences when appropriate to make coachees feel understood. Creating a safe environment is essential, where coachees can share personal thoughts without judgment, and their privacy is respected.

Coaches may encounter barriers such as past negative experiences, cultural differences, lack of communication skills, and fear of judgment. Overcoming these requires acknowledging past experiences, educating oneself about the coachee's cultural background, using alternative communication methods, and maintaining a non-judgmental attitude.

Support tools like trust-building activities and communication skills workshops can also enhance trust. These activities and workshops should include exercises that are age-appropriate and gradually increase in complexity. They should focus on developing skills such as active listening, assertiveness, and non-verbal communication, providing practical scenarios for coachees to practice these skills (RCADEMY, n.d.).

2.2 Cultural sensitivity

Cultural sensitivity is a vital skill for coaches working in diverse youth environments. It involves more than just acknowledging cultural differences—it requires an active effort to understand, respect, and appropriately respond to the unique cultural backgrounds of each coachee. This sensitivity impacts how coachees perceive their environment, engage with their peers and adults, and how they respond to authority and educational activities.

2 Starr, J. (2014) *The Mentoring Manual: Your Step-by-Step Guide to Being a Better Mentor*, Harlow: Pearson Business.

3 Jorgsen, R. (2022) *Connecting With Students Through Strategic Sharing*, Edutopia.

Tips & tricks

Build a cultural calendar

Tip: keep track of important cultural and religious holidays of the coachees you work with and acknowledge these in your sessions.

Trick: use online calendar tools that allow for multiple holiday calendars from various cultures to be integrated into your main calendar. Set reminders a week in advance to plan for a small celebration or a learning session about the holiday. This helps ensure that all relevant cultural dates are recognized and prepared appropriately.

Use "I" statements[4]

Tip: when discussing cultural issues, use "I" statements to express your feelings and thoughts without assuming those of others.

Trick: practice framing sentences like, "I feel…" or "From my perspective…" in team meetings or training sessions. Role-play scenarios where cultural misunderstandings might occur to help staff get accustomed to using "I" statements in sensitive conversations, reducing the risk of miscommunication or offense.

Diverse role models

Tip: incorporate stories and examples of diverse role models and leaders into your coaching to inspire and connect with coachees from different backgrounds.

Trick: create a "Role Model of the Month" feature where you highlight the achievements of various cultural figures, not only from history but also contemporary leaders. Use multimedia resources like videos, podcasts, and articles to make these figures more relatable and engaging. Include local community leaders who can be invited to speak at the center.

Individual recognition

Tip: avoid comparing coachees: Refrain from making comparisons between group members, especially those from different cultures, as this can create tension and unhealthy competition. It's important to honor each young person's unique strengths and background.

Trick: focus on individual progress by using phrases like "I noticed your improvement in…" or "You bring a unique perspective to this," which highlights their personal growth without making comparisons to others.

Enhancing cultural sensitivity in coaching involves various strategic methods to ensure inclusivity and respect for diversity. Encouraging cultural sharing can significantly enhance mutual respect and understanding. Organizing cultural days or events where coachees can showcase their traditions fosters learning and appreciation among all participants. Adapting coaching practices is also essential; coaches should modify their communication methods, conflict-resolution strategies, and team-building activities to align with cultural sensitivities.

Promoting an inclusive coaching environment involves using inclusive language that is simple and clear, and avoiding slang or colloquialisms that could be misunderstood by non-native speakers. Understanding non-verbal cues is also important; coaches should educate themselves about the meanings behind different cultural gestures and body language to prevent misinterpretation. Additionally, creating culturally relevant materials that reflect diverse races, ethnicities, and cultures in coaching materials is crucial.

To support these strategies, coaches can participate in cultural competence training workshops, which equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge for interacting effectively with culturally diverse coachees. They should also use cultural awareness resources, such as books and online materials, to build a foundational understanding of different cultural backgrounds and share these insights with their team (Building Rapport and Trust through Effective Communication,2025).

4 Rosenberg, M.B. (2015) *Nonviolent communication: a language of life*, Encinitas, CA: PuddleDancer Press.

2.3 Setting boundaries and expectations

Setting boundaries and expectations is a critical component of youth coaching. It establishes a framework within which both the coach and coachee can operate safely and effectively. Clear boundaries and expectations help in creating a structured and respectful environment, essential for the coachee's growth and development.

Tips & tricks

Clearly define rules and consequences

Tip: from the outset, clearly articulate the rules of the environment and the consequences of not adhering to them.

Trick: develop a visual chart or booklet that outlines the rules and consequences in simple language and use graphical symbols that can be understood by all, regardless of reading level or language proficiency.

Involve coachees in the process[5]

Tip: engage coachees in developing some of the rules and expectations. This increases their buy-in and understanding.

Trick: use interactive workshops or group discussions to facilitate the creation of rules. This can be a dedicated session where coachees propose rules and discuss their importance before a group decision is made.

Consistent enforcement[6]

Tip: ensure that all staff members enforce boundaries and expectations consistently.

Trick: implement a peer-review system where coaches periodically observe each other and provide feedback on consistency and enforcement of rules.

Setting clear boundaries and expectations in coaching involves several strategic approaches. First, it's essential to communicate these boundaries using simple, direct language right from the start, and to regularly revisit and reinforce them. Engaging coachees in setting these boundaries collaboratively ensures they feel a sense of ownership and are more likely to adhere to them. It's crucial to apply these expectations consistently and fairly across all coachees to maintain fairness and avoid any perceptions of favoritism.

Coaches may face challenges such as resistance to boundaries, inconsistent enforcement, cultural differences affecting perceptions, and overly rigid boundaries that may stifle creativity. Addressing these challenges involves explaining the purpose and benefits of boundaries, ensuring all coaches enforce rules consistently, being culturally sensitive, and striking a balance between structure and flexibility.

To support these strategies, coaches can utilize tools like boundary-setting workshops, which educate coachees about the importance of boundaries through interactive role-playing and discussions. Expectations agreements are also helpful; these written agreements clearly outline the expectations for both coach and coachee and are reviewed and signed by both parties, with regular revisions as needed. These methods and tools help create a structured yet flexible coaching environment that fosters growth and respects individual needs.(Rogers, 2008).

2.4 Resources referenced in this chapter

Books

Apple, M. and Beane, J. (2007) Democratic Schools. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Rogers, J. (2008) Coaching Skills: A Handbook. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Rosenberg, M.B. (2015) Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life. Encinitas, CA: PuddleDancer

5 Apple, M. and Beane, J. (2007) *Democratic Schools*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

6 J. Scrivener, Classroom Management Techniques, Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Press.

Starr, J. (2014) The Mentoring Manual: Your Step-by-Step Guide to Being a Better Mentor. Harlow: Pearson Business.

Online articles and resources

Jorgsen, R. (2022) Connecting With Students Through Strategic Sharing. Edutopia. Available at: https://www.edutopia.org/article/connecting-students-through-strategic-sharing/ (accessed 27 November 2024)

RCADEMY (n.d.) Building Rapport and Trust through Effective Communication, Available at: https://rcademy.com/building-rapport-and-trust-through-effective-communication/ (accessed 27 November 2024).

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Think Coaching Academy (n.d.) Cultural Competency: Coaching Across Diverse Populations and Contexts, Available at: https://www.thinkcoachingacademy.co.za/cultural-competency-coaching-across-diverse-populations-and-contexts/ (accessed 12 November 2025).

2.5 Additional recommended resources

Books

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Brennan, D. and Wildflower, L. (2014) 'Ethics in coaching', in Cox, E., Bachkirova, T. and

Clutterbuck, D. (eds.) The complete handbook of coaching. London: SAGE Publications, pp. 430–444.

Pàmies, J. and D'Angelo, A. (2020) 'Youth inclusion and cultural diversity', in Úcar, X.,

Soler-Masó, P. and Planas-Lladó, A. (eds.) Working with young people: A social pedagogy perspective from Europe and Latin America. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 217–232.

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Sercombe, H. (2010) Youth work ethics. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Starr, J. (2014) The mentoring manual: Your step-by-step guide to being a better mentor. Harlow: Pearson Business.

Online articles and resources

Ethics-for-Managers.pdf (Accessed: 25 October 2024).

Youth Affairs Council of WA (YACWA) (2017) *Supporting ethical youth work: Guide to implementing the code of ethics for managers.* Available at: https://www.yacwa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Guide-to-Implementing-the-Code-of-

Youth Affairs Council of Victoria (YACVic) (n.d.) *Code of ethical practice.* Available at: https://www.yacvic.org.au/training-and-services/code-of-ethical-practice/ (Accessed: 28 October 2024).

Youtube

A practical 3-part video exploring legal and related ethical issues that commonly arise when working with young people:

Youthlaw - Young People's Legal Rights Centre Inc (2013) *Working with Young People Part 1: Your Duty of Care*. Available from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LqA6sZk3xus (Accessed 26 October 2024).

Youthlaw - Young People's Legal Rights Centre Inc (2013) *Working with Young People Part 2: Privacy and Confidentiality*. Available from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tqJ_yyKm12k (Accessed 26 October 2024).

Youthlaw - Young People's Legal Rights Centre Inc (2013) *Working with Young People Part 3: Reporting Child Abuse*. Available from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e4KFBOdeZhg (Accessed 26 October 2024).

3.

Personalising the coaching approach

Effective coaching relies on a personalised approach that recognises the unique needs, goals, and circumstances of each coachee. By understanding these factors and tailoring strategies accordingly, coaches create experiences that strengthen the impact of the coaching process. Personalisation is essential for fostering meaningful growth and helping coachees reach their full potential.

A personalised coaching approach builds a relationship of trust, relevance, and responsiveness between coach and coachee. It involves continuously adapting strategies and techniques to align with evolving needs so that the coaching journey stays effective and meaningful.

DOs	DON'Ts
✔ Review and adjust your coaching strategies regularly.	✘ Don't make assumptions about the coachee's strengths and weaknesses.
✔ Encourage coachees to view challenges as opportunities for growth.	✘ Don't rush the process of strength identification.
✔ Integrate storytelling into the progress review processes.	✘ Don't impose your own goals or expectations on the coachee.
✔ Provide coachees with strengths-based feedback.	✘ Don't overlook the importance of emotional intelligence.

3.1 Understanding coachee needs

Understanding each coachee's needs, goals, and challenges is the first and most crucial step in personalising your coaching. It requires active listening, empathy, and a willingness to adapt traditional methods to individual circumstances. This understanding builds trust and sets the stage for a successful coaching relationship.

Tips & tricks

Storytelling in coaching
Tip: Use storytelling to help coachees express their journeys, challenges, and aspirations. Encouraging personal stories can uncover core values and motivations.
Trick: Start sessions with prompts like "Tell me about a time you overcame a challenge." Use these stories to guide goal-setting and identify strengths.

Strengths-based practices
Tip: focus on amplifying coachees' strengths rather than their weaknesses.
Trick: use tools such as the VIA Character Strengths Survey or Character strengths inventory (appendix .1) and ask coachees to reflect on how they've used these strengths before and how they can apply them now.

Adaptive goal-setting
Tip: set dynamic goals with coachees that can evolve as circumstances change.
Trick: use scenario planning exercises to anticipate challenges and schedule regular check-ins to refine objectives (appendix. 2).

Setting milestones
Tip: establish clear SMART milestones that track progress and maintain motivation.
Trick: break large goals into smaller steps and use visual tools like timelines or Gantt charts to map progress and celebrate completion.

Clarify communication
Tip: never assume silence means agreement - it may indicate confusion or discomfort.
Trick: check understanding with open-ended questions such as "What are your thoughts on this?" or "How do you feel about what we discussed?"

3.2 Customised coaching strategies

Once you clearly understand your coachee's needs, the next step is to develop customized strategies that address them directly. Select coaching techniques, resources, and communication styles that best resonate with each coachee.

Tips & tricks

Emotional intelligence
Tip: build emotional awareness by recognising your emotions and those of your coachee.
Trick: observe tone, body language, and energy shifts. Name emotions when appropriate (e.g., "It seems you're feeling frustrated - would you like to talk about that?").

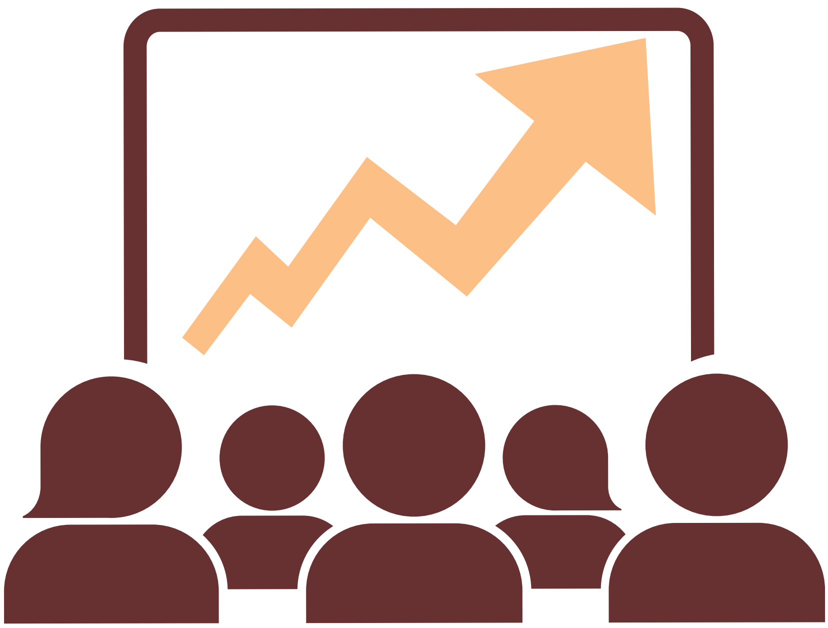
Strengths-based practices
Tip: align coaching methods with the coachee's strengths to maximise their potential . Highlight instances where they've successfully utilised these strengths in the past (appendix. 3).
Trick: use exercises that reinforce their strengths, such as role-playing scenarios where they lead using their top skills. This not only

Flexible coaching methods
Tip: stay flexible and adjust your methods as the coachee's needs evolve
Trick: combine traditional and creative tools - such as role-playing, visual aids, interactive exercises to keep sessions engaging and relevant.

Strategies for personalization

Personalised coaching requires flexibility and responsiveness. Regularly assess how well your strategies meet the coachee's needs, invite honest feedback, and adapt tools or resources as circumstances change.

- Ongoing assessment: review whether current strategies are meeting needs and adjust as new challenges appear.
- Feedback loop: establish regular feedback sessions to gauge satisfaction and refine your approach.
- Resource adaptation: adapt materials, introduce new exercises, or modify session frequency to fit the coachee's evolving context.



3.3 Encouraging storytelling to promote growth

Encouraging storytelling to promote growth is a cornerstone of effective coaching. Through storytelling, coachees internalise their learning, recognise their progress, and identify areas for further development. These personal narratives help coachees take ownership of their growth and develop the self-awareness needed for long-term success.

Tips & tricks

Fostering a growth mindset through storytelling
Tip: encourage coachees to view challenges as chapters in their growth story. This helps build resilience and a forward-looking mindset.
Trick: invite them to narrate a "future success story" where they've overcome current challenges and achieved their goals. This exercise nurtures optimism and motivation.

Promoting regular reflection with narratives
Tip: use reflective storytelling exercises to encourage deeper thinking about personal growth.
Trick: ask coachees to keep a narrative journal documenting progress, challenges, and insights. Offer prompts such as "What story does this week tell about your growth?"

Setting adaptive goals within stories
Tip: help coachees create goal narratives that emphasise flexibility. For instance, instead of saying "I will achieve X," reframe it as "I am working toward X while adapting to challenges."
Trick: use visual tools such as storyboards to map goal narratives, making goal-setting more engaging and accessible.

By combining storytelling, strengths-based practices, adaptive goal-setting, and emotional intelligence, coaches create a personalised and impactful coaching experience. These methods keep coaching dynamic and meaningful, supporting both short-term progress and long-term growth.

3.4 Providing constructive feedback

Constructive feedback is a vital part of youth coaching, promoting both learning and development. Whether positive or corrective, feedback should encourage growth without undermining confidence. In multicultural settings, giving and receiving feedback with sensitivity is key to building trust and motivation.

Constructive feedback helps young people recognise their strengths and identify areas for improvement. Effective feedback focuses on behaviour and specific actions rather than personal traits, encouraging reflection, accountability, and growth.

Feedback can:

- Boost confidence by reinforcing positive actions.
- Foster growth by identifying areas for improvement without criticism.
- Strengthen relationships by showing genuine care for development.

Guidelines for giving constructive feedback:

- Focus on behavior, not the person: address specific actions rather than personal traits. This reduces defensiveness and helps the young person view feedback as an opportunity to grow.
  Example: Instead of saying "You're lazy," say, "I noticed you missed deadlines twice this week, and I'd like to discuss how we can address that."
- Use "I" statements: frame feedback around your observations to avoid blame and create collaboration.
  Example: "I felt concerned when you seemed disengaged during today's activity," instead of, "You didn't participate."

- Be timely and private: give feedback soon after the event and, if it's corrective, always do it privately. Delays dilute impact, and public criticism can damage trust.
  Example: After a group activity, discuss observations privately rather than in front of peers.
- Provide group feedback when appropriate: Use group-level feedback to foster cohesion and reinforce shared values. Focus on team behaviour and dynamics rather than singling out individuals.
- Limit feedback to two issues: Avoid overwhelming coachees. Focus on one or two points they can realistically address.
- Example: "I noticed you interrupted others during discussions. Let's work on giving everyone space to speak."
- Be specific and action-oriented: Avoid vague feedback — always suggest clear, actionable next steps.

Example: "You've been arriving late to group sessions, which affects the team. Let's agree on a plan to improve punctuality."

The 5-step feedback model for youth workers

Use this model to guide effective feedback conversations:

1. Describe the behavior: clearly outline the behaviour you're addressing.

   Example: "During today's discussion, I noticed you interrupted others several times."
2. Describe your reaction: use "I" statements to explain how it affected you or the group.

   Example: "I felt concerned because it made it difficult for others to share their thoughts."
3. Explain why it's important: clarify the broader impact.

   Example: "It's important to let others speak so everyone can contribute to the discussion and feel valued."
4. Show you understand: clarify the broader impact.

   Example: "Can you tell me why you felt the need to interrupt during the discussion?"
5. Suggest a solution: offer practical suggestions and co-develop improvements.

   Example: "Next time, try to wait for a pause before jumping in. What do you think might help you do that?"

3.5 Additional recommended resources

Books

Rosenberg, M. (2015) Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life. 3rd edn. Encinitas, CA: PuddleDancer Press.

Starr, J. (2016) The Coaching Manual: The Definitive Guide to the Process, Principles and Skills of Personal Coaching. 4th edn. Harlow: Pearson Education.

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4.

Self-care and wellbeing for coaches

Youth coaches play a crucial role in shaping the lives of the young people they work with, but to do this effectively, it's essential that they have a strong mental health foundation. This foundation empowers them to cope with the unique stresses associated with their role, develop resilience, and foster healthy relationships with both their colleagues and the coachee under their guidance. Prioritizing their mental well-being directly impacts their effectiveness as a coach, ability to inspire and guide coachee, and their overall quality of life. When coaches invest in their well-being, they model healthy practices for the young people in their care, demonstrating the importance of mental health and self-care.

DO's	Don'ts[7]
✔ Clearly define your work hours and stick to them to ensure you have time to recharge outside of work.	✘ Avoid putting your well-being last. Remember that you can't effectively support others if you're not taking care of yourself.
✔ Reach out to colleagues, supervisors, or mental health professionals when you need to talk about the challenges you face. It's okay to ask for help.	✘ While it's important to be empathetic, don't take on the emotional burdens of the young people you work with. Practice compassionate detachment.
✔ Engage in regular physical exercise, maintain a balanced diet, and ensure you get enough sleep to support your overall well-being.	✘ If you're struggling with your mental health, don't hesitate to seek professional support. Mental health is as important as physical health.

4.1 Basics of mental well-being[8]

Mental well-being is a fundamental aspect of overall health that significantly influences how we experience life. It goes beyond merely avoiding mental health issues—mental well-being encompasses our ability to thrive emotionally and psychologically. It affects how we interpret events, manage stress, and respond to challenges, whether in our personal relationships, professional endeavors, or daily routines. Good mental well-being enables us to maintain a balanced perspective, nurture positive relationships, and make sound decisions. It is the bedrock upon which resilience is built, allowing us to recover from setbacks, stay motivated, and find joy and meaning in life. By nurturing our mental well-being, we equip ourselves with the tools necessary for long-term success and fulfillment in all areas of life.

7 Adjusted and summarised from: RecruitmentPlus, n.d., *7 Tips for Managing Your Mental Health at Work*.

8 Gautam, S. et al. (2024) *Concept of mental health and mental well-being, its determinants and coping strategies*, Indian Journal of Psychiatry, 66(2), pp. 231–244.

Tips & tricks

Prioritize personal well-being
Tip: recognize that your mental health is just as important as the well-being of the coachee you mentor. Prioritizing self-care ensures you can perform at your best and provide the necessary support to your coachees.
Trick: schedule regular self-care activities, such as exercise, hobbies, or relaxation techniques, into your daily or weekly routine. Treat these activities as non-negotiable appointments with yourself to ensure they happen consistently.

Build a support network
Tip: cultivate a strong support network of colleagues, friends, and family who understand the demands of your role. A supportive community is essential for mental resilience.
Trick: join or form a support group with other youth coaches where you can share experiences, challenges, and strategies. Regular meetings with this group can provide both emotional support and practical advice.

Celebrate small wins
Tip: acknowledge and celebrate your achievements, no matter how small. Recognizing your successes boosts your morale and motivation.
Trick: at the end of each week, list three things you accomplished, even if they seem minor. Reflect on how these contribute to your overall goals and well-being, and reward yourself with something enjoyable.

Mental well-being is inherently fluid, constantly influenced by our experiences, environment, and internal state. It's not a fixed destination but a continuous journey that requires ongoing attention and adjustment. This dynamic process involves maintaining a delicate balance across various aspects of life, including emotional, psychological, social, and physical dimensions.

Central to mental well-being is self-compassion—being kind to oneself during failures or difficulties, recognizing setbacks as natural, and reducing self-criticism. Proactively managing stress through mindfulness, meditation, and deep breathing helps stay grounded. Building strong social connections provides emotional support and a sense of belonging. Setting and pursuing meaningful goals fosters a sense of purpose and fulfillment, reinforcing a positive mindset and confidence. Ultimately, mental well-being is about cultivating a balanced life, enabling resilience, healthy relationships, and finding joy in daily experiences.

For those who work with young people, mental well-being is not just a personal asset but a professional necessity. The ability to maintain emotional balance and psychological resilience is crucial when guiding coachees through their own challenges. Because youth coaches often serve as role models, mentors, and support systems, their mental well-being directly impacts their effectiveness and the well-being of the young people they serve. Working with youth can be unpredictable and emotionally demanding. Mental well-being provides the foundation for managing these challenges without becoming overwhelmed. When youth coaches are balanced and resilient, they are better equipped to model healthy coping strategies, offer consistent support, and maintain a positive, encouraging environment for young people.

4.2 Self awareness and understanding others

Being self-aware means understanding ourselves better, which leads to personal growth, self-acceptance, and taking proactive steps to improve. It boosts our mental well-being, making us more confident, better decision-makers, and fostering stronger relationships through honesty and empathy. Understanding our own thoughts and behaviours also helps us understand others, improving both personal and professional connections. Ultimately, knowing ourselves well allows us to set realistic goals, succeed in tasks, build fulfilling relationships, and stay motivated in our daily lives. It's a crucial aspect of performing at our best (Ackerman, 2025).

Tips & tricks

Practice regular self-reflection[9]
Tip: use specific questions to guide your reflection, focusing on both positive experiences and areas for growth.
Trick: develop a template with key reflection questions, such as “What am I proud of today?” and “What will I do differently next time?” Keep this template in a visible place, like your desk or phone, to remind yourself to complete it regularly.

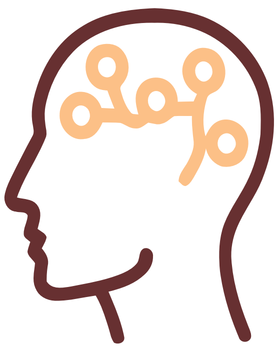
Ask open-ended questions
Tip: encourage others to share more by asking open-ended questions that invite thoughtful responses. This helps you gain a deeper understanding of their feelings, experiences, and perspectives.
Trick: instead of asking “Did you have a good day?” ask “What made your day good today?” or “How did that make you feel?” These types of questions lead to more insightful conversations and help you understand others better.

Manage your assumptions
Tip: before jumping to conclusions about someone’s behavior or intentions, take a moment to consider alternative explanations.
Trick: when you catch yourself making an assumption, pause and ask yourself, “What other reasons could there be for this behavior?” or “Could I be missing something?” Follow up by asking the person clarifying questions like, “Can you help me understand your perspective?”

Expanding on self-awareness, it’s essential to recognize that this practice is not just about knowing our thoughts and behaviors but also understanding how they impact our interactions with others. Self-awareness allows us to identify patterns in our reactions, uncover underlying beliefs, and make conscious decisions that align with our values. This depth of understanding fosters authenticity, where our actions reflect our true selves rather than unconscious impulses or societal expectations.

For those working with young people, self-awareness and the ability to understand others are critical skills that significantly impact the quality of mentorship and guidance provided (YIPA training, n.d.). Self-awareness allows youth coaches to recognize how their own emotions, biases, and behaviors affect their interactions with young people. By understanding their own triggers and responses, youth coaches can maintain a calm, supportive presence, even in challenging situations, modeling healthy emotional regulation for the coachees they support.

Understanding others, particularly young people, requires empathy and the ability to see situations from their perspective. Youth coaches who cultivate this skill can build stronger, more trusting relationships, which are essential for effective mentorship. When young people feel understood and respected, they are more likely to open up, engage, and benefit from the guidance provided. These skills also enable youth coaches to navigate the diverse backgrounds and experiences that young people bring to the table. Recognizing the individual needs, challenges, and strengths of each young person allows for more personalized and effective support, fostering an environment where all coachees can thrive.



9 PositivePsychology.com (n.d.) *Self-Reflection Questions for Introspection*.

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Online Articles and Resources

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CWVYS (2014) Health and well-being in youth work. Available at: https://www.cwvys.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/HB-Health-and-Wellbeing.pdf (Accessed: 3 December 2024).

Gautam, S., Jain, A., Chaudhary, J., Gautam, M., Gaur, M. and Grover, S. (2024) Concept of mental health and mental well-being, its determinants and coping strategies, Indian

Journal of Psychiatry, 66(2), pp. 231–244. Available at: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10911315/ (Accessed: 23 November 2024).

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PART 2

Tools for coaching young changemakers

5.

Project management

5.1 Introduction

In their journey of developing and implementing environmental sustainability initiatives, young changemakers are in one way or another concerned with project management. It can range from straightforward, intuitive actions taken in smaller initiatives to more structured, complex approaches necessary for larger, multifaceted projects. While the former may suffice in some cases, relying solely on intuition can lead to inefficiencies and missed opportunities. A more systematic approach, even for smaller projects, helps ensure that initiatives are well-organized, resource-efficient, and aligned with their intended goals. Therefore it is usually worth spending the time and energy to carefully set up the project management process, and apply it consistently throughout the initiative's development and implementation stages.

By the end of this chapter, you as a coach will be better able to:

- help young changemakers understand the importance of a structured approach to managing their environmental sustainability initiatives;
- guide them in translating their vision into clear objectives and actionable plans while helping them recognize and navigate the essential stages of the project management process;
- equip them with practical tools and strategies to plan, execute and monitor their initiatives effectively, ensuring they stay on track;
- help them in identifying and engaging key stakeholders, fostering collaboration, and building support for their initiatives;
- encourage continuous learning, equipping your coachees with competences and approaches to evaluate their progress and refine their approaches.

This chapter begins with an introduction to the fundamental principles of project management, providing a solid foundation for coaches and young changemakers alike. It then delves into the critical stage of project initiation, emphasizing the importance of setting clear goals and objectives. The subsequent sections focus on detailed project planning, offering strategies to develop comprehensive action plans, and stakeholder management, which is crucial for building support and collaboration. The chapter also covers methods for effective monitoring, reporting, and evaluation, ensuring that initiatives stay on track and achieve their desired impact. Finally, we conclude with a summary of key insights and additional resources to further support young changemakers in their journey.

5.2 Project management fundamentals

At its heart, project management revolves around several key principles: defining clear objectives, organising resources efficiently, maintaining flexibility, and ensuring stakeholder alignment. A project manager is responsible for navigating the complexities of the project, balancing competing demands, and driving the project team towards successful completion of the project. This requires a combination of leadership, communication, and problem-solving skills, underpinned by a solid understanding of project management methodologies.

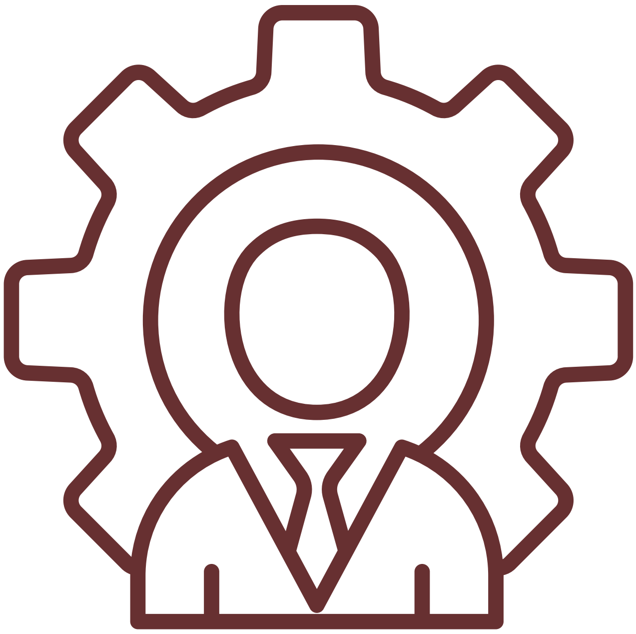
Choosing the right methodology

Selecting the appropriate project management methodology depends on the nature of the project, the organizational context, and the preferences of the project team. Each methodology has its advantages and potential drawbacks, and a successful project manager must be able to assess these factors and choose or adapt the methodology that best suits the project's needs. The table below presents an overview of widely recognized methodologies.

Methodology	Description
Waterfall	A traditional, linear approach where each phase (planning, design, implementation, evaluation) follows sequentially. Works best for projects with clearly defined requirements and minimal expected changes.
Agile	An iterative and flexible approach that emphasizes collaboration, adaptability, and incremental progress. Ideal for projects where requirements may evolve over time, such as community-based or creative initiatives.
Hybrid	Combines structured planning from Waterfall with the flexibility of Agile, allowing changemakers to plan key milestones while remaining adaptable in execution.
Lean	Focuses on maximising value and minimising waste, making it suitable for small teams or projects with limited resources. Encourages continuous improvement and learning.
PMBOK	A globally recognised framework developed by the Project Management Institute (PMI), providing standardised guidelines and best practices across all project stages. Useful as a reference for coaches who wish to deepen their technical understanding.

The role of the project manager

Regardless of the chosen methodology, the project manager plays a pivotal role in ensuring that the project is aligned with its goals. This involves not only the project's technical aspects but also managing relationships with stakeholders, addressing risks proactively, and maintaining the motivation and productivity of the team.



Part of the role	NOT part of the role
✔ Setting project goals and objectives ✔ Creating and managing the project plan ✔ Communicating with stakeholders ✔ Keeping the project on schedule ✔ Monitoring risks and adjusting plans	✘ Providing administrative support ✘ Doing the actual work (e.g. design, coding, event facilitation) ✘ Making technical decisions ✘ Taking over the work of others rather than coordinating efforts

Effective project managers combine strategic thinking with empathy and clear communication. They act as facilitators who enable the team to perform at its best, rather than as controllers who dictate every detail.

Educate Yourself First

Picture yourself as a coach guiding a changemaker who's passionate but unsure how to structure their initiative. Before advising them, make sure you're comfortable with the fundamentals of project planning, stakeholder mapping, and risk management. Your understanding will help your coachee turn ideas into a structured plan that feels both achievable and motivating.

Here are some useful resources to strengthen your foundation:

- Council of Europe & European Commission (2000) *Project Management T-Kit (T-Kit No. 3)*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.
- PM4NGOs (2020) *Project DPro, Project Management for Development Professionals Guide*. 2nd edn. This is a globally recognised manual tailored for NGOs and social impact projects.
- Project Management Institute (2021) *A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK® Guide)*, 7th edn. Newtown Square, PA: PMI. A comprehensive reference for universal project management standards.
- OpenLearn (n.d.) *Agile in Practice for Social Impact Projects* [online course]. The Open University.
- The Changemaker Project (n.d.) *Youth-Led Project Design Toolkit*. Focuses on adaptive and inclusive project planning for young teams.

Reflection

A solid understanding of project management fundamentals allows coachees to navigate their projects effectively, anticipate challenges, and maintain alignment with goals. Coaches should help coachees develop both conceptual knowledge and practical strategies to apply these principles in their own initiatives.

Tips & tricks

- Use real-life project examples to illustrate methodology strengths and weaknesses.
- Encourage coachees to document their reasoning for choosing a methodology.
- Highlight the iterative nature of project management: plans can and should evolve.

DO's	DON'Ts
✓ Ensure clear understanding of key methodologies by giving examples relevant to youth-led or small-scale initiatives.	✗ Don't assume one methodology fits all projects; even similar initiatives may need different approaches.
✓ Discuss pros and cons of each approach in the context of the coachee's specific project (timeline, uncertainty, stakeholders).	✗ Don't focus solely on tools without context: tools should always serve the project's goals.
✓ Encourage reflection on why a methodology fits, not just what it is.	✗ Don't neglect stakeholder alignment when discussing methodology; communication style must fit the chosen approach.
✓ Connect methodology choices to real project goals and constraints, such as flexibility needs or resource limitations.	✗ Don't overlook the importance of flexibility, especially in community-based or volunteer-driven projects.

5.3 Project initiation

In the first stage of a project's life cycle the coachee broadly defines their project, including why they're developing it and what value it will deliver. This stage is generally referred to as Project Initiation. It lays the foundation for the entire project, and if not done properly there's a huge risk that the project will fail as a result of unclear objectives, expectations that don't align, or low stakeholder involvement (PMBOK guide p68).

Project initiation typically consists of the following activities:

- Identifying key stakeholders and performing a needs analysis
- Defining the aim or goal, and setting the concrete objectives
- Assembling the team and (project management) tools

The most prominent deliverable that these activities normally result in is a project charter, also called a project definition document. It outlines the scope, objectives, stakeholders and project team. The document provides a solid framework guiding the project through subsequent stages.

Educate yourself first

Project Initiation requires a solid grounding in how projects are defined, framed, and prepared before any planning or implementation begins. As a coach, understanding the basics of problem definition, stakeholder identification, early scoping, and the difference between goals and objectives will help you guide young changemakers in building a strong project foundation.

Manuals such as the Project Management T-Kit offer a youth-sector perspective that aligns closely with grassroots initiatives, while the PMBOK Guide provides a structured overview of the Initiation Process Group. Reviewing introductory materials on stakeholder analysis and early team formation can strengthen your ability to support coachees in setting the right direction from the start. Finally, short online courses can help refresh and consolidate your understanding of core initiation concepts.

Useful resources:

- Council of Europe & European Commission (2000) *Project Management T-Kit (T-Kit No. 3)*, sections on problem identification, stakeholder mapping, goal-setting, and scope.
- Project Management Institute (2021) *A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK® Guide)*, sections on the Initiating Process Group.
- PMI (2000) Smith, L. W., "Stakeholder Analysis: A Pivotal Practice". *Project Management Institute Annual Seminars & Symposium*, Houston, TX.
- Forbes (2023) "Goals vs Objectives: Why It Matters and How to Set Them", *Forbes Business Council*.
- Forbes (n.d.) "Best Project Management Software" overview, *Forbes Advisor*.
- Haas, M. R. & Mortensen, M. (2016) "The Secrets of Great Teamwork", *Harvard Business Review*.
- Coursera (n.d.) *Project Initiation: Starting a Successful Project*.
- LinkedIn Learning (n.d.) *Project Management Foundations: Initiating and Planning* (module "Setting up the Project for Success").

Case study: clarifying project objectives in a youth-led recycling initiative

Context:
A young changemaker, Emma, wants to start a recycling awareness campaign at her local school. She is motivated but struggles to clearly define what she wants to achieve and how to measure success.

Intervention:
Her coach guides her through the SMART Objectives tool, helping her turn her broad goal ("increase recycling awareness") into a concrete objective: "Increase student participation in the school's recycling programme by 20% within three months."

Outcome:
Emma leaves the session with a clear, actionable objective and feels confident explaining her goal to school staff. The coach notes that using SMART objectives early helps coachees focus their energy and align with stakeholders, setting a strong foundation for the project.

Tools

Title: Business Model Canvas

Purpose: helps define, describe and analyse the business model of the initiative

Type of tool: framework

How to deliver to coachees: either on an individual level or as part of a group process

Expertise level required from coach: intermediate

Instruction for coaches:

1. Begin by explaining the purpose and components of the Business Canvas Model to your coachees. Emphasize its relevance to not just businesses but also (activities ran by) non-profits, highlighting how it can help in understanding and improving what their initiative is really about and how to operate it.
2. Encourage coachees to use the Business Model Canvas to reflect on their initiative independently or in groups. Ask them to consider each section of the canvas and how it related to what they've already defined so far.
3. Propose to them to document their thoughts and ideas in each section of the Business Model Canvas. This will help them organize their insights and prepare for conversations with stakeholders as well as the later planning stage of their initiative.

Notes:

- We recommend that you offer to your coachees the Business Model Canvas for Non-Profits, which has been tailored to be representative of the nature and needs of non-profits and social enterprises. This prevents them from forcing themselves into the for-profit mindset that the original Business Model Canvas would ask from them. See 'further reading' for details.

Useful resources:

- Alexandros, B. & Skylance, S. (2013) *The Canvas Kit for Nonprofits*. [online]
- HFPg Nonprofit Support Program (n.d.) *Nonprofit Business Model Canvas*. [online]

Title: SMART objectives

Purpose: helps in setting the objectives right

Type of tool: framework

How to deliver to coachees: either on an individual level or as part of a group process

Expertise level required from coach: basic

Instruction for coaches:

1. Explain the framework by running your coachee(s) through the five SMART criteria and giving concrete examples. We recommend to start with an objective that is ill-defined, making it SMART step by step as you walk them through the criteria one by one.
2. Discuss with your coachee(s) the benefits of using SMART objectives, and tap into potential pitfalls.
3. Ask them to identify SMART objectives for their initiatives, starting from the goal they should have already defined previously. If you work with your coachees in a group setting, encourage them to take this step individually, as only then they can take full ownership of the objectives.
4. Invite your coachees to challenge each other's objectives in pairs if you brought them in a group setting, asking them to critically assess whether the objectives of their peers now represent the SMART criteria. If you coach people one-on-one, your coachees can benefit from your feedback instead.

Notes:

- Many resources talk about SMART Goals alongside or instead of SMART Objectives[10]. In our definition, which matches the resource in the Educate Yourself box on the previous page, goals are overarching ideas of what you want to achieve, rather than being short-term and measurable. Following that definition, defining SMART Goals has less of a priority than setting SMART Objectives.
- A project has one goal but usually several objectives. Make sure your coachees have defined at least a draft goal for their initiative before asking them to proceed to the objectives. It is likely and OK that they finetune the goal after having set the objectives.
- Be flexible and use common sense: it's not always possible to apply all five SMART criteria simultaneously, requiring the coachee to take other steps first before finalising the objectives; also, blindly following the framework can result in objectives that are SMART but not wise. Make sure to advise your coachees to define objectives that make sense given who they are and what they are doing.

Useful resources:

- Boogaard, K. (2023) "How to write SMART goals", *Atlassian Work Life*.
- Harvest (n.d.). *Achieving success: How SMART objectives can empower your team.*

10 and sometimes, the words "goal" and "objective" are even used interchangeably.

Title: Stakeholder mapping and analysis

Purpose: helps identify and prioritize stakeholders based on their influence and interest in the project.

Type of tool: framework

How to deliver to coachees: either on an individual level or as part of a group process

Expertise level required from coach: intermediate

Pre-Exercise preparation: before starting this exercise, ensure that your coachees have completed the following tasks:

- Stakeholder identification: coachees have already identified the relevant stakeholders for their initiative. Stakeholders include anyone who has an interest in or is affected by the project. They can be internal (e.g., team members, managers) or external (e.g., clients, partners, community members). The stakeholder identification process involves listing all individuals, groups, or organizations that could impact or be impacted by the project. Coachees can e.g. use a stakeholder analysis context diagram for the identification process.[11]
- Stakeholder needs analysis: coachees have conducted a needs analysis for each identified stakeholder, understanding their expectations, needs, concerns, priorities and the potential impact they may have on the project. This involves engaging with stakeholders directly through interviews, surveys, meetings, or informal discussions.

Instruction for coaches:

1. Begin the exercise by introducing the concept of stakeholder mapping. Explain that the goal of this step is to visually categorize stakeholders based on their level of interest in the project and their influence over its outcomes. Next, guide your coachees through the process of mapping stakeholders using an interest/influence matrix, using the following steps.
2. Create the Matrix: draw a 2x2 grid, labeling one axis as "Interest" (low to high) and the other as "Influence" (low to high).
3. Plot stakeholders: ask the coachees to place each stakeholder on the matrix according to the level of interest they have in the project and the degree of influence they hold over it. Stakeholders with high influence and high interest will be placed in the top right quadrant, while those with low influence and low interest will be in the bottom left, and so on. Note that influence indicates a stakeholder's relative power over and within a project, and that importance indicates the degree to which the project cannot be considered successful is the needs and expectations of that stakeholder are not addressed.
4. Prioritize stakeholders: once the stakeholders are plotted, help the coachees prioritize them. Stakeholders in the top right quadrant (high influence, high interest) should be the primary focus, requiring the most attention and engagement. Discuss strategies for engaging and managing each group of stakeholders based on their position in the matrix.

Notes:

- Before implementing this tool, make sure you're sufficiently familiar with the stakeholder analysis approach, e.g. by exploring the article "*Stakeholder analysis: a pivotal practice*" by the Project Management Institute that was referred to before.
- Remind coachees that stakeholder dynamics can shift over time, so it's important to review and update the stakeholder map regularly.
- Encourage coachees to reflect on how they will interact with their stakeholders to ensure alignment and to be able to address any concerns early on.

Useful resources:

- Bray, M. (2023). "The complete stakeholder mapping guide", *Miro*.
- O'Haire, C. et al (2015). *Engaging Stakeholders To Identify and Prioritize Future Research Needs*. National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI).

11 Exhibit 1 in "Stakeholder analysis: a pivotal practice" by the PMI

Title: The devil's advocate

Purpose: to critically assess a project idea

Type of tool: exercise

How to deliver to coachees: in a group-based setting. The exercise is to be played in groups of three persons.

Expertise level required from coach: basic

Instruction for coaches:

1. Divide your coachees in groups of three persons
2. Ask them to assign roles to each person: one person is the pitcher, the second one is the proponent, and the third one is the devil's advocate.
3. The pitcher starts by briefly sharing their initiative idea in just two minutes.
4. The two other persons share their views in response, one by one. The devil's advocate only brings forward points and feedback that are critical of the pitch, i.e. things they don't like or don't consider good about it. Subsequently, the proponent only shares feedback that is positive of the initiative, i.e. things they do appreciate and find good about it. Whilst this is happening, the pitcher writes down notes for later contemplation. Once the two persons are done with their feedback, the pitcher thanks them, and the three of them move on to the next round.
5. The group members switch roles and repeat, until everyone has pitched their initiative and everyone has taken both of the other roles within their groups.
6. Ask your coachees to do a reflection of e.g. 15 minutes within their groups of three. They can reflect on the process of giving and receiving feedback: what did they appreciate; what was difficult; etc. But also encourage them to reflect on the content: what did they gain from this exercise in terms of developing their initiatives.

Notes:

- Be strict in the time management: asking coachees to share their ideas and feedback with their peers in just a few minutes encourages them to stick to what's most important, and it helps prevent long monologues that make people zone out.
- Ask coachees to stick to their roles. The point of the exercise is not to go into a discussion, but rather to present the pitchers with different viewpoints on their ideas.
- You can consider to give your coachees five minutes of time before the exercise to loosely prepare their pitch.

Reflection

As a coach, your role in the Project Initiation stage is to help coachees build a solid foundation for their project. Tailor your guidance to the size and complexity of your coachee's initiative, but ensure that the key activities are addressed, i.e. stakeholder identification, defining the objectives, and assembling the team.

Tips & tricks

- Use visual mapping tools (e.g. stakeholder matrix) to help coachees physically map who matters and why.
- Encourage coachees to *voice and test their assumptions* (e.g. "What if this stakeholder doesn't support us?") in a safe space. Early "devil's advocate" exercises can surface hidden risks.
- Promote iterative drafting of the project charter: encourage coachees to write a draft, reflect, then refine. This builds clarity and ownership.
- When helping coachees set SMART objectives, ask them to write them down, share them, and commit to a simple check-in rhythm (e.g., monthly reviews) to track progress.

DO's	DON'Ts
✓ Emphasize the importance of setting clear, achievable objectives that align with their project vision.	✗ Don't assume all coachees will instinctively use or understand "smart" goal logic; guide them step by step.
✓ Encourage early and meaningful stakeholder engagement, ensuring coachees map and prioritize key actors.	✗ Don't delay stakeholder conversations until later phases. They need input and buy-in early on.
✓ Help coachees assemble a balanced and committed team, clarifying roles and responsibilities.	✗ Don't leave your coachees working in isolation or without a sense of shared ownership.
✓ Support them in developing a project charter that captures scope, objectives, stakeholders, risks, and roles.	✗ Don't let this foundational document be vague or informal; it's their reference throughout the project.

5.4 Project planning

Once the project has been initiated, the next critical step is Project Planning. This stage involves developing a detailed roadmap that will guide the project from start to finish. Research reveals a strong link between thorough planning and the success of a project[12]. By dividing the project into smaller, more manageable tasks, project managers can more effectively distribute resources, track progress, and anticipate potential risks. This way, project planning helps ensure that the project is completed on time, within budget and with high-quality results.

Project planning usually consists of:

- breaking down the project into smaller, more manageable tasks, using e.g. a Work Breakdown Structure
- creating a detailed project schedule
- identifying and allocating resources
- identifying potential risks and developing a plan to mitigate them
- making the budget
- preparing a communications plan

These components together make the project plan that is typically delivered at the end of the Project Planning stage.

Educate yourself first

Before guiding young changemakers through Project Planning, familiarise yourself with core concepts such as scheduling, risk management, resource allocation, and communication planning. The "Project Management T-Kit" provides a youth-sector perspective well suited to the realities of grassroots initiatives, while the PMBOK Guide – in particular the sections on scope management, scheduling, and risk management – offers a structured overview of industry-standard practices.

Risk management is often unfamiliar terrain for young project teams, so reviewing a practical breakdown can help you support coachees in identifying risks realistically rather than reactively. Resources on scheduling and resource allocation can strengthen your understanding of how to build timelines that are realistic rather than aspirational. And online learning platforms offer short modules on planning fundamentals that help consolidate the theory.

When planning stakeholder engagement, explore introductory materials on building stakeholder communication plans. A simple starting point is to examine communication matrix examples that visualise who needs what information and when. This will help you coach coachees in structuring outreach and ensuring alignment among their supporters, volunteers, and beneficiaries.

Useful resources:

- Council of Europe & European Commission (2000) *Project Management T-Kit (T-Kit No. 3)*, section on planning.
- Project Management Institute (2021) *PMBOK® Guide*, sections on scope, scheduling, resource management, and risk management.
- PMP (2024) "A Comprehensive Guide to Risk Management Strategies".
- Jones, E. F. (2009) *Scheduling 101 – the basic of best practices.* PMI.
- Coursera (n.d.) *Initiating and Planning Projects*.
- LinkedIn Learning (n.d.) *Project Management Foundations: Planning for Project Success*.

12 https://www.pmi.org/learning/library/importance-planning-phase-project-success-6021

Case Study: Building a realistic project plan

Context:

A small youth collective aimed to organise a city-wide cultural event promoting vegan food. The idea was strong, but the team struggled to turn their enthusiasm into a structured plan. They had a concept but no clear timeline, budget, or division of roles.

Intervention:

During coaching sessions, the coach guided them through three steps:

1. Creating a Work Breakdown Structure, which helped them understand how many small tasks were hidden behind broad goals.
2. Using a Gantt Chart to sequence tasks realistically (starting with fundraising, venue booking, and stakeholder outreach).
3. Running a brief Pre-Mortem exercise to surface risks such as volunteer drop-off, funding uncertainty, and weather disruptions.

As a result, they identified early which tasks were prerequisites for others and where responsibilities needed clarification.

Outcome:

The team produced a concise but robust project plan. With clearer timelines and responsibilities, they secured small sponsorships earlier than expected and delegated tasks more confidently. When two volunteers unexpectedly withdrew, the team could redistribute workload without derailing the project—thanks to their well-defined plan and updated Gantt Chart.

Tools

Title: Gantt chart

Purpose: helps in planning, scheduling, and tracking the timeline of project tasks and milestones.

Type of tool: template

How to deliver to coachees: either on an individual level or as part of a group process

Expertise level required from coach: basic

Instruction for coaches:

1. Start by introducing the Gantt Chart to your coachees, explaining its purpose in visualizing the project timeline. Highlight how it can help them organize tasks, set deadlines, and monitor progress.
2. Share with them either paper versions of the template or a digital one in for instance Microsoft Excel.
3. Guide your coachees through creating their own Gantt Chart, either manually or using software like Excel or dedicated project management software. Encourage them to first break down their project into smaller tasks, assign start and end dates, and set dependencies between tasks.
4. Give feedback on their work, with a focus on checking whether the activities and milestones are sufficiently concrete and can realistically be achieved in the given time span. If you're facilitating a group of coachees, you may instead ask them to provide feedback to each other in pairs.
5. Suggest that they regularly update the Gantt Chart as their initiative progresses, ensuring it reflects the current state of their initiative. This will help them stay on track, identify potential delays, and adjust timelines as needed.

Notes:

- To plan realistically, it's often helpful to work backward. Start by determining the deadline for the main activity, event, or deliverable in the project, and then plan each preceding step by working your way back in time.
- Encourage coachees to share their Gantt Chart with their stakeholders to ensure everyone is

aligned with the project's timeline and expectations

- For coachees who are managing complex projects, recommend using Gantt Chart software that offers advanced features like resource allocation and progress tracking.
- The Gantt Chart usually follows the Work Breakdown Structure (WBS). Encourage coachees to create a WBS first to ensure tasks are sufficiently detailed before scheduling them.

Useful resources:

- Miranda, D. (2024) *How to make a Gantt chart in Excel.* Forbes Advisor.
- TeamGantt (n.d.) "TeamGantt online Gantt chart tool".

Title: Budget template

Purpose: to plan, track, and manage project finances effectively.

Type of tool: template

How to deliver to coachees: mostly for individual use

Expertise level required from coach: basic / intermediate?

Instruction for coaches:

1. Begin by explaining the purpose and components of the budget template to your coachees. Highlight its importance in ensuring that project resources are allocated appropriately and costs are controlled.
2. Guide coachees through filling out the template, ensuring they account for all projected income and expenses related to their initiative.
3. Encourage them to regularly update the template as the project progresses, using it as a reference to make informed financial decisions.

Notes:

- Recommend using a customizable template that suits the specific needs of the project, whether it's a simple spreadsheet or a more advanced financial tool.

Useful resource:

- Tools4Dev (n.d.) "Budget Template".

Title: Pre-Mortem, taken from Atlassian[13]

Purpose: to help anticipate potential project failures and opportunities for success before the project begins.
Type of tool: an exercise built around a template

How to deliver to coachees: best conducted as a group session but can also be adapted for individual reflection.
Expertise level required from coach: basic

Instruction for coaches:

1. Start by explaining the concept of a Pre-Mortem to your coaches. Unlike a post-mortem, which analyzes failures after the fact, the goal of this exercise is to reflect on what could happen in a project before it begins and make a plan.
2. Ask your coachees to in the next steps of the exercise take on both the perspective of What could go right in the project and that of What could go wrong in the project.
3. On a large sheet, write down columns with the following headers:

   What could cause us to miss our deadline?

   What will keep our project on time?

13 Atlassian (n.d.) "How to run Pre-Mortem exercises"

What does this project need that we don't have?

What do we already have that this project needs?

What lessons have you learned from past projects?

What are you worried about?

What are you excited about?

To discuss

4. Give the team ten minutes to silently write their answers on the sheet, or on sticky notes placed under each question.
5. Ask them to group and merge similar ideas.
6. Next, ask the coachees to vote on the cards or sticky notes across the board that pose the biggest threat to the project. Give every person a limited number of votes, e.g. three per person if they're working in teams.
7. Now, ask them to do the same for those cards or sticky notes across the board that represent keys to the project's success.
8. Move the three to five topics with the most votes into the "to discuss" column. Starting at the top, set a timer for ten minutes. In these ten minutes, ask your coachees to discuss the risk and come up with at least one action item to mitigate the risk. Move on to the topic and repeat until all of them have been discussed.

Notes:

- The Pre-Mortem exercise works best in a collaborative environment where team members feel comfortable discussing potential failures openly. Set a tone of constructive criticism and problem-solving.
- Suggest revisiting the Pre-Mortem findings at regular intervals during the project to update risk management strategies and seize new opportunities as they arise.

Useful resources:

- Klein, G. (2007) "Performing a project Premortem", *Harvard Business Review*.
- Marker, A. (2023) "How to create a project risk register".This risk register can be integrated into the exercise or can alternatively be offered to coachees as a standalone project management tool.

Title: RACI chart

Purpose: Clarifies team roles and responsibilities. RACI stands for "Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, Informed", which are the roles that team members can take within this framework. Type of tool: framework

How to deliver to coachees: best conducted as a group session but can also be adapted for individual reflection. Expertise level required from coach: basic

Instruction for coaches:

1. Introduce the RACI Chart to your coachees, explaining how it helps ensure clear role assignments within a team.
2. Work with your coachees to list all tasks required for running their initiative and then assign roles (Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, Informed) to each task. The identification of tasks can have been done before the exercise, possibly through the use of the previously referred to Work Breakdown Structure.
3. Encourage your coachees to review the RACI Chart with their team members to confirm everyone understands their roles and responsibilities.

Notes:

- Emphasize the importance of a balanced role distribution to prevent overload on certain team members.
- Suggest using the RACI Chart as a living document that evolves as the project progresses and the team dynamics change.

Useful resources:

- Miranda, D. and Day, B. (2025) *What Is A RACI Chart? How This Project Management Tool Can Boost Your Productivity*. Forbes Advisor.
- Matthews, B. and Webster, W. (2025) *RACI Matrix: Responsibility Assignment Matrix Guide.* Project-Management.com.

Title: Belbin team roles exercise

Purpose: to help team members identify their natural roles within a team, resulting in more self-awareness and enhancing team collaboration.

Type of tool: exercise

How to deliver to coachees: in a group-based setting

Expertise level required from coach: basic

Instruction for Coaches:

1. Start by explaining the concept of Belbin Team Roles to your coachees. Highlight that this model identifies nine distinct roles that individuals naturally gravitate towards within a team. Each role has its strengths and potential weaknesses, and understanding these can significantly improve team dynamics.
2. Briefly describe the nine roles: Plant, Resource Investigator, Coordinator, Shaper, Monitor Evaluator, Teamworker, Implementer, Completer Finisher, and Specialist. Emphasize that everyone typically has a mix of these roles, with some being more dominant than others.
3. Provide each coachee with access to the Belbin test. This can be done through printed questionnaires or via an online platform (see link further down).
4. Give coachees time to complete the test individually. This should take about 20-30 minutes. Ensure that the results are kept confidential until they are ready to be shared in the group setting.
5. Once everyone has completed the test, gather the group and ask each coachee to share their top one or two dominant Belbin roles with the team. Encourage them to discuss whether these roles resonate with how they perceive themselves and their contributions to the team.
6. Facilitate a discussion on how these roles can complement each other within the team. Ask team members to think about how their roles can be used effectively in upcoming projects or tasks.
7. If your group of coachees consists of complete teams who work together on one initiative, you can ask them to map out their Belbin roles on a large sheet or whiteboard. This visual representation will help the team see the distribution of roles within the group. Discuss the balance of roles in the team. For example, does the team have too many Shapers and not enough Teamworkers? How might this affect the team's performance? Are there critical roles that are underrepresented, such as the Completer Finisher or Monitor Evaluator? If you're not working with complete teams, skip this step and proceed to step 8.
8. Optional: ask your coachees to do a role play in smaller groups. Give them hypothetical scenarios that require teamwork, such as planning an event or solving a complex problem. Ask them to work together while consciously leveraging their identified roles. After the short activity, have each group reflect on how their roles influenced the outcome. What worked well? What challenges did they encounter?
9. End the session by asking each coachee to reflect on how they can use their dominant roles more effectively within the team. And facilitate the creation of an action plan for the team, where they commit to using their strengths and supporting each other in areas where the team may be lacking.

Notes:

- Be sensitive to the fact that some coachees may feel uncomfortable with their results. Remind the group that all roles are valuable, and that the purpose of the exercise is to understand and appreciate different working styles, not to judge them.
- Encourage open and respectful communication during the sharing and discussion phases. The goal is to foster a supportive (team) environment.
- Encourage them to consider how they can develop roles that are less dominant but could be beneficial for the team's success.

Useful Resources:

- Belbin (n.d.). *Belbin Team Role Inventory Test (Free version).*
- Belbin (2010) *Belbin Team Role Technical Manual*. Henley-on-Thames: Belbin Associates.

Reflection

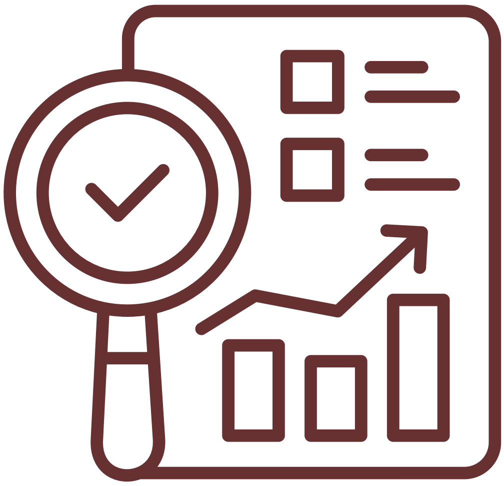
Project Planning is often the first moment when coachees realise the true scope of their initiative. As a coach, your role is not to plan for them but to help them navigate complexity, prioritise effectively, and make grounded decisions. Many young changemakers underestimate the time certain tasks require or overestimate the resources available to them. Others overcomplicate their plans, creating long documents that are never used in practice. Guide them toward balance: thorough enough to structure their work, simple enough to stay actionable. Planning is ultimately about clarity, alignment, and adaptability.

Tips & tricks

- Encourage coachees to work backwards from key deadlines, which creates more realistic timelines.
- Use the Work Breakdown Structure to Gantt sequence to prevent coachees from scheduling vague tasks.
- Ask coachees to share early drafts of schedules or budgets with stakeholders to ensure buy-in.
- Remind coachees that plans should be updated, not archived.
- Promote a "prototype mindset": planning is iterative, rather than having one perfect document completed at the start.

DO's	DON'Ts
✓ Help coachees break down their project into concrete, manageable tasks before scheduling.	✗ Don't assume that the first timeline your coachee creates is going to be realistic.
✓ Emphasise the importance of resource allocation, including people, time, and money.	✗ Don't let your coachees to rush into execution without a clear plan.
✓ Encourage the use of simple tools (WBS, Gantt, budget templates).	✗ Don't overwhelm them with overly technical tools unsuitable for their level.
✓ Support coachees in building flexible plans that can adapt to change.	✗ Don't treat the project plan as static or final.

5.5 Monitoring, reporting and evaluation



Once the project is underway, the next stage of managing it is Monitoring, Reporting, and Evaluation (MRE). This stage plays an essential role in ensuring that the project remains on track and achieves its intended outcomes. Research consistently shows that projects with rigorous monitoring and evaluation practices are more likely to succeed, as these practices help project managers identify issues early, adjust strategies, and learn from their experiences and outcomes. Through regular reporting, project stakeholders stay informed, and lessons learned can be applied to improve future projects.

Monitoring, Reporting, and Evaluation typically consist of:

- Tracking project progress against the planned schedule, budget, and scope.
- Regularly reporting to stakeholders about the project's status.
- Evaluating outcomes against the project's objectives and defined Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
- Identifying and addressing issues or changes that arise during the project, and adjusting the approach wherever necessary.
- Learning and adapting from successes and challenges to improve future project management practices.

Concrete outputs (e.g., workshop held, report submitted, pilot launched) are key checkpoints that make progress measurable and visible. They help coachees communicate clearly with stakeholders and verify whether the project is on track.

Educate yourself first

Before guiding changemakers through monitoring, reporting, and evaluation, make sure you're familiar with the basic concepts and practices of MRE. Strong MRE guidance can help coachees stay organised, communicate effectively with stakeholders, and build learning habits that strengthen future initiatives.

Useful resources include:

- Council of Europe & European Commission (2000) *Project Management T-Kit (T-Kit No. 3)*, sections on tracking and evaluation.
- Project Management Institute (2021) *PMBOK® Guide.* Chapters on performance measurement, reporting, and quality management.
- ProjectManagement.com (n.d.) "Key Performance Indicators" wiki on measurable KPIs.
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (n.d.) *Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating Development Results*.
- Coursera (n.d.) *Project Monitoring and Control*.
- LinkedIn Learning (n.d.) *Learning Data Analytics (Foundations) to support interpreting monitoring data*.

Case Study: When a weekly check-in reveals a hidden bottleneck

Context:

Fatima is running a youth-led initiative to organise an awareness event on clean oceans at her school. According to her project plan, she should by now have secured speakers and confirmed the venue. During their weekly check-in, her coach asks her to fill in a short status update: "What was planned? What happened? What's next?"

Fatima writes that she is "in progress" with securing speakers, but when the coach asks a follow-up question, it becomes clear she hasn't heard back from anyone and has been waiting for responses for over two weeks. She feels stuck and slightly embarrassed to admit it.

Intervention:

Using the status report template, the coach helps Fatima identify the issue clearly: outreach efforts were too limited and lacked follow-up. Together, they reframe this as a manageable risk. Fatima decides to:

- expand the outreach list;
- schedule reminder emails;
- ask two classmates to support the outreach;
- identify a backup speaker in case confirmations come late.

Outcome:

In the next check-in, progress is significantly better; the simple act of structured monitoring helped surface a risk early, before it became a crisis.

Tools

Title: Status report template

Purpose: to provide regular, structured updates on the project's status to stakeholders, ensuring everyone is aligned and informed.

Type of tool: template

How to deliver to coachees: mostly for individual use but can be adapted for group settings

Expertise level required from coach: basic

Instruction for Coaches:

1. Start by explaining the importance of regular status reports in keeping stakeholders informed and engaged. Emphasize transparency and consistency in reporting.
2. Walk your coachees through the status report template, highlighting key sections such as progress updates, upcoming milestones, risks, and issues. Discuss how to tailor the template to the initiative's characteristics and the needs of the coachee.
3. Provide feedback on a draft report of your coachees, focusing on clarity, relevance, and completeness of information.

Notes:

- Suggest that coachees use these reports as a basis for follow-up meetings or discussions with stakeholders, allowing for real-time adjustments to project plans.
- Stress the importance of keeping reports concise and to the point, focusing on key issues and decisions.
- Recommend including visual aids like charts or graphs to make the report more engaging and easier to understand.
- Discuss how often these reports should be delivered, and the best times for sending them to maximize stakeholder engagement. Note that a project with a high level of uncertainty might require more frequent reporting.

Useful Resources:

- Atlassian (n.d.). *Project status reports: Best practices and templates*.
- YouTube (2023). *How to create a project status report in Excel* [Video].
- Richter, L. (2020). *Project status report templates*.

Title: Evaluation framework

Purpose: to assess the effectiveness and impact of the project once completed, ensuring that objectives have been met and lessons are learned for future projects.

Type of tool: framework/guideline

How to deliver to coachees: can be delivered as a group session or as part of individual project debriefs

Expertise level required from coach: intermediate.

Instruction for coaches:

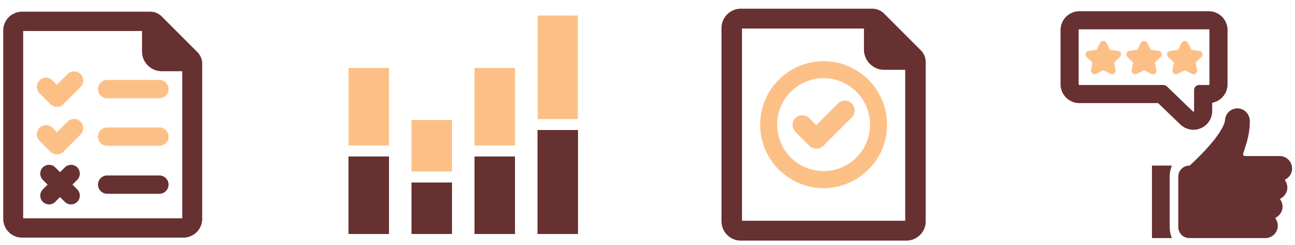
1. Begin by explaining the purpose of an evaluation framework; how it helps in assessing whether project goals were achieved and what can be learned from the project's outcomes.
2. Guide your coachees through the key components of the framework, including defining success criteria, selecting evaluation methods (e.g., surveys, interviews, data analysis), and determining how results will be used.
3. Help coachees apply the framework to their project. This might involve setting up end-of-project reviews, gathering feedback from stakeholders, and analyzing performance data.
4. Instruct coachees on how to compile an evaluation report, summarizing findings, lessons learned, and recommendations for future projects.

Notes:

- Continuous Learning: encourage coachees to use evaluation findings to inform and improve future project planning and execution.
- Suggest to your coachees that they involve all key stakeholders in the evaluation process to gain a comprehensive understanding of the initiative's impact.

Useful Resources:

- UNESCO (1977). *Project Evaluation Methodologies and Techniques.* Paris, France: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
- YouthREX (2025) "Evaluation Plan Template".



Reflection

As a coach, your role in the Monitoring, Reporting, and Evaluation (MRE) stage is to help coachees treat MRE as a continuous, decision-focused practice rather than a bureaucratic requirement. Good MRE helps teams spot early signs of trouble, make evidence-based adjustments, communicate transparently with stakeholders, and convert lessons into concrete improvements for future work.

Tips & tricks

- Set a regular rhythm for monitoring (weekly or biweekly check-ins) and keep them short and focused, e.g., the "What, So What, Now What" format.
- Use one visual (a mini-dashboard or progress bar) in every report to show status at a glance — this increases stakeholder engagement.
- Encourage coachees to pair quantitative KPIs (attendance, tasks completed) with qualitative signals (participant feedback, team morale).
- Keep status reports decision-oriented: highlight issues that need action, not every minor detail.
- Make MRE a collaborative habit: invite a stakeholder or peer to one monitoring meeting every few months to broaden perspective.
- Turn evaluation findings into three practical recommendations (what to continue, what to stop, what to change) to ensure learning translates into action.

DO's	DON'Ts
✔ Align monitoring with project scale: keep MRE proportionate to the project's size and resources. ✔ Set a fixed reporting rhythm (weekly/biweekly/monthly) so updates become routine. ✔ Encourage concise, stakeholder-friendly reporting (one page / one slide). ✔ Make evaluation actionable: frame MRE as learning, not judgment. And translate findings into 2–3 clear next steps.	✘ Don't overengineer MRE: avoid introducing complex systems that coachees can't maintain. ✘ Don't wait for crises to report: irregular updates reduce usefulness and trust. ✘ Don't produce long reports no one reads; verbosity reduces impact. ✘ Don't archive evaluation reports without follow-up actions: learning must change practice.

5.6 Conclusion

As coaches, our role is to help coachees navigate the intricate journey of project management with a mix of strategic insight and adaptive flexibility. At the Project Initiation stage, the focus is on establishing a clear and compelling vision. Coachees shall formulate their goals concretely and engage stakeholders from the start. This foundation is crucial for gathering support and ensuring a shared understanding of the project's objectives. Moving into Project Planning, the emphasis shifts to creating a detailed and realistic plan, but with an eye toward adaptability. Coachees shall be encouraged to break down their projects into manageable tasks, allocate resources wisely, and anticipate risks, while also remaining open to modifying their approach as circumstances change.

The Monitoring, Reporting, and Evaluation phase underscores the importance of carefulness and reflection. Regular, transparent reporting keeps stakeholders informed and engaged, fostering trust and facilitating timely adjustments. Effective monitoring and evaluation not only track progress but also offer valuable insights for refining current practices and informing future projects. The dynamic nature of projects necessitates a balance between adhering to a structured plan and remaining agile enough to address emerging challenges and opportunities. By guiding coachees to integrate these practices, you as a coach can help them build resilience, enhance project outcomes, and continuously evolve their project management skills.

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6.

Fundraising and financial security

6.1 Introduction

Securing financial stability is crucial for nonprofits striving to make a sustained impact. In an environment of limited resources and increasing competition, NGOs must build a solid foundation in both fundraising and financial management to maintain operations and grow effectively. In many NGOs the financial aspects including financial management and fundraising is given low priority. In their journey of building impactful nonprofit initiatives, young changemakers and NGO leaders must address the challenges of financial sustainability and effective fundraising. From establishing transparent budgeting practices to creating lasting relationships with donors, financial security is foundational to every organization's success. Without a structured approach, nonprofits may struggle to allocate resources effectively, manage risks, or secure consistent funding. Adopting strategic financial practices and honing fundraising skills not only enhances an organization's stability but also strengthens its ability to achieve its mission over the long term.

By the end of this chapter, you as a coach will be better able to:

- Guide coachees in recognizing the importance of financial security and its impact on their organization's sustainability.
- Support them in understanding and implementing essential fundraising strategies tailored to their mission and audience.
- Equip them with tools for financial planning, budgeting, and risk management to ensure they are prepared for financial challenges.
- Help them build donor relationships that foster trust and long-term commitment.

Through practical tools, resources, and reflection exercises, this chapter provides a roadmap for coaches to help NGOs secure the financial resources they need to drive positive change."

6.2 Fundraising & financial security fundamentals

In many NGOs, financial management often takes a backseat, leading to gaps in planning and monitoring. However, effective financial management is crucial for organizational sustainability and competitiveness. Leaders need practical financial skills to allocate resources efficiently, maintain accountability to stakeholders, and foster trust with donors and funding agencies.

There are many tools, some of them are not even necessarily financial, which can be used to help achieve good practice in financial management and control. These are the following:

- Planning - Before taking action, a critical step is to always carefully plan ahead. Tools that can be used: strategic plan, business plan, activity plan, budgets, work plans, cashflow forecast, feasibility study...etc.
- Organizing - The organization's resources, including personnel, volunteers, vehicles, facilities, and funds, are managed to facilitate the execution of the comprehensive plan. It is essential to have clarity on which tasks and duties will be performed, at what time, and by which individual.
- Controlling - A set of controls, checks, and balances is crucial to ensure the correct utilization of procedures and resources in program implementation.
- Monitoring - This includes generating consistent and timely data for managers and stakeholders to monitor. Monitoring includes comparing current performance to plans to assess plan effectiveness, detect weaknesses in advance, and make necessary corrections.

Fundraising fundamentals

Fundraising involves how organizations seek donations or financial backing from the public, businesses, government, foundations, and other sources. Effective fundraising is the approach that aligns best with your organization's mission, goals, and financial needs, as well as the resources and support you have.

Effective fundraising involves three key elements:

- Clear Objectives: Define specific goals, whether financial or awareness-based.

- Target Audience: Identify and approach the right donors, whether individuals or organizations.
- Engaging Story: Use compelling storytelling to connect donors with your cause.

As fundraising becomes more competitive, fundraisers need to nurture a culture of philanthropy within the organization. Educating staff, volunteers, and donors on the impact of their support strengthens relationships and reinforces the organization's mission.

It is also important to work to help your staff, volunteers and donors to understand the impact of the philanthropic relationship on fulfilling your mission and vision. But in thin end it's up to you to help them connect the dots and to cultivate a widespread culture of philanthropy within your organization.

Educate yourself first

Picture yourself that your coaches is delivering a well-defined budget and bolding key funding for your frontier sustainable initiative. If there is long-term interest in the initiative, the will have to prove that that idea will work and make a difference - with financial literacy! This is where you as a coach come in hand. You should be able to help them manage the resources effectively, control risks and monitor progress towards reaching their end goal. This financial savvy not only gains the trust of potential donors but sets you up for success in the long haul of their initiative. Here are some resources that can help you on this topic matter:

- Ensor, K. (2025). 10 Best Crowdfunding Sites for Nonprofits and Charities [online]. A curated list of top crowdfunding platforms for nonprofits and charities, helping organizations choose the best options for fundraising.
- FundsforNGOs. (n.d.). Financial Management for NGOs : An Introduction [online]. An introductory guide to financial management principles tailored for NGOs, supporting effective resource allocation and sustainability.
- Propel Nonprofits. (n.d.). Glossary of Financial Terms for Nonprofits. A comprehensive glossary explaining essential financial terminology for nonprofit organizations.
- Capacity for Conservation. (2014). Financial Management for Conservation Organisations: MANGO Guide. A practical handbook offering financial management essentials for NGOs, with a focus on conservation organizations..
- Nonprofit Finance Fund. (n.d.). Cash Flow Projection Template. A ready-to-use template designed to help nonprofits forecast and manage cash flow effectively.
- NGO Connect. (n.d.). Practical Financial Management for NGOs: Coursebook Part 1. A detailed coursebook aimed at demystifying financial management for NGOs and building confidence in handling finances.
- Atlas Network. (n.d.). Fundraising Certification. An online certification program offering free courses on fundraising fundamentals for NGOs
- NonprofitReady. (n.d.). Free Fundraising Courses. A platform providing free online courses on various aspects of fundraising for nonprofit professionals.

Tools to support coaches

Title: Financial Planning and Management Tools

Purpose: ensuring resources are allocated effectively.

Type of tool: a framework that your coachees can apply independently or that you can embed in a group exercise.

Stages in the coachee's process to which this tool is applicable: during the whole process.

Instruction for coaches:

1. Budgeting Templates: This helps track income (grants, donations, fundraising events) and expenses such as materials, equipment, travel. *(Coefficient (n.d.) Nonprofit Cash Flow Projection Template)*.
2. Cash Flow Management Tools: It help forecast future income and expenses, allowing proactive planning and avoiding potential shortfalls. *(Societ (n.d.) Nonprofit Budget Templates)*
3. Financial Reporting Tools: Simple reporting tools can track key financial metrics like spending trends, fundraising success, and project impact. This data is crucial for demonstrating accountability and attracting further support.

Useful Resources

- NGO Connect (n.d.) *Practical Financial Management for NGOs: Coursebook Part 1*.
- Atlas Network (n.d.) *Fundraising Certification*. Available at: https://www.atlasnetwork.org/pages/fundraising-certification (Accessed: 24 November 2025)

Reflection

Below are some aspects that are important, and you as a coach can give to your coachees.

Provide them with some tips and trick which can be very useful in every day practice:

Tips & tricks

- Establish an Emergency Fund - Set aside a portion of funds as a reserve for unexpected expenses or financial downturns.
- Regularly Review and Adjust Budgets - Make it a habit to review your budget periodically and adjust it based on actual income and expenses.
- Leverage In-Kind Donations **-** In-kind donations (goods and services) can help reduce expenses and stretch your budget further.

Do's and Dont's

DOs	DON'Ts
✓ Train Staff on financial management tools. ✓ Foster Transparency and Accountability ✓ Monitor Financial Performance ✓ Utilize Technology and financial tools available ✓ Re-stating the vision and mission of the organization at the start of the fundraising ✓ Understanding why income is needed is the starting point in fundraising planning. ✓ Diversify Your Fundraising Strategies ✓ Be Transparent and Accountable	✗ Neglect Financial Planning ✗ Overlook Financial Controls ✗ Rely on a Single Funding Source ✗ Compromise on Transparency ✗ DON'T Make it All About the Money ✗ DON'T Ignore Donor Preferences ✗ DON'T Underestimate the Importance of Compliance ✗ DON'T Fail to Follow Up

6.3 Strategies for fundraising

Fundraising is a crucial aspect of an NGO's sustainability and success. In the context of NGOs, fundraising refers to the process of raising money or securing resources to support the organization's mission, activities, and goals. Theoretical models of fundraising often focus on two main elements: *donor engagement* and *resource mobilization*.

Donor Engagement refers to creating and nurturing relationships with individuals, organizations, or foundations that are willing to financially support the NGO. It involves understanding the donor's motivations, interests, and willingness to invest in a cause.

Resource Mobilization goes beyond monetary donations and includes other forms of support, such as in-kind contributions, partnerships, and volunteer work. Resource mobilization strategies are key in ensuring that NGOs can diversify their sources of income.

The four types of fundraising approaches

- Individual Donations – Securing contributions from individuals through direct solicitation, online platforms, or regular giving schemes.
- Corporate Sponsorship – Partnering with businesses for mutual benefit, including cause-related marketing.
- Foundations and Grants – Securing funds from charitable foundations or government agencies, often for specific projects or operational support.
- Crowdfunding – Harnessing the power of the crowd by reaching out to many people, usually via digital platforms.

Educate yourself

Imagine your coachee confidently identifying and addressing fundraising challenges, diversifying revenue streams, and overcoming donor fatigue, all while maintaining strong donor relationships. This level of expertise starts with you as a coach. To effectively guide your coachee, you need a deep understanding of the tools and strategies outlined below. Equip yourself with the knowledge to provide practical, actionable advice, ensuring their fundraising efforts are both strategic and sustainable. Here are some resources and tools to help you master these concepts:

- NetSuite. (n.d.). Nonprofit Fundraising Challenges. An overview of common obstacles nonprofits face in fundraising, with strategies to identify and overcome these challenges.
- Commons Library. (n.d.). Fundraising Strategy and Planning. A foundational guide to setting up effective fundraising strategies and planning processes.
- NXUnite. (n.d.). How to Start a Fundraiser. A practical resource for beginners on how to launch and manage a successful fundraiser.
- Commons Library. (n.d.). Fundraising Checklist: How to Win Grants and Funding. A step-by-step checklist for securing grants and funding opportunities for nonprofit initiatives.
- Donorly. (n.d.). Fundraising Strategy Guide. An in-depth guide to creating and implementing a comprehensive fundraising strategy.
- Donately. (n.d.). The Power of Storytelling in Fundraising: Inspiring Donors Through Compelling Narratives. Insights into using storytelling techniques to engage donors and strengthen fundraising campaigns.
- Classy. (n.d.). Unique Examples of Nonprofit Visual Storytelling. Examples and best practices for enhancing donor engagement through visuals and multimedia storytelling.

Tools to support coaches

Below is a collection of key tools and methods to help coaches support NGO leaders in developing and executing effective fundraising strategies.

SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)

Purpose: A SWOT analysis helps NGOs assess their internal capabilities and external opportunities and challenges. This is vital for shaping fundraising strategies that align with the NGO's strengths and address areas of concern.

Expertise Level Required from Coach: Intermediate. The coach should be familiar with organizational analysis and capable of facilitating strategic discussions.

Instruction for Coaches:

- Introduce the Tool: Begin by explaining the concept of SWOT analysis to your coachees. Emphasize how it provides a comprehensive view of both internal and external factors that impact their fundraising capacity and strategy.
- Guide Self-Reflection: Encourage the coachee to start by listing the organization's strengths and weaknesses. Suggest they consider factors like reputation, available resources, and team capacity for fundraising.
- Explore External Factors: Help the coachee identify opportunities in the external environment, such as emerging trends, potential partnerships, or untapped donor groups, and threats like market competition or economic challenges.
- Facilitate Strategic Thinking: Use the insights from the analysis to guide the coachee in developing actionable strategies that leverage their strengths, address weaknesses, capitalize on opportunities, and guard against threats.
- Review and Refine: Encourage the coachee to periodically revisit the SWOT analysis as their fundraising efforts evolve, ensuring strategies remain relevant and adaptable.

Notes: Remind coachees to avoid overly optimistic or pessimistic assessments. The analysis should be grounded in realistic, objective insights.

Useful Resources:

- Templates for SWOT analysis. (Arthur Davis Consulting (n.d.) *Fundraising SWOT and TOWS)*
- Sample case study of NGOs using SWOT for fundraising. (Venngage (n.d.) *SWOT Analysis Templates*.)

Donor segmentation matrix

Purpose: The Donor Segmentation Matrix allows NGOs to categorize potential and existing donors by their giving capacity and engagement level. This helps prioritize efforts based on donor potential.

Expertise Level Required from Coach: Advanced.

The coach should have experience in donor relationship management and segmentation strategies.

Instruction for Coaches:

- Clarify the Concept: Explain to your coachee how donor segmentation helps to prioritize efforts by understanding the different categories of donors. Emphasize the importance of tailoring approaches based on donor engagement and giving capacity.
- Assist in Categorizing Donors: Help the coachee define the donor segments. Guide them to consider factors such as donation size, frequency, and their relationship with the organization (e.g., long-term donors vs. one-time contributors).
- Analyze Each Segment: Work with the coachee to identify what motivates each donor group and how to best engage them. For example, high-capacity donors may appreciate personal meetings, while low-capacity but engaged donors may prefer regular updates and smaller-scale involvement.
- Develop Tailored Strategies: Support the coachee in creating personalized engagement strategies for each segment. This might include different communication styles, levels of involvement, and specific calls to action for each group.
- Track and Adjust: Encourage the coachee to track engagement and adjust strategies over time based on the effectiveness of their approaches.

Notes: The segmentation should be flexible—coachees should revisit it periodically as new data becomes available or donor behaviors change.Resources:

Resources:

- Donor segmentation basics. (Neon One (n.d.) *Donor Segmentation).*

The fundraising funnel

Purpose: The fundraising funnel is a model that helps NGOs visualize the donor journey from awareness to commitment. By understanding the stages in the donor journey, coaches can guide NGOs to implement appropriate strategies at each stage.

Expertise Level Required from Coach: Intermediate to Advanced.

The coach should understand donor behavior and be able to guide the coachee through strategic planning for each stage of the funnel.

Instruction for coaches:

- Explain the Donor Journey: Start by explaining the concept of the fundraising funnel. Emphasize the stages of donor engagement, from raising awareness to converting potential donors into long-term supporters.
- Map Out the Funnel Stages: Walk the coachee through each stage of the funnel—Awareness, Interest, Desire, Action, and Retention. Discuss how each stage builds on the previous one and how specific fundraising strategies can be employed at each stage.

- Develop Targeted Strategies: Help the coachee design strategies for each funnel stage. For example, in the Awareness stage, suggest broad outreach tactics like social media campaigns; in the Retention stage, recommend personalized communication and recognition efforts.
- Guide Implementation: Work with the coachee to implement the strategies, ensuring that each donor is effectively moved from one stage to the next.
- Track Progress: Encourage the coachee to measure donor movement through the funnel and adjust strategies based on where donors drop off or fail to progress.

Notes:

- The funnel is a dynamic process that requires ongoing attention and adjustment. Encourage coachees to regularly assess how well they are nurturing donor relationships at each stage.

Useful Resources:

- It's time to flip the pyramid – Giving Funnel. (EverTrue (n.d.) *The Giving Funnel)*.
- Examples of donor retention strategies. (Donorly (n.d.) *Donor Retention)*

Reflection

Coaching for fundraising strategies requires careful guidance, as NGOs often operate with limited resources and face high expectations for impact. Reflection is key for both the coach and the coachee in ensuring the right approach is followed.

Tips & tricks

- Leverage partnerships: Encourage coachees to form strategic partnerships with other NGOs or businesses to enhance credibility and reach.
- Use technology: Donor management software and crowdfunding platforms can simplify tracking and engagement.
- Engage in storytelling: Create compelling narratives around the organization's mission and successes to attract and retain donors.

Do's and Dont's

DOs	DON'Ts
✔ Keep fundraising efforts aligned with the NGO's mission and values. ✔ Regularly assess and refine fundraising strategies.	✘ Overpromise or mislead donors about the impact of their contributions. ✘ Regularly assess and refine fundraising strategies.

6.4 Overcoming fundraising challenges

Fundraising is often a complex and challenging aspect of running a nonprofit organization. NGOs face numerous obstacles when seeking to secure funding, from economic downturns to donor fatigue, competition for limited resources, and internal organizational challenges. Understanding these common challenges and implementing effective strategies to address them is essential for long-term success.

This chapter outlines practical tools and strategies to help coaches guide NGOs through typical fundraising challenges, including donor fatigue, revenue diversification, and external funding cuts. By empowering coachees with the right tools, they can tackle these hurdles head-on and develop sustainable fundraising solutions.

Educate yourself

Envision your coachee confidently identifying fundraising obstacles, diversifying revenue streams, and combating donor fatigue—all while nurturing enduring donor relationships. To guide them effectively, you, as a coach, need a deep understanding of the tools and evidence-based strategies below. Equip yourself with the insights to deliver practical, sustainable advice.

- Nonprofit Point. (2025). Donor Fatigue in 2025: Causes, Signs, and Strategies to Re-Engage Supporters [online]. A comprehensive guide to recognizing donor fatigue and implementing tailored interventions such as personalized messaging, transparent impact communication, and timing strategies to re-engage supporters.
- Forbes Nonprofit Council. (2025). How Nonprofit Leaders Can Fight Donor Fatigue With Connection, Not Campaigns [online, July 8]. Insights from nonprofit executives on segmentation, mission alignment, and donor behavior patterns—emphasizing connection over frequent appeals.
- Bloomerang. (2025). 6 Strategies for Diversifying Nonprofit Revenue in Uncertain Times [online]. Actionable tactics for building mixed-income models—peer-to-peer, earned income, grants—to stabilize funding during economic disruptions.
- Prosper Strategies. (2025). Donor Fatigue is Real: Four Fresh Strategies to Fight It [online]. Guides you through introspective analysis to isolate fatigue causes, avoid repetitive appeals, and pivot to strength-based storytelling.

Case study: Overcoming fundraising challenges

Context:

Leila, leading a youth-led climate initiative, struggled to raise funds for a community tree-planting project. Despite a strong mission, her team's proposals were repeatedly rejected. They realized their pitches lacked clarity on impact and financial transparency.

Intervention:

Her mentor introduced the "Impact-Driven Pitch Model", focusing on:

1. Defining measurable outcomes—number of trees planted, carbon offset estimates, and community engagement metrics.
2. Crafting a compelling narrative—linking the project to donors' values and global sustainability goals.
3. Budget storytelling—breaking down costs visually to show efficiency and accountability.

The mentor also arranged a mock pitch session with experienced fundraisers for feedback.

Outcome:

Leila's team revised their proposal and secured $15,000 from a local foundation. Their improved pitch not only unlocked funding but also attracted two corporate sponsors for future projects. The team learned that fundraising is as much about clarity and trust as it is about passion.

Tools to support coaches

Title: Identifying and Addressing Common Fundraising Challenges

Purpose: This tool helps NGOs identify key fundraising challenges and develop solutions to overcome them. By recognizing challenges early, NGOs can adapt and stay resilient in the face of adversity.

Expertise Level Required from Coach:Intermediate.

The coach should be able to facilitate discussions, help identify root causes of challenges, and guide the coachee toward actionable solutions.

Detailed Instructions for Coaches:

- Start with Reflection: Ask your coachee to reflect on their current fundraising experience. What challenges have they faced so far? Common challenges include donor fatigue, insufficient funding sources, or ineffective communication strategies.
- Categorize Challenges: Work with the coachee to categorize these challenges into internal and external factors. For example, internal challenges may include limited capacity or unclear messaging, while external challenges could include competition for funding or changing donor priorities.
- Develop Solutions: For each identified challenge, brainstorm practical solutions. For example, if donor fatigue is an issue, suggest diversifying donor engagement strategies or introducing personalized thank-yous.
- Create an Action Plan: Develop a detailed action plan that outlines specific steps the coachee can take to address each challenge, with clear timelines and responsible parties.
- Encourage Monitoring: Emphasize the importance of periodically revisiting these challenges and adjusting the action plan as necessary.

Notes: Ensure that the solutions are realistic and actionable. Encourage coachees to prioritize challenges based on their impact and urgency.

Useful Resources:

- Fundraising Challenge Guidance. (FIRST (n.d.) *Fundraising Toolkit)*

Building donor relationships and overcoming donor fatigue

Purpose: Donor fatigue is a common issue faced by NGOs, where donors become disengaged or less willing to give over time. This tool offers strategies for revitalizing donor relationships and maintaining engagement.

Expertise Level Required from Coach: Advanced.

The coach should have an understanding of donor psychology and relationship management techniques.

Detailed Instructions for Coaches:

- Explain Donor Fatigue: Start by explaining what donor fatigue is and how it can manifest in reduced donations, lower engagement, or donor attrition.
- Assess the Current State: Ask the coachee to evaluate their current donor engagement strategies. Are they sending frequent requests without showing appreciation? Are they failing to update donors on the impact of their contributions?
- Introduce Engagement Strategies: Suggest strategies to overcome donor fatigue, such as:
- Personalized Thank-Yous: Encourage the coachee to send handwritten thank-you notes or personalized emails to show appreciation.
- Storytelling: Advise using compelling stories that demonstrate the impact of donations, making the donor feel connected to the cause.
- Exclusive Donor Events: Suggest hosting events (virtual or in-person) where donors can see firsthand the difference they are making.
- Diversify Communication: Guide the coachee in diversifying their communication methods.

Encourage a mix of social media updates, newsletters, and one-on-one calls or emails.

- Segment Donors: Recommend segmenting donors based on engagement levels or donation size to tailor communication and recognition efforts appropriately

Notes: Encourage coachees to avoid repetitive and impersonal communication. Donor engagement should feel like a relationship, not a transaction

Useful Resources:

- Building Donor Relationships and Overcoming Donor Fatigue. (Bloomerang (n.d.) *Donor Engagement).*

Diversifying revenue streams

Purpose: This tool helps NGOs identify and implement diverse revenue streams to reduce dependency on a single funding source, ensuring financial sustainability.

Expertise Level Required from Coach:Intermediate.

The coach should be familiar with various fundraising methods and help coachees prioritize options that suit their organizational goals.

Detailed Instructions for Coaches:

- Assess Current Revenue Streams: Ask the coachee to evaluate their current sources of funding, noting which ones are stable and which are more volatile. Discuss how dependent the NGO is on each stream.
- Brainstorm Alternative Revenue Sources: Facilitate a brainstorming session where the coachee identifies potential new revenue streams, such as:
- Grants: Government or foundation grants.
- Individual Donations: Building a donor program.
- Corporate Partnerships: Securing sponsorships or cause-related marketing opportunities.
- Events: Organizing fundraising events, both online and offline.
- Crowdfunding: Launching crowdfunding campaigns for specific projects or needs.
- Evaluate Feasibility: Work with the coachee to evaluate the feasibility of each new revenue stream. Consider the resources required and the alignment with the NGO's mission and capabilities.
- Create an Action Plan: Help the coachee prioritize these revenue streams and create a step-by-step plan for each, including timelines and specific actions to be taken.

Notes: Diversification takes time. Coachees should begin with a few viable options and expand as they gain experience and resources

Useful Resources:

- Crowdfunding Resources for NGOs. (Donorbox (n.d.) *Crowdfunding Sites for Nonprofits).*

Reflection

As a coach, your role is to guide coachees through the complexities of fundraising. Encourage them to make well-considered decisions, document processes, and assess potential risks to staff, volunteers, and the public during fundraising activities. Remind them that fundraising can be demanding and stressful, so prioritizing personal and team wellbeing is essential.

If a coachee shows signs of burnout, suggest breaks, realistic goals, and self-care strategies. When donor engagement stagnates, help them identify causes such as donor fatigue or ineffective communication and explore ways to re-engage supporters.

Tips & tricks

- Regularly Review and Adapt Strategies - Evaluate fundraising approaches using feedback and performance metrics. Personalize donor communications to strengthen relationships and demonstrate impact, focusing on long-term engagement rather than one-time gifts.
- Competing for Funds - Clarify your mission and vision to attract aligned donors. Attend fundraising events, apply for grants, and prioritize donor retention through strategic efforts.
- Donor Fatigue - Show appreciation consistently, communicate the impact of donations, and avoid excessive requests for funds.
- Effective Storytelling - Craft stories that evoke emotion and clearly explain how donations are used. Use visual content and social media to amplify reach.
- Scarcity of Resources - Create realistic budgets and diversify income streams—grants, memberships, sponsorships, events, and space rentals.
- Lack of Donor Involvement - Improve communication, share impact updates, and organize events or volunteer opportunities to deepen engagement.
- Building Donor Trust - Ensure transparency through regular financial updates, independent audits, and clear reporting on fund allocation.

Do’s and Dont’s

DOs	DON’Ts
✔ prioritize donor relationships over transactional asks. ✔ be transparent and communicative with donors about challenges and successes.	✘ Don’t ignore early warning signs of donor fatigue or disengagement. ✘ Don’t make fundraising a “one-size-fits-all” approach; tailor strategies to the needs of specific donor segments.

6.5 Financial risk management

Financial risk management is the process of identifying, evaluating, and mitigating financial uncertainties that could disrupt an organization's stability or operations. For NGOs, managing financial risks is crucial to maintain solvency and ensure that resources are effectively used to achieve their mission. Common risks include fluctuating funding levels, economic instability, fraud, and unforeseen expenses.

A well-structured financial risk management framework helps NGOs proactively prepare for and respond to risks, ensuring continuity in programs and services. This includes tools and practices such as risk assessments, contingency planning, and implementing internal controls. Understanding and applying these measures allow NGOs to build financial resilience while maintaining transparency and accountability to stakeholders.

Educate yourself

Help your coachee assess, mitigate, and respond to financial risks by mastering tools and frameworks like those below. This knowledge empowers you to offer proactive, strategic guidance, ensuring they maintain stability, compliance, and mission continuity:

- Nonprofit Financial Commons (Polanco & Walker, 2025) - Financial Risk Assessment: A 3-Level Model for Nonprofits in 2025. It offers a practical framework for assessing nonprofits' risk levels and contingency planning amid 2025's financial uncertainties.
- FundsforNGOs (2025) - What Every Nonprofit Leader Should Know About Financial Risk Management. It lays out core steps—identification, assessment, mitigation—and emphasizes reputation and trust impacts of financial risk.
- Araize (2025). Effective Nonprofit Financial Risk Management Strategies. Clearly explains risk types, identification frameworks, and mitigation tools such as reserves, diversification, insurance, and tech integration.
- Plante Moran (2025) - Common Risks Nonprofits Are Facing in 2025 .Highlights emerging threats—cyber risks, internal fraud, regulatory and technology challenges—and offers targeted mitigation steps

Case study: Managing financial risks in a social campaign

Context:

Jonas, leading a youth-driven mental health awareness campaign, secured a small grant to launch workshops in schools. However, he realized that relying on one funding source made the project vulnerable. If the grant was delayed or reduced, the campaign could collapse. Jonas had never created a financial risk plan before.

Intervention:

His mentor introduced the "Risk Radar Framework", guiding Jonas through:

1. Risk Identification—listing potential threats like delayed grant disbursement, unexpected venue costs, and volunteer drop-off.
2. Risk Prioritization—using an impact-probability matrix to rank risks.
3. Mitigation Strategies—creating backup plans such as diversifying income through small community donations and setting aside an emergency reserve.

They also ran a "worst-case scenario" exercise to stress-test the campaign's budget.

Outcome:

Jonas developed a simple risk register and allocated 15% of the grant to a contingency fund. When a venue unexpectedly raised its rental fee, the reserve allowed the campaign to proceed without cutting workshops. Jonas gained confidence in financial planning and later shared his risk management approach with other youth-led initiatives.

Tools for coaches

Financial Risk Assessment Template

Purpose: To identify, categorize, and prioritize financial risks based on their likelihood and potential impact.

How to Deliver to Coachees*:* Guide coachees in using a structured template to evaluate their organization's financial vulnerabilities systematically.

Expertise Level Required from Coach:Intermediate.

The coach should have a basic understanding of financial risk assessment and risk prioritization.

Detailed instruction for coaches

- Introduce the Tool: Explain the purpose of the financial risk assessment template, emphasizing its role in proactive risk identification.
- Identify Financial Risks: Work with the coachee to brainstorm potential financial risks, such as funding shortfalls, exchange rate fluctuations, or high administrative costs.
- Evaluate Risks: Assist the coachee in assessing the likelihood of each risk (low, medium, high) and its impact on the organization's operations or finances.
- Prioritize Risks: Using the template, help the coachee rank risks from most to least critical based on their evaluation.
- Action Planning: Guide the coachee in defining mitigation actions for high-priority risks and assigning responsibilities for monitoring and response.

Notes: Encourage coachees to involve finance teams and leadership in the assessment process for broader perspectives.

Useful Resources

- Risk Assessment Template for Nonprofits. (Board Leadership Calgary (2016) *Risk Assessment for Alberta Organizations)*
- Financial Risk Management for Nonprofits: A Comprehensive Guide. (Araize (n.d.) *Nonprofit Financial Risk Management).*

Internal control checklist

Purpose: To ensure proper financial controls are in place, minimizing risks such as fraud or mismanagement of funds.

Expertise Level Required from Coach: Intermediate.

Coaches should understand basic internal control principles.

Detailed instruction for coaches

- Explain the Importance: Introduce internal controls as a safeguard against financial risks.
- Review the Checklist: Go through the checklist items with the coachee, covering areas like segregation of duties, approval procedures, and regular audits.
- Evaluate Current Practices: Assist the coachee in identifying gaps in their current financial control processes using the checklist.
- Implement Improvements: Guide the coachee in creating an action plan to address identified gaps, such as introducing dual signatories for payments or conducting quarterly financial reviews.
- Monitor Effectiveness: Encourage periodic reviews to ensure controls remain effective over time.

Notes: Advise coachees to involve their finance team in implementing and maintaining these controls.

Useful Resources:

- Internal Control Checklists for Nonprofits. (Wallace Foundation (2023) *Internal Controls Checklist)*

Reflection

As a coach, if you see that your coachees struggle in this part, use analogies or real-world examples that relate to the nonprofit sector to make these concepts more accessible. You can also help them set up a calendar for monthly or quarterly financial check-ins. And encourage a culture where financial concerns and risks can be openly discussed without fear of blame or criticism.

Tips & tricks

- Regularly train staff on financial literacy and fraud prevention.
- Set realistic budgets with built-in contingencies for emergencies.
- Use financial software to monitor transactions and flag discrepancies.

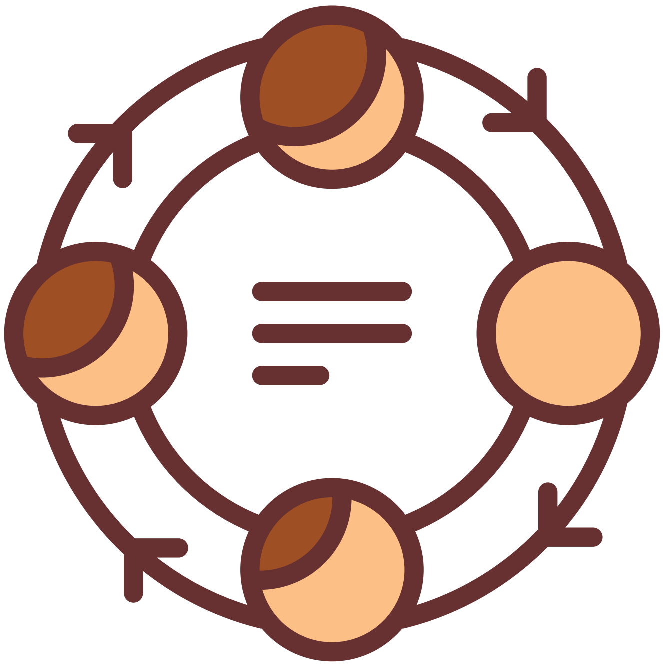
Do's and Dont's

DOs	DON'Ts
✔ encourage periodic financial audits to ensure transparency. ✔ Do involve multiple stakeholders in financial decision-making.	✘ Don't ignore early warning signs of financial stress or fraud. ✘ Don't delay in addressing identified financial risks; act promptly.

6.6 Circular business models

The circular economy is a regenerative system that prioritizes the reuse, recycling, and repurposing of resources to minimize waste and extend the lifecycle of products. Unlike the traditional linear model of "take-make-dispose," the circular economy focuses on sustainability, innovation, and resource efficiency.

For NGOs, integrating circular economy principles into their fundraising strategies offers unique opportunities to ensure financial security while aligning with their sustainability goals. Initiatives such as repurposing materials for donor incentives, organizing recycling-based fundraisers, or collaborating with businesses focused on circular solutions can attract new funding streams and enhance donor engagement. Embracing the circular economy not only demonstrates commitment to environmental responsibility but also opens doors to partnerships with green-focused companies and donors who value sustainability.



Educate yourself

Imagine your coachees successfully incorporating circular economy principles into their fundraising strategies, designing innovative campaigns that reduce waste while increasing donor engagement. This level of expertise starts with you as a coach. Equip yourself with the knowledge to help your coachees merge sustainability with financial security. Here are some resources and tools to help you master these concepts.

- Ellen MacArthur Foundation. (n.d.). Homepage.
- An introduction to the circular economy, outlining its key principles and benefits for sustainable development.
- Business Model Lab. (n.d.). Quickscan Circular Business Model. A practical resource for understanding and applying different circular business models in various industries.
- Scribd. (n.d.). Circular Economy Toolkit. A toolkit offering strategies and tools to implement circular economy practices effectively.
- Ellen MacArthur Foundation. (n.d.). Circular Brainstorming. A guide to generating innovative ideas based on circularity principles through structured brainstorming.

Case Study: Applying circular principles in a community project

Context:

Maya, a youth leader in a local environmental club, wanted to reduce waste in her community by organizing a "Zero-Waste Festival." While the idea was inspiring, the team struggled to design the event in a way that truly embodied circular principles—reuse, recycling, and resource efficiency. They feared the festival would end up generating more waste than it prevented.

Intervention:

During a mentorship session, Maya's mentor introduced the "Circularity Mapping Exercise", which involved:

1. Mapping resource flows—identifying where materials (decorations, food packaging, promotional items) came from and where they would go after the event.
2. Creating value loops—planning for reusable decorations, composting stations, and partnerships with local repair cafés.
3. Scenario planning—estimating the environmental and logistical impact of these changes.

The mentor also connected Maya with a youth-led sustainability network that shared practical tips for zero-waste events.

Outcome:

The festival implemented a "bring-your-own-container" policy, partnered with local composting services, and reused decorations from previous events. Waste was reduced by 70% compared to similar events in the area. The initiative became a model for other youth groups, and Maya's team gained recognition for turning circular principles into community action.

Tools for coaches

Circular Economy Fundraising Ideation Template

Purpose: To help coachees brainstorm and develop innovative fundraising ideas rooted in circular economy principles, such as upcycling workshops, recycling programs, or repair cafes.

Expertise Level Required from Coach: Intermediate.

Coaches should have a basic understanding of circular economy principles and fundraising strategies.

Detailed Instruction for Coaches:

- Introduce the Concept: Explain the circular economy and its relevance to fundraising. Highlight examples of successful initiatives (e.g., thrift stores, recycling drives).

- Brainstorm Ideas: Facilitate a brainstorming session using the template to explore fundraising activities aligned with circular economy practices. Encourage creativity and inclusivity.
- Assess Feasibility: Help coachees evaluate the feasibility of each idea in terms of cost, required resources, and alignment with organizational goals.
- Develop a Plan: Guide coachees in creating a detailed plan for the chosen idea, including steps, required materials, and budget considerations.
- Implement and Monitor: Support coachees in executing the fundraising initiative, tracking progress, and collecting feedback for improvement

Notes**:** Encourage coachees to involve their team and volunteers in the ideation process to ensure diverse input and ownership.

Useful Resources:

- Circular Economy Brainstorming Templates (VentureWell (n.d.) *Design Lifetime Sharing Exercise*.)
- Circular Economy Business Model Pattern Cards. (Circit Nord (n.d.) *Circular Economy Business Model Pattern Cards)*

Below are some aspects that are important, and you as a coach can give to your coachees.

DOs	**DON'Ts**
✔ Start Small and Scale Up projects that test circular practices on a small scale. ✔ Collaborate with Like-Minded Organizations ✔ Educate and Train Your Team to understand the principles of circularity	✘ Overlook Local Contexts - what works in one region or community might not be applicable in another ✘ overlook the importance of aligning circular economy activities with the organization's mission ✘ Compromise on Quality - ensure that products and services created under the circular model meet or exceed quality standards

6.7 Conclusion

This chapter on "Fundraising and Financial Security" highlights the critical importance of sound financial management and strategic fundraising for the sustainability of NGOs. Despite often being deprioritized, these areas are foundational to the success and longevity of any nonprofit organization. Effective financial management enables NGOs to optimize resources, manage risks, and maintain accountability to stakeholders, while strategic fundraising ensures a steady flow of support and engagement from donors.

As a coach, it is vital to equip your coachees with the necessary tools and knowledge to navigate these financial and fundraising challenges. This includes educating them on financial planning, leveraging technology for cash flow management, and employing diverse fundraising strategies that align with their organization's mission and goals. By mastering these elements, NGOs can secure the financial stability needed to thrive in a competitive and ever-changing environment.

Moreover, understanding the intricacies of donor engagement, financial reporting, and risk management will not only bolster an NGO's credibility but also foster long-term relationships with supporters. The practical tools and resources provided throughout this section offer actionable guidance for coaches to help their coachees build a robust financial foundation and develop effective fundraising strategies that resonate with donors.

Ultimately, by prioritizing financial literacy and strategic fundraising, NGOs can position themselves for sustained impact, ensuring that their missions continue to inspire and drive meaningful change in the communities they serve.

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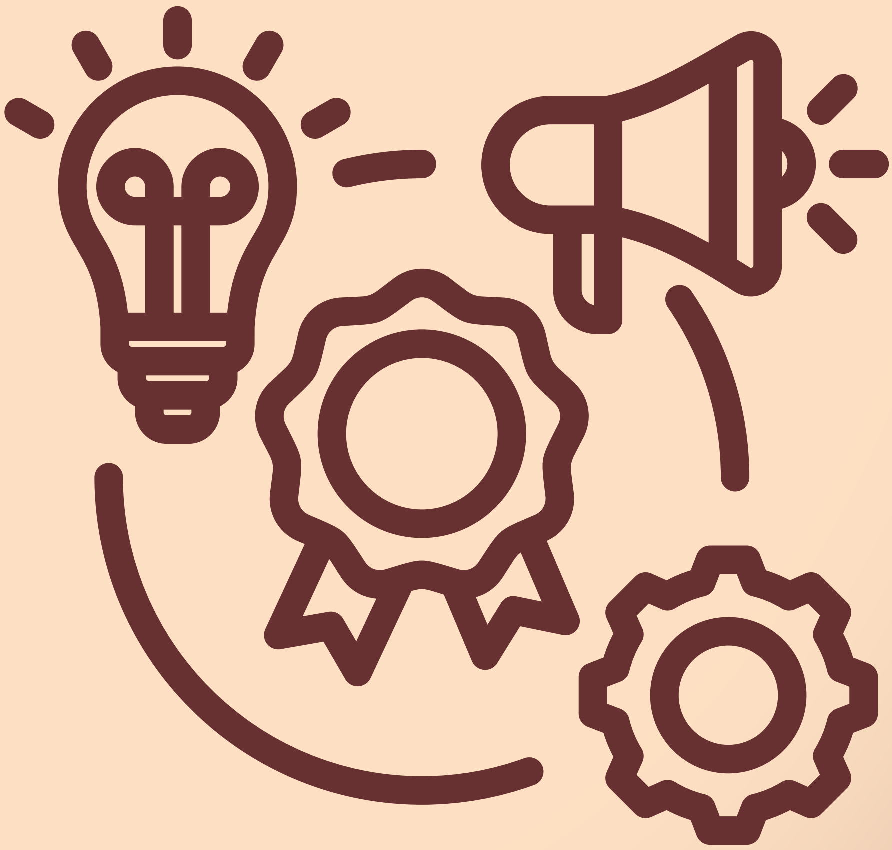
7.

Branding & Marketing



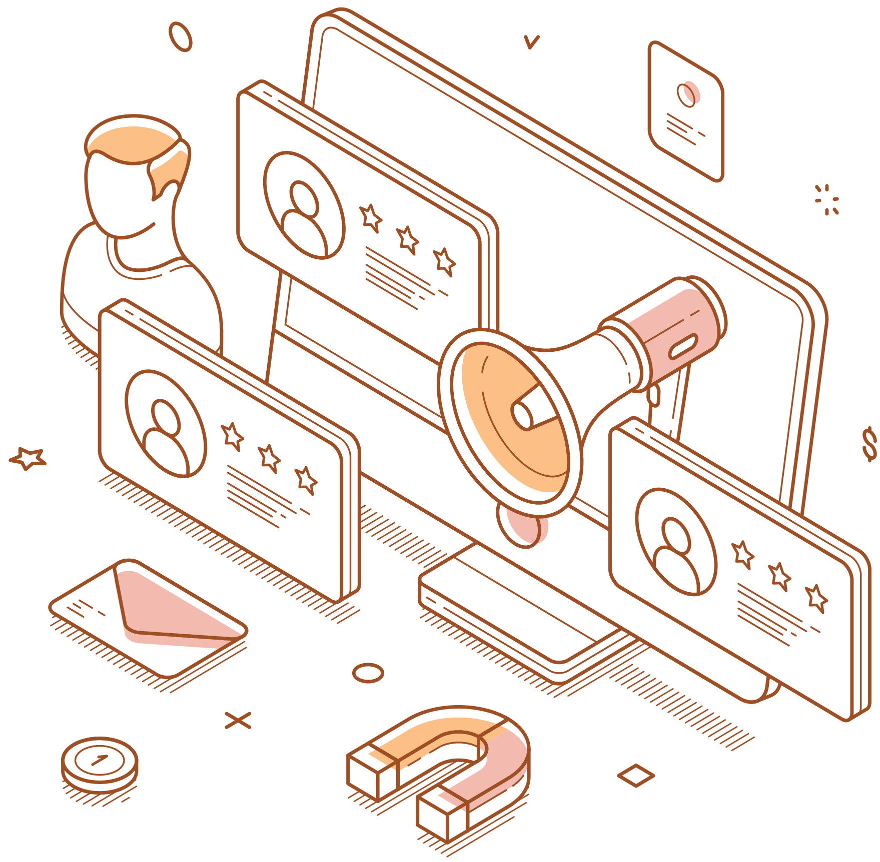
7.1 Introduction

In the context of sustainability initiatives, branding and marketing are essential for effectively communicating the mission and vision of a project. They help young changemakers clarify their identity, connect with their audience, and mobilise support for their cause. For sustainability projects, marketing is not only about visibility but also about education and behavioural change, it enables communities to understand, care about, and participate in meaningful action.

This module equips youth workers, coaches, and mentors with the knowledge and skills to guide young people in developing effective branding and marketing strategies. These strategies enhance the success, credibility, and long-term sustainability of their initiatives.

The aims of this module are to support young people to:

- Recognize the importance of branding and marketing in the context of sustainable initiatives.
- Understand the process of creating a compelling brand that aligns with their initiative's mission, vision, and values.
- Develop and implement marketing strategies that effectively reach and engage their target audience.
- Utilize social media and digital marketing tools to amplify the reach and impact of their initiatives.
- Learn how to evaluate the success of their branding and marketing efforts and make necessary adjustments.



Learning objectives

By the end of this module, coaches will be able to:

- Understand the role of branding and marketing in the success of sustainability initiatives.
- Identify the key elements of a strong brand, including mission, vision, values, personality, and visual identity.
- Develop and adapt marketing strategies that engage and resonate with young changemakers and their audiences.
- Use digital and social media tools effectively to increase visibility and interaction.
- Evaluate marketing performance and refine strategies based on feedback and results.

7.2 Marketing fundamentals

Overview

This section introduces the essential principles that underpin all marketing activities. It provides coaches with a clear understanding of what marketing is, how it functions, and why it matters when supporting young changemakers. By exploring its main concepts and purposes, coaches will gain the theoretical grounding needed to help youth design communication strategies that are intentional, value-driven, and aligned with the goals of their sustainability initiatives.

Theoretical foundation

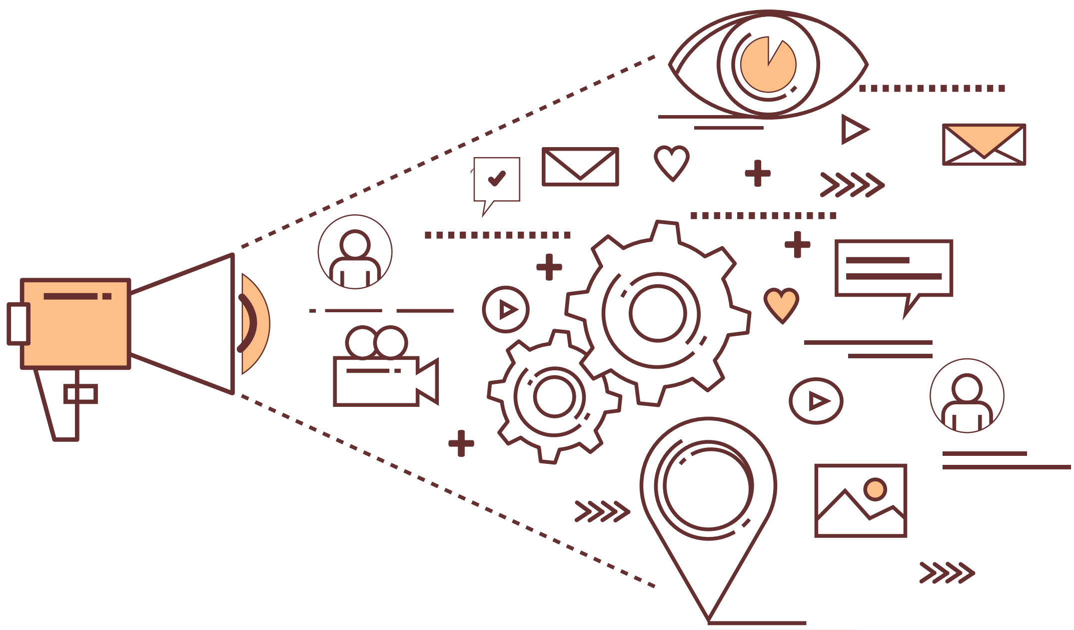
Marketing involves understanding and meeting the needs of your target audience. It is about creating, communicating, and delivering value through various strategies that engage and inspire action. For sustainability initiatives, marketing not only aims to promote but also to educate and mobilize communities towards positive change.

Fundamentals of marketing

- Definition and Purpose of Marketing: Marketing is the process of creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large. It is essential for identifying and meeting the needs of your target audience, ensuring the success and sustainability of your initiatives.
- Key Concepts: Understanding the audience's needs, wants, and demands is at the core of effective marketing. It is about crafting messages and campaigns that resonate with your target audience and inspire them to take action.

Importance of marketing

- Raising Awareness: Marketing helps to inform and educate the public about sustainability issues and the importance of your initiative.
- Engaging the Community: Effective marketing strategies foster community involvement and support, crucial for the success of sustainability initiatives.
- Securing Support and Resources: By communicating the value and impact of your initiative, marketing helps attract volunteers, funding, and other resources.
- Driving Behavioral Change: Marketing not only promotes your initiative but also encourages positive behaviors and practices related to sustainability.



Educate yourself first

Before diving into marketing strategies and guiding young people through the promotion of their sustainability initiatives, it is important to understand key marketing concepts. Below are carefully selected resources that offer a comprehensive foundation in marketing, target audience engagement, and sustainability communication. These materials will equip you with the necessary knowledge to effectively apply the tools and techniques in this chapter and help guide others in their marketing efforts.

- Kotler, P., & Armstrong, G. (2017). *Principles of Marketing* (17th ed.). Pearson. This textbook covers fundamental marketing concepts and how to tailor strategies for specific audiences, a must-read for understanding the basics.
- Godin, S. (2018). *This Is Marketing: You Can't Be Seen Until You Learn to See*. Portfolio. This book explains modern marketing approaches, emphasizing connection and storytelling, particularly useful for promoting social and sustainability causes.
- Coursera – Marketing in a Digital World by the IE Business School A comprehensive online course that explores the impact of digital tools on marketing, ideal for understanding how to promote initiatives in the digital age.(Coursera, n.d.)

Case study: "Save your hood" campaign

Overview

To mobilize community members, especially the youth, to participate in neighborhood cleanups and raise environmental awareness.

Background

Save Your Hood is a grassroots movement in Greece, founded during the COVID-19 pandemic by Vassilis Sfakianopoulos. The initiative encourages volunteers to clean and protect their local neighborhoods, growing rapidly to involve over 52,000 volunteers and organize more than 6,300 cleanups across Greece.

Marketing strategy

Save Your Hood's marketing strategy focuses on community engagement through:

- Social Media: Leveraging Instagram and Facebook to share impactful visuals, including before-and-after cleanup photos and volunteer stories.
- Key Messages: "Save Your Hood" and "We take care of our neighborhoods; we put trash in its place" resonate with local pride and environmental stewardship.
- Collaborations: Partnering with schools and local groups to promote their mission through educational events and workshops.

Implementation

The campaign built a strong online community using the hashtag #SaveYourHood, which allowed participants to share their cleanup efforts and inspire others. Educational initiatives further engaged the youth, fostering a culture of environmental responsibility.

Outcome

The marketing approach effectively raised awareness and mobilized thousands of volunteers, establishing Save Your Hood as a leading environmental movement in Greece.

Exercises / Reflection questions

1. *Identify Key Marketing Concepts*: For your sustainability initiative, outline the key messages and strategies you will use to reach your audience.
2. *Reflect on Marketing Components*: Consider how each component of your marketing efforts can help achieve your goals. What challenges do you foresee, and how can you address them?

Tips & tricks

- Encourage participants to think of marketing as a tool for both promotion and education.
- Emphasize the importance of clear, consistent messaging that aligns with the initiative's values and goals.
- Use real-world examples to illustrate how marketing can drive engagement and support for sustainability initiatives.

Warning signs

As a coach, you may need to provide additional guidance if your coachee:

- struggles to define clear marketing objectives or target audience.
- experiences low engagement from the community or target audience despite marketing efforts.
- allocates resources inefficiently or overlooks essential marketing channels

Resources:

- Hiam, A. (2014) *Marketing for Dummies*. 4th edn. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- Alanis Business Academy (n.d.) *Introduction to Marketing: The Importance of Product, Price, Place, & Promotion | Episode 118*. Available from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qWlhzTI0ooo [Accessed 26 November 2025].
- WildApricot (n.d.) *Nonprofit marketing*. Available from: https://www.wildapricot.com/blog/nonprofit-marketing [Accessed 26 November 2025].

7.3 Brand creation

Overview

Creating a strong brand is essential for making your sustainability initiative memorable and engaging. This chapter guides you through the process of brand creation, focusing on defining your mission, vision, values, personality, and visual identity. A well-defined brand helps communicate your initiative's purpose and build a loyal community around it.

Theoretical foundation

Brand creation involves establishing a distinct identity that resonates with your target audience. It encompasses the mission, vision, values, personality, and visual elements that together create a cohesive and recognizable brand. For sustainability initiatives, a strong brand can amplify your message and foster greater community support.

Mission, vision, and values

- *Mission*: The mission statement defines the core purpose of your initiative. It explains why your initiative exists and what it aims to achieve.
- *Vision*: The vision statement outlines the long-term impact and the desired future state resulting from your initiative. It serves as an inspirational guide for your efforts.
- *Values*: Core values are the guiding principles that dictate behavior and action. They help establish the ethical foundation of your brand and shape the culture of your initiative.

Brand personality and visual identity

- Personality: The brand personality refers to the human characteristics attributed to your initiative. It shapes how your audience perceives and interacts with your brand.
- Visual Identity: Visual elements, such as the logo, color scheme, typography, and design style, create a recognizable and consistent look for your brand. They play a crucial role in making your initiative visually appealing and memorable.

Educate yourself first

Before creating a brand for sustainability initiatives, it's essential to grasp the foundational elements of brand identity. Below are key resources that provide valuable insights into branding, from defining mission and vision to crafting a consistent visual identity. These resources will equip you with the necessary knowledge to effectively guide others in building strong and memorable brands.

1. Wheeler, A. (2017) *Designing brand identity: An essential guide for the whole branding team*. 5th edn. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

This guide covers every aspect of branding, from strategy to execution, offering actionable insights into creating cohesive brand identities.

2. Kapferer, J.-N. (2012) *The new strategic brand management*. 5th edn. London: Kogan Page

A comprehensive resource on strategic branding, including methods for developing brand personality and visual identity.

3. Coursera - Brand Management: Aligning Business, Brand, and Behaviour. An online course that delves into the nuances of brand strategy, focusing on how to align mission, vision, and values with visual identity. (Coursera, n.d.)

Example / Case study:

Save your hood: Building a cohesive brand

Overview:

To establish a recognizable and impactful brand identity that strengthens community involvement and supports the long-term sustainability of Save Your Hood.

Background:

Save Your Hood's rapid growth highlighted the need for a strong brand to unify its diverse activities and communicate its mission clearly. The brand aims to connect people with their neighborhoods, fostering a deep sense of responsibility and pride in maintaining a clean environment.

Brand Creation Process:

The team developed a brand that reflects its core mission and values:

- Mission: "To empower communities to actively protect and enhance their local environment."
- Visual Identity: The logo features a globe with a small city and a tree, symbolizing the connection between community and nature. The green color reinforces the environmental focus.
- Tagline: "We take care of our neighborhoods; we put trash in its place" encapsulates the movement's core message, encouraging collective action.

Implementation:

The brand was consistently applied across all communications, from social media to volunteer gear. The creative team produced compelling visuals and narratives that amplified the movement's message, making it relatable and inspiring.

Outcome:

The strong brand identity helped Save Your Hood become a well-recognized movement in Greece, fostering greater community engagement and ensuring the initiative's sustainability.

Tools: Mission-driven brand canvas

Purpose: To help coachees align their brand identity with their mission and values.

Step-by-step approach for coaches**:**

1. Create a canvas with six sections: Mission, Values, Audience, Personality, Voice, and Visual Identity.
2. Guide your coachee through each section:

   Mission: What's the core purpose of your initiative?

   Values: What principles guide your work?

   Audience: Who are you trying to reach and engage?

   Personality: If your initiative was a person, how would you describe them?

   Voice: How does your initiative communicate? (e.g., friendly, authoritative, inspiring)

   Visual Identity: What visual elements represent your initiative?
3. Help your coachee fill in each section with descriptive words or short phrases.
4. Discuss how these elements work together to form a cohesive, mission-driven brand.

Exercises / Reflection questions:

1. Create a mission statement, vision statement, and list of core values for your sustainability initiative.
2. Design a logo and choose a color scheme that reflects the personality and values of your initiative. Create a style guide to ensure consistency in all visual materials.

Tips & tricks

- Guide participants in brainstorming sessions to ensure that their brand reflects their goals and values.
- Emphasize the importance of authenticity in branding. The brand should genuinely reflect the initiative's goals and values.
- Use brainstorming sessions and feedback loops to refine brand elements and ensure they resonate with the target audience.

Warning signs

As a coach, you may need to provide additional guidance if your coachee:

- Displays inconsistency in actions and decisions that do not align with stated values..
- lacks a cohesive and recognizable visual identity that differentiates the initiative.
- exhibits a brand personality that does not resonate with the target audience or misrepresents the initiative.

Resources:

- Levy, M. (2010) *Building your brand: A practical guide for nonprofit organizations*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- The Futur (2017) *What Is Branding? 4 Minute Crash Course.* Available from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sO4te2QNsHY [Accessed 26 November 2025].
- TEDx Talks (2019) *How to brand anything | Youri Sawerschel | TEDxEHLLausanne*. Available from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z_YNMsS6NLk [Accessed 26 November 2025].

- Simon Sinek (n.d.) *3 Things that Make a MEANINGFUL Vision | Simon Sinek*. Available from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zpzZumZCdWA [Accessed 26 November 2025].
- WholeWhale (2020) *Writing a Mission vs. a Vision Statement for Nonprofits*. Available from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mR60SPX2ET4 [Accessed 26 November 2025].
- noissue (n.d.) *How to create your brand's vision & values*. Available at: https://noissue.co/blog/how-to-create-your-brands-vision-values/ (Accessed: 26 November 2025).
- Canva (n.d.) *Brand Kit*. Available at: https://www.canva.com/help/brand-kit/ (Accessed: 26 November 2025).
- NPR (n.d.) *How I Built This*. Available at: https://www.npr.org/series/490248027/how-i-built-this (Accessed: 26 November 2025).
- Entrepreneur (n.d.) *Business: The Basics of Branding*. Available at: https://www.entrepreneur.com/starting-a-business/business-the-basics-of-branding/77408 (Accessed: 26 November 2025).

7.4 Marketing strategy development

Overview:

Developing a marketing strategy involves setting clear goals and planning campaigns to achieve those goals. This chapter will guide you through the process of understanding your target audience, crafting compelling messages, and selecting the right channels to reach your audience. A well-thought-out marketing strategy is crucial for the success of your sustainability initiative.

Theoretical foundation:

Marketing strategy development is about creating a roadmap that outlines how your initiative will achieve its marketing objectives. It involves understanding the needs and behaviors of your target audience, defining your unique value proposition, and choosing the most effective ways to communicate your message

Crafting messages and selecting channels:

- Messaging: Develop clear and compelling messages that resonate with your audience. Ensure that your messages align with your brand's mission, vision, and values.
- Channels: Choose the most effective channels to deliver your messages. This could include social media, email marketing, community events, and partnerships with other organizations.

Campaign planning:

- Campaign Structure: Plan the structure of your marketing campaigns. Outline the key activities, timelines, and responsibilities.
- Budgeting: Allocate resources effectively. Determine the budget needed for different marketing activities and ensure it aligns with your overall budget.
-

Educate yourself first

Before developing a marketing strategy for sustainability initiatives, it's important to familiarize yourself with strategic planning, audience engagement, and effective communication channels. The following resources will provide a strong foundation for understanding how to craft marketing strategies that resonate with your audience and achieve your goals.

- Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2016). *Marketing Management* (15th ed.). Pearson. A comprehensive guide on marketing strategy development, covering key topics such as targeting, positioning, and channel selection.
- McDonald, M., & Wilson, H. (2016). *Marketing Plans: How to Prepare Them, How to Use Them* (8th ed.). Wiley. An essential resource for creating detailed marketing plans, including campaign structure and budgeting

Example / Case study:

Overview

Save Your Hood's rapid growth necessitated a well-structured marketing strategy to sustain and expand its impact across Greece.

Strategy development

- Goal Setting:
- Primary goal: Increase active volunteers by 25% within 6 months
- Secondary goal: Expand to 5 new cities within a year
- Target Audience Analysis:
- Primary: Environmentally conscious youth (18-35)
- Secondary: Local businesses and municipal authorities
- Unique Value Proposition: "Empower your community to create visible, immediate environmental change"
- Channel Selection:
- Instagram and Facebook for volunteer engagement
- LinkedIn for partnership development
- Local media for broader awareness
- Message Crafting:
- For youth: "Be the change your neighborhood needs"
- For businesses: "Show your community commitment through local action"

Tools: Theory of change for marketing

Purpose: To help coachees develop a marketing strategy aligned with their long-term impact goals.

Step-by-step approach for coaches**:**

1. Introduce the concept of Theory of Change and how it applies to marketing.
2. Guide your coachee through these steps:

   Long-term Impact: What's the ultimate change you want to see?

   Outcomes: What needs to happen to achieve this impact?

   Outputs: What tangible results will your marketing produce?

   Activities: What marketing actions will you take?

   Inputs: What resources do you need for these activities?
3. Help them create a visual map connecting these elements.
4. Discuss how this map can guide marketing decisions and goal-setting.

Exercises / Reflection questions:

1. Write down at least three marketing goals for your initiative using the SMART criteria (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound). For each goal, specify the actions you will take to achieve it and the metrics you will use to measure success.
2. How do these goals align with the overall mission and vision of your initiative? Are there any potential obstacles to achieving these goals?

Tips & tricks

- Guide participants to regularly review and adjust their marketing strategy based on performance and feedback.
- Encourage the use of analytics tools to measure the effectiveness of marketing campaigns.
- Suggest creating a content calendar to organize and plan marketing activities.

Warning signs

As a coach, you may need to provide additional guidance if your coachee:

- has unclear or overly broad marketing goals that lack specificity.
- struggles to identify or understand their target audience.
- uses marketing channels that are ineffective or do not reach the intended audience.

Resources:

- Annie E. Casey Foundation (2022) *Theory of Change*. Available at: https://www.aecf.org/resources/theory-of-change (Accessed: 26 November 2025).
- Google Skillshop (2025) *Fundamentals of Digital Marketing*. Available at: https://skillshop.exceedlms.com/student/collection/1830706-fundamentals-of-digital-marketing (Accessed: 26 November 2025).
- HubSpot (n.d.) *Marketing Plan Template Generator*. Available at: https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/marketing-plan-template-generator (Accessed: 26 November 2025).
- TechSoupVideo (2021) *Nonprofit Marketing Plan Workshop*. Available from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SNskHQ8FD9U [Accessed 26 November 2025].

7.5 Content creation and digital marketing

Overview

Creating engaging content is key to attracting and retaining your audience. This chapter covers the fundamentals of content creation and digital marketing, focusing on types of content, digital tools, and social media platforms—including the power of TikTok and Instagram Reels—that can be used to promote sustainability initiatives.

Theoretical foundation

Content creation involves producing various types of media that effectively communicate your message and engage your audience. Digital marketing leverages online platforms and tools to disseminate this content, increase visibility, and foster community engagement. Understanding how to create compelling content and utilize digital marketing tools, especially with the rise of short-form video platforms like TikTok and Instagram Reels, is essential for the success of sustainability initiatives.

Content:

Types of content

- Blog Posts: Written articles that provide in-depth information, personal stories, or updates about your initiative.
- Social Media Posts: Short, engaging updates shared on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to keep your audience informed and engaged.
- Videos: Visual content that can range from short clips to full-length documentaries, showcasing your activities, interviews, or educational content.
- Short-form Videos: TikTok and Instagram Reels are powerful tools for creating quick, engaging content that has the potential to go viral, reaching a wide and diverse audience quickly.
- Infographics: Visual representations of data and information that are easy to understand and share.
- Email Newsletters: Regular updates sent directly to your audience's inbox, keeping them informed about your progress and upcoming events.

Digital tools

- Content Management Systems (CMS): Platforms like WordPress or Wix to create and manage your website and blog.
- Social Media Management Tools: Tools like Hootsuite or Buffer to schedule and manage your social media posts across multiple platforms.
- Graphic Design Tools: Canva or Adobe Spark to create visually appealing graphics and infographics.
- Video Editing Software: Tools like Adobe Premiere Pro or iMovie to edit and enhance your video content.
- Mobile Video Editing Apps: Apps like InShot and CapCut are popular for editing TikToks and Reels directly from your phone.
- Email Marketing Services: Mailchimp or Constant Contact to design and send professional email newsletters.

Social media platforms

- Facebook: For creating event pages, engaging with community groups, and sharing updates.
- Instagram: For sharing visually appealing photos and stories about your initiatives. Another feature are Reels. Reels are short, engaging videos that can quickly gain traction and spread awareness about your initiatives.

- TikTok: A platform for creating short, viral videos that can raise awareness and inspire action, especially among younger audiences.
- Twitter: For real-time updates and engaging with relevant hashtags and conversations.
- LinkedIn: For networking with professionals and sharing detailed articles and updates.
- YouTube: For hosting and sharing video content related to your initiatives.

Educate yourself first

Before diving into content creation and digital marketing, it's important to understand the basics of creating engaging content and using digital tools effectively. The following resources provide in-depth guidance on leveraging content to promote sustainability initiatives, using social media, and understanding the potential of short-form video platforms like TikTok and Instagram Reels.

- Pulizzi, J. (2014). *Epic Content Marketing*. McGraw-Hill.
  A practical guide to creating content that engages and retains audiences, perfect for sustainability initiatives.
- Chaffey, D., & Ellis-Chadwick, F. (2019). *Digital Marketing: Strategy, Implementation and Practice*. Pearson.
  This book covers comprehensive digital marketing strategies and tools, from content creation to social media management.
- HubSpot Academy - Content Marketing Certification
  A free online course that offers step-by-step guidance on content marketing strategies, from blogs to videos.(HubSpot Academy, n.d.)

Example / Case study:

Overview

Save Your Hood leveraged various content types and digital platforms to engage volunteers and spread awareness.

Content strategy

- Instagram/Facebook Posts: Before/after cleanup photos, volunteer spotlights
- Short Videos: Quick tips for eco-friendly living, cleanup event highlights
- Blog Posts: Success stories, environmental impact reports
- Infographics: Statistics on waste reduction, cleanup event results

Digital tools used

- Canva for graphic design
- Later for social media scheduling
- WordPress for the website and blog

Social media focus

Instagram became the primary platform due to its visual nature and popularity among the target demographic.

Implementation

- Content Calendar: Planned posts 1 month in advance
- User-Generated Content: Encouraged volunteers to share their experiences with #SaveYourHood
- Influencer Partnerships: Collaborated with local eco-influencers for wider reach

Tools: Cause-driven content matrix

Purpose: To help coachees plan diverse, mission-aligned content.

Step-by-step approach for coaches**:**

1. Create a matrix with content types (e.g., posts, videos, articles) on one axis and content goals (e.g., educate, inspire action, share impact) on the other.
2. Guide your coachee to:

   Brainstorm content ideas for each intersection of type and goal.

   Consider how each piece of content supports their mission.

   Plan a balanced mix of content across different types and goals.
3. Use this matrix to inform their content calendar.
4. Discuss how to adapt content for different platforms while maintaining a consistent message.

Exercises / Reflection questions:

- Develop a social media calendar with the content you would like to publish for the next three months. Include different types of content (blog posts, social media updates, TikToks, Reels, videos) and plan their publication dates.
- How does your content calendar align with your overall marketing strategy? What types of content do you think will be most effective in engaging your audience?
- Why did you choose these particular platforms? How will you measure the success of your social media efforts?

Tips & tricks

- Encourage participants to experiment with short-form video content, as it is a powerful tool for quickly spreading awareness and engaging with a younger audience.
- Advise them to use analytics tools to track the performance of their content and adjust their strategies accordingly.
- Remind them of the importance of consistency in posting and engaging with their audience.

Warning signs

As a coach, you may need to provide additional guidance if your coachee:

- is uncertain about which social media platforms to use, or attempts to use too many without a clear strategy
- posts too frequently or shares content that isn't aligned with the audience's interests, leading to disengagement..
- produces content that is visually unappealing or lacks cohesion with the overall brand identity.
- fails to interact with their audience through comments, replies, and social media engagement, resulting in lower community involvement.

Resources:

- Donorbox (n.d.) *Content Marketing for Nonprofits*. Available at: https://donorbox.org/nonprofit-blog/content-marketing-for-nonprofits (Accessed: 26 November 2025).
- Shorthand (n.d.) *Content Marketing for Nonprofits*. Available at: https://shorthand.com/the-craft/content-marketing-for-nonprofits/ (Accessed: 26 November 2025).
- Hootsuite (n.d.) *Social Media Content Calendar*. Available at: https://www.hootsuite.com/resources/blog/social-media-content-calendar (Accessed: 26 November 2025).
- Ahrefs (2021) *Content Marketing For Beginners: Complete Guide*. Available from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0R_3iarc8IA [Accessed 26 November 2025].

7.6 Follow-up and dissemination

Overview

Effective follow-up and dissemination are critical steps in ensuring the long-term success and sustainability of your initiative. After implementing your marketing strategy, it's essential to maintain engagement with your audience, share success stories, gather and share testimonials from participants, and use the insights gained to inform future efforts. This chapter will guide you through the processes of following up after campaigns, engaging with your community, and planning for the future to keep the momentum going.

Theoretical foundation

Follow-up and dissemination are often overlooked but are crucial components of any successful initiative. Proper follow-up ensures that your audience remains engaged, and dissemination of your results helps to spread your message, inspire others, and secure continued support. This chapter emphasizes the importance of:

- Maintaining Audience Engagement: Keeping your audience interested and involved, even after a campaign ends.
- Sharing Success Stories and Testimonials: Highlighting the achievements and impact of your initiative through stories and feedback from participants to motivate both your team and your audience.
- Future Planning: Using the insights from your follow-up activities to plan future campaigns and initiatives.

Maintaining audience engagement

After the completion of a marketing campaign, it is crucial to continue engaging with your audience to build a lasting relationship. This can be achieved by:

- Sending thank-you messages or updates on the impact of their contributions.
- Hosting follow-up events or online sessions to keep the conversation going.
- Encouraging feedback and interaction through surveys, polls, or Q&A sessions.

Sharing success stories and testimonials

Success stories and participant testimonials serve as powerful tools to showcase the effectiveness of your initiative. They can be used to inspire others to join your cause and to validate the impact of your efforts. Consider:

- Creating detailed case studies or impact reports that highlight the achievements of your campaign.
- Sharing testimonials from participants, volunteers, or beneficiaries of your initiative. These personal accounts can add authenticity and emotional resonance to your story.
- Utilizing social media platforms, your website, and newsletters to broadcast these stories and testimonials widely.

Future planning

Effective follow-up also involves reflecting on what worked and what didn't in your campaign. Use these insights to plan future efforts by:

- Conducting a debrief with your team to discuss lessons learned.
- Identifying opportunities for improvement and innovation in future campaigns.
- Setting new goals based on the feedback and results from your previous efforts.

Educate yourself first

Before guiding others on effective follow-up and dissemination strategies, it's essential to understand how to maintain engagement and build long-term relationships with your audience. Below are resources that cover the fundamentals of audience engagement, storytelling, and planning future initiatives based on past insights.

- Heath, C., & Heath, D. (2007). *Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die*. Random House. - A resource on crafting messages and stories that resonate with audiences, especially useful for sharing success stories.
- Kotler, P. (2016). *Marketing 4.0: Moving from Traditional to Digital*. Wiley. Covers how to engage audiences in a digital world and effectively disseminate campaign outcomes.

Example / Case study:

Overview

Save Your Hood implemented a robust follow-up strategy to maintain volunteer engagement and share their impact.

Follow-up activities

- Post-Event Surveys: Gathered feedback after each cleanup event
- Monthly Impact Reports: Shared statistics on waste collected, areas cleaned
- Volunteer Spotlight Series: Featured dedicated volunteers on social media
- Annual Community Meet-up: Organized a yearly event to celebrate achievements

Dissemination strategies

- Press Releases: Sent to local media after significant milestones
- Partnership Updates: Regular reports to corporate sponsors and municipal partners
- Academic Collaboration: Shared data with environmental researchers

Implementation

- The team assigned specific roles for follow-up activities, ensuring consistent communication with volunteers and stakeholders.

Tools: Stakeholder feedback loop

Purpose**:** To help coachees create a system for collecting and acting on feedback from various stakeholders.

Step-by-step approach for coaches:

1. Help your coachee identify key stakeholder groups (e.g., beneficiaries, volunteers, donors, partners).
2. For each group, guide them to:

   Define what feedback is most valuable.

   Choose appropriate feedback collection methods.

   Set a schedule for collecting and reviewing feedback.
3. Develop a process for analyzing feedback and implementing changes.
4. Create a plan for communicating actions taken based on feedback to close the loop.
5. Discuss how this feedback loop can improve their initiative and strengthen relationships.

Exercises / Reflection questions:

- Develop a detailed follow-up plan for your initiative that includes strategies for maintaining audience engagement, collecting and sharing success stories, and utilizing testimonials from participants. Break down the plan into actionable steps, such as scheduling post-campaign communications, identifying key messages, and selecting appropriate platforms for dissemination.
- How will your follow-up activities contribute to the long-term success of your initiative? What specific outcomes do you hope to achieve through consistent follow-up?

Tips & tricks

- Prompt your coachee to regularly reflect on the outcomes of their initiatives and the effectiveness of their follow-up strategies.
- Remind your coachee that feedback are invaluable for improving future efforts and adding credibility to their initiatives. Encourage them to actively seek and share testimonials from participants.
- Guide your coachee to be consistent in their follow-up efforts. Regular communication helps to build trust and loyalty among their audience.

Warning signs

As a coach, you may need to provide additional guidance if your coachee:

- does not have a clear plan for maintaining engagement after their campaign ends, leading to a loss of momentum.
- neglects to share the successes of their initiative, missing opportunities to inspire and attract more support.
- is hesitant to seek or act on feedback and testimonials from their audience, which could prevent growth and improvement.

Resources:

- Guide: Keystone Accountability (2013) *Technical Note 1: Constituent Voice*. Available at:https://alnap.org/help-library/resources/constituent-voice-technical-note-1/ [Accessed: 26 November 2025].
- Jotform (n.d.) *Event Feedback Form*. Available at: https://eu.jotform.com/form-templates/event-feedback-form (Accessed: 26 November 2025).
- Event Espresso (n.d.) *Post-Event Follow-Up: Best Practices*. Available at: https://eventespresso.com/blog/post-event-follow-up?lang=en-US (Accessed: 26 November 2025).
- The Communications Network (2023) *WEBINAR: Measuring Communications Success: How Evaluation Can Strengthen Your Impact*. Available from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z_S9EWUH8CA [Accessed 26 November 2025].

7.7 Conclusion

This chapter has equipped coaches with essential knowledge and tools to guide young changemakers in developing effective branding and marketing strategies for their sustainability initiatives. From understanding marketing fundamentals to creating strong brand identities, developing comprehensive strategies, leveraging digital platforms, and implementing robust follow-up methods, coaches now have a solid foundation to support their mentees.

As coaches guiding young changemakers, it's crucial to remember that effective branding and marketing are not just about promotion—they're about creating meaningful connections, inspiring action, and driving real change. Your role is to empower young people to develop their own authentic marketing strategies that align with their initiative's core values and goals.

Encourage your mentees to stay adaptable in the ever-changing digital landscape, always focusing on the impact of their initiatives. Foster a spirit of continuous learning and collaboration, as many sustainability challenges require collective action. By guiding young changemakers in developing strong branding and effective marketing strategies, you're helping to amplify their voices and extend the reach of their sustainability initiatives.

Remember, the ultimate goal is not just to promote an initiative, but to inspire widespread action and create lasting positive change in our communities and our world. Through thoughtful guidance in branding and marketing, coaches play a crucial role in empowering the next generation of sustainability leaders to make their mark and drive meaningful change.

7.8 Resources referenced in this chapter

Books

Kotler, P., & Armstrong, G. (2017). *Principles of Marketing* (17th ed.). Pearson.

Godin, S. (2018). *This Is Marketing: You Can't Be Seen Until You Learn to See*. Portfolio.

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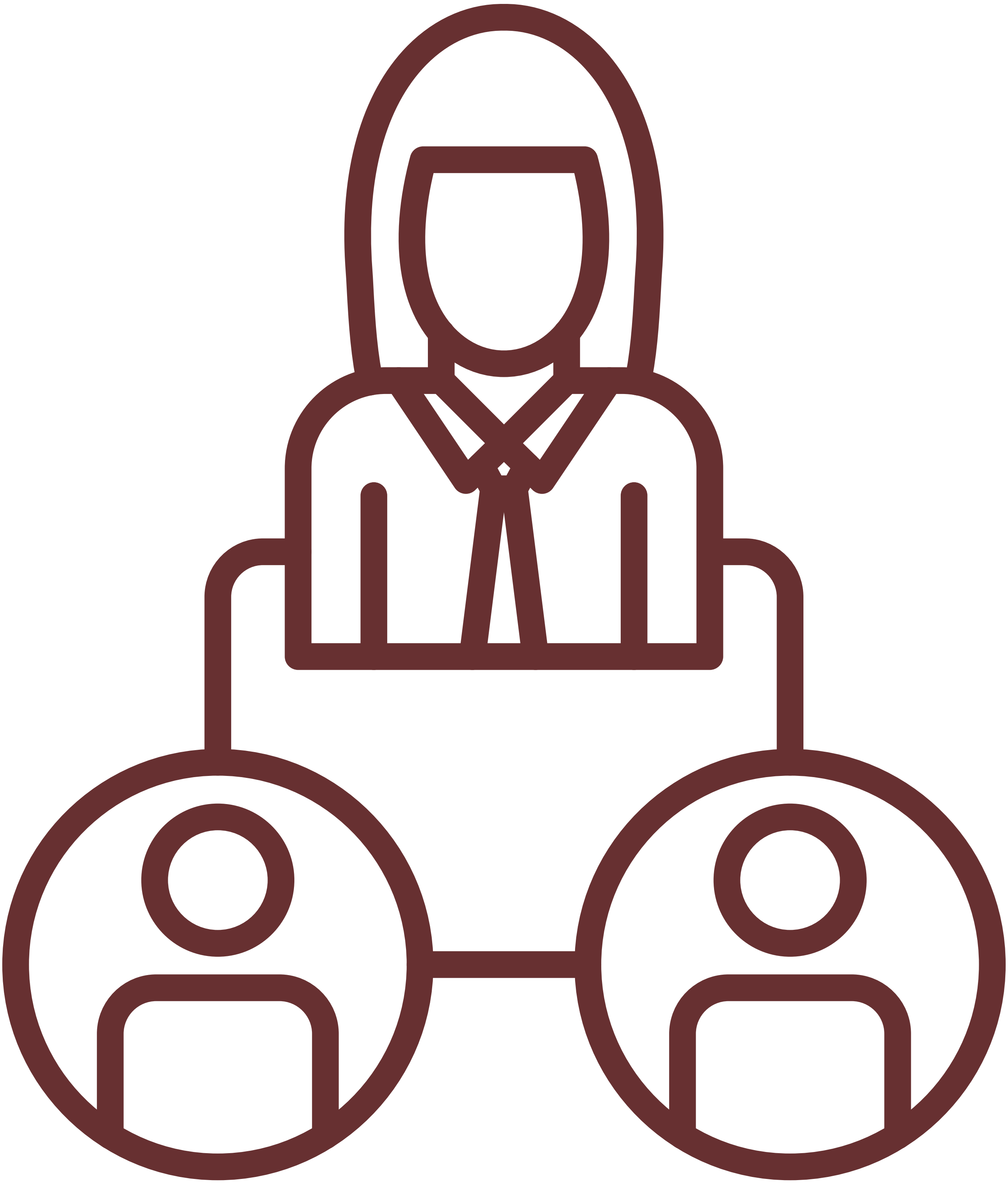
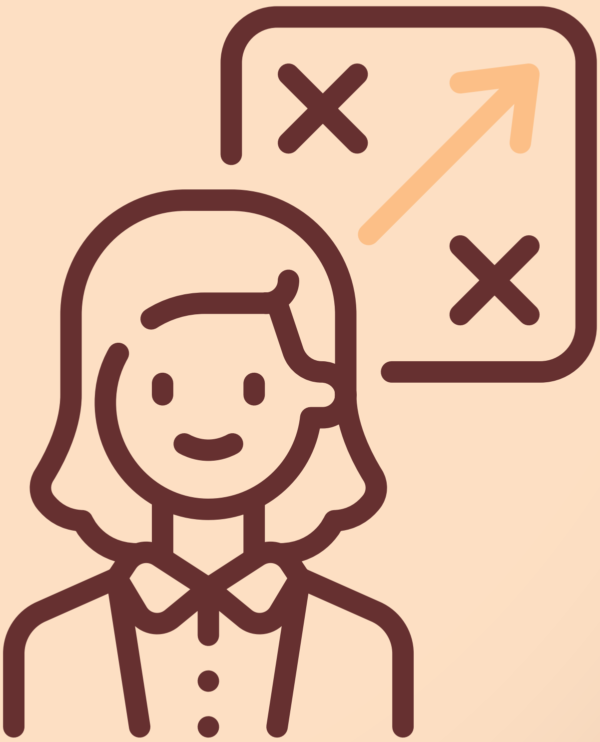


8.

Effective communication and leadership skills



8.1 Introduction

Effective communication is the ability to express thoughts, ideas, and emotions in a clear and understandable way, ensuring that the message reaches its intended recipient without distortion. It involves not only speaking or writing but also actively listening and interpreting the responses of others. For young changemakers, developing effective communication is essential, as it enables them to interact confidently across different contexts such as school, home, and their communities.

Communication is also fundamental for personal development. When young people learn how to express themselves clearly, they strengthen their self-confidence and their capacity to engage meaningfully with others. As a coach, strengthening their communication skills allows you to provide the support they need to face challenges, articulate their needs, and build healthy relationships with their environment.

The aims of this module are to support young people to:

- understand the importance of effective communication styles when engaging with others;
- improve skills in non-violent communication to create supportive and respectful dialogue;
- develop assertiveness techniques to express needs and boundaries clearly.

After completing this section, coaches will be able to:

- understand and apply different communication styles to improve interactions with young changemakers;
- enhance communication skills through clear, assertive, and constructive methods;
- effectively engage stakeholders by using targeted strategies and addressing their needs and concerns;
- implement non-violent communication techniques to foster empathy and handle conflicts with care;
- use leadership communication to inspire, guide, and support teams effectively.

Effective communication needs for young changemakers

Working with young people requires understanding what motivates them. They thrive when their efforts are recognised, their contributions matter, and they feel connected to a supportive community. Providing validation and fostering a sense of belonging keeps their energy and commitment high.

At this pivotal stage, young changemakers are eager to explore their values and identities. Active listening and empathetic communication strengthen their confidence and encourage self-expression. By creating environments where their voices are heard and respected, we empower them to contribute meaningfully and drive positive change in their communities.

8.2 Communication styles

Working with young changemakers requires understanding what motivates them. They are more engaged when they feel recognised, when their contributions matter, and when they are part of a supportive community. Validation and belonging play a central role in sustaining their motivation and commitment.

Many young changemakers are exploring their identities and values. During this stage, active listening and empathetic communication are essential tools for strengthening their confidence and encouraging them to express themselves openly. When you create an environment where their voices are heard and respected, you empower them to contribute meaningfully and to drive positive change in their communities.

Effective communication is a foundation for building trust and fostering growth when working with young changemakers. It supports stronger relationships, clearer expectations, and more confident self-expression. In general, we can differentiate between three types of communication styles:

- Passive communication: yielding to others' needs, often because of assumptions about one's own lesser importance or a fear of conflict.

- Aggressive communication: dominating others to fulfil personal needs, possibly due to assumptions about others' intentions or capabilities.
- Assertive communication: balancing one's own needs with those of others, achieved by questioning assumptions and seeking clarity.

While passive, aggressive, and assertive communication styles are commonly discussed, no single style is universally the "best" in all situations. The key is adaptability. Young changemakers benefit from learning how to adjust their approach depending on the context, the people involved, and the desired outcome.

Assertiveness is often appropriate when expressing needs and boundaries, but passive communication can be useful in situations where listening is more important than leading. Even forms of direct, firm communication—sometimes perceived as aggressive—may be necessary in urgent or safety-related situations.

Your role as a coach is to help young changemakers become aware of their assumptions, observe their own communication habits, and assess each situation with intention. Supporting them to blend communication styles when needed allows them to build trust, promote understanding, and engage constructively with others. Communication is not about following one fixed style. It is about choosing the approach that best supports clarity, respect, and emotional safety in each moment.

Educate yourself first

Before supporting young changemakers in developing effective communication skills, it is important to deepen your own understanding of how young people express themselves, how dialogue can be facilitated, and what helps them feel genuinely heard. The following resources offer practical guidance on youth voice, participation, and dialogue, and can help you approach communication with more confidence and intention.

- Lawrence Becko and Jennifer Raven (2020) *The Youth Voice & Participation Handbook*.
  A practical handbook offering strategies and examples for creating environments where young people feel empowered to speak up, be heard, and influence decisions.
- Author unknown (n.d.). *The Youth Participation Toolkit*.
  A step-by-step toolkit providing activities and methods to strengthen meaningful youth participation, with a focus on communication, active listening, and collaborative group work.

These resources will support you in building a stronger foundation for your own communication practice, so you can better model and encourage effective dialogue with young changemakers.

Case Study: Enhancing team dynamics through effective communication

Context:

During a session with the GreenFuture team, the coach noticed communication issues: Emma's silence was misinterpreted as disinterest (passive communication), while Liam's interruptions left others feeling unheard (aggressive communication). Sofia, the leader, avoided addressing the problem, fearing it would create more tension.

Intervention:

The coach stepped in to guide Sofia through self-reflection, helping her understand that avoidance was fueling misunderstandings. They facilitated an open discussion on communication styles, introduced assertiveness training, and helped the team establish norms for respectful listening and equal participation.

Outcome:

As a result, Emma felt more confident contributing, Liam improved his listening, and the team collaborated more effectively, leading to successful workshops and stronger community engagement. Through the coaches' intervention, GreenFuture strengthened their teamwork and advanced their sustainability goals.

Tools

Title: Communication styles exploration

Purpose: help young changemakers recognise and practise different communication styles (assertive, passive, aggressive) through guided experience.

Type of tool: group exercise / experiential learning.

Expertise level required from the coach: beginner.

Stage in the coachee's process: early or mid-stage coaching, when communication challenges appear or when establishing group norms.

Instructions for coaches:

1. Create a supportive environment: begin by setting expectations for respectful participation. Make it clear that the activity aims to learn, not to judge behaviour.
2. Introduce communication styles: briefly explain the three styles and give short, relatable examples. Invite young people to recall situations where they observed each style.
3. Assign role-play scenarios: divide participants into small groups and assign each group:

- a scenario (e.g., disagreeing on project tasks, asking for help, giving feedback);
- a communication style they must portray.

4. Facilitate role-play: allow time to practise and encourage creativity. Ensure a safe atmosphere where no one feels embarrassed or exposed.
5. Guide reflection: bring the group together and ask:
   - "How did you feel using this communication style?"
   - "What impact did it have on the interaction?"
   - "What would change if you used a different style?"
6. Connect to real-life situations: invite participants to identify moments where assertiveness could support better collaboration or reduce misunderstandings.

Notes:

- Some participants may feel uncomfortable role-playing. Allow them to observe the first round before participating.
- Encourage equal participation: ensure dominant voices do not take over the exercise.

Useful resources:

- *Essential Skills for Youth Work Practice* (Kate Sapin, 2013)
  This book provides a clear and practical overview of foundational communication skills in youth work, including active listening, rapport building, and constructive responses to challenging behaviour.
- Youth Work Conversations Guide (Youth Scotland, 2020) A concise and practical guide offering techniques for asking open questions, facilitating reflective dialogue, and creating safe communication spaces with young people.

Title: Assumption awareness exercise

Purpose: help young changemakers identify, question, and adjust their assumptions during communication.

Type of tool: individual reflection exercise.

Expertise level required from the coach: beginner to intermediate.

Stage in the coachee's process: throughout the coaching process, particularly when misunderstandings or conflicts arise.

Instructions for coaches:

1. Identify a recent interaction: ask participants to choose a challenging or confusing conversation they recently experienced.
2. List assumptions: invite them to write down assumptions they made during that interaction, such as:
   - "I assumed they were upset"
   - "I thought they were ignoring me"
   - "I believed they didn't care about my opinion"
3. Challenge assumptions: guide them in asking:
   - "What evidence supports this belief?"
   - "Are there alternative explanations?"
   - "How did this assumption shape my behaviour?"
4. Plan future conversations: support them in identifying communication strategies such as asking open questions or pausing before responding.
5. Group discussion (optional): if appropriate, invite volunteers to share insights about how assumptions shaped their reactions.

Notes:

- Remind participants that everyone makes assumptions. The aim is not to eliminate them but to become aware of them.
- Maintain confidentiality when discussing sensitive interactions

Useful resources:

- *Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life* (Rosenberg, 2015, PuddleDancer Press)
  An essential introduction to communicating with empathy, managing emotional triggers, and expressing needs clearly—highly relevant when helping young people challenge assumptions.
- *Communication Skills for Leaders: A Practical Guide* (Centre for Creative Leadership, 2019, CCL Press)
  A concise guide offering practical tools for improving clarity, listening, feedback, and leadership communication across diverse groups and contexts.

Reflection

Communication style and effective communication is the foundation of every meaningful relationship and successful collaboration. For youth workers, it is not just a skill but a vital tool for empowering young people, resolving conflicts, and fostering growth. By mastering a range of communication techniques—whether verbal, non-verbal, or emotional—you can create environments where trust, understanding, and mutual respect thrive.

Each conversation offers an opportunity to connect, inspire, and lead. Through thoughtful listening, clear expression, and adaptive communication styles, you help build bridges across diverse perspectives. These efforts not only enhance your impact as a professional but also equip young people with the tools they need to communicate confidently and effectively in their own lives.

Tips & tricks

Practice mindful listening
Tip: focus fully on the speaker to understand their message beyond your preconceptions.
Trick: before conversations, take a deep breath and set the intention to listen without judgment. Use techniques like nodding and paraphrasing to demonstrate engagement.

Clarify before responding
Tip: seek to understand others' perspectives by asking open-ended questions.
Trick: implement the "3-Question Rule". Ask at least three clarifying questions before forming a conclusion in important discussions.

Observe and adjust non-verbal signals
Tip: ensure your body language supports your verbal message for clearer communication.
Trick: use a mirror or video recording to rehearse important conversations, paying attention to posture, eye contact, and facial expressions.

Precision questioning
Tip: use targeted questions to uncover deeper meanings and resolve ambiguities.
Trick: apply the "Funnel Method": Start with broad questions like, *"What's been on your mind?"* Then narrow down with specifics such as, *"What result are you hoping for?"* This keeps conversations purposeful and efficient.

Communication pivoting
Tip: be ready to switch communication styles mid-conversation when the tone, context, or emotional state changes.
Trick: use the "Switch Framework": if a conversation becomes defensive or unproductive, pivot from direct instruction to empathetic inquiry by asking, *"What would help you feel more comfortable discussing this?"* This resets the dialogue constructively.

Warning signs

As a coach, you may need to provide additional guidance if you notice that your participants or you are showing patterns that hinder clear, respectful, or balanced communication.

- Frequent misunderstandings: regularly having to clarify or correct what you meant indicates possible misalignment in your communication style.
- Avoidance of difficult conversations: feeling reluctant to address issues may suggest a passive communication tendency influenced by assumptions.
- Dominating conversations: noticing that others rarely contribute when you speak could point to aggressive communication patterns.
- Emotional reactions: experiencing frustration or defensiveness during interactions may signal underlying assumptions affecting your responses.

DO's	DON'Ts
✔ Regularly assess and reflect on your own communication style to understand how it affects interactions with participants. ✔ Modify your communication style depending on the situation and the needs of the participants to ensure effective and respectful exchanges. ✔ Actively seek out and value different viewpoints during discussions to challenge and broaden assumptions. ✔ Incorporate activities designed to challenge and examine assumptions, such as role-playing different perspectives or discussing hypothetical scenarios.	✘ Avoid making decisions or responding based on assumptions about participants' thoughts or feelings without verifying them. ✘ Don't ignore subtle signs of discomfort or misunderstanding, such as body language or tone changes, as they may indicate deeper issues. ✘ Don't make broad generalizations about participants based on limited interactions or preconceived notions; address each person individually. ✘ Don't assume that all participants interpret messages in the same way; consider cultural, personal, and contextual factors in communication.

8.3 Stakeholder engagement

Stakeholder engagement is about more than maintaining relationships; it requires strategic, intentional communication to build trust, ensure alignment, and foster collaboration. This section provides advanced strategies for engaging stakeholders with professionalism, clarity, and impact. This section will equip you to support your coachees in refining their communication skills for different stakeholder environments.

Effective stakeholder communication is grounded in key psychological and organizational theories:

- Framing Theory: stakeholders interpret information based on the way it is framed. Crafting messages that align with stakeholders' values and goals enhances receptivity.
- Relational Coordination: this focuses on high-quality communication for aligning actions and goals, essential in multi-stakeholder environments.
- Feedback Dynamics: feedback is not just evaluative but developmental, driving mutual understanding and continuous improvement.

Educate yourself first

Before engaging in effective communication with stakeholders, it's crucial to understand the foundational principles and advanced strategies of stakeholder engagement. This includes mastering communication frameworks, understanding stakeholder psychology, and leveraging tools for meaningful interaction.

- Freeman, R.E. (2010). *Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach*. Cambridge University Press.
- A foundational text in stakeholder theory, this book provides a comprehensive framework for identifying, managing, and communicating with stakeholders. It emphasizes the importance of aligning stakeholder interests with organizational goals.
- Bryson, J. (2018) *Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations*. Wiley.

Case study: strengthening stakeholder engagement through structured feedback

Context:

During their work with a youth-led social enterprise, a coach observed communication breakdowns with a key corporate sponsor. Delayed responses and unmet expectations were straining the partnership, threatening the project's progress. The team leader struggled to address these gaps, fearing that direct feedback might jeopardize the sponsorship.

Intervention:

The coach guided the team leader in applying the SBI+F (Situation, Behavior, Impact + Future) framework to structure their feedback. Together, they identified specific instances of miscommunication and their impact on project timelines. The coached also supported the the team leader in how to propose actionable solutions, such as implementing joint review sessions to ensure better alignment moving forward.

Outcome:

Through the coaches' intervention, the team leader delivered clear, constructive feedback, which the sponsor welcomed. The introduction of regular review sessions fostered open communication, leading to improved coordination and a stronger partnership. Ultimately, the project regained momentum, demonstrating how structured feedback can enhance stakeholder relationships and drive collective success.

Tools

Title: Stakeholder mapping for clearer communication

Purpose: help young changemakers identify key stakeholders and adapt communication strategies based on each stakeholder's needs and expectations.

Type of tool: planning and communication design tool.

Expertise level required from the coach: beginner to intermediate.

Stage in the coachee's process: during project planning or before major presentations, meetings, or partnerships.

Instructions for coaches:

1. Introduce stakeholder categories: explain the different types of stakeholders (e.g., partners, beneficiaries, authorities, funders, volunteers).
2. Create a stakeholder map: ask changemakers to map stakeholders according to:
   - level of influence;
   - level of interest;
   - communication expectations;
   - preferred channels (e.g., meetings, email, social media).
3. Analyse expectations: invite them to consider what each stakeholder cares about most and what motivates them.
4. Adapt communication strategies: help changemakers define specific messages and approaches for each stakeholder group.
5. Prepare for upcoming interactions: role-play different stakeholder meetings to build confidence and clarity.

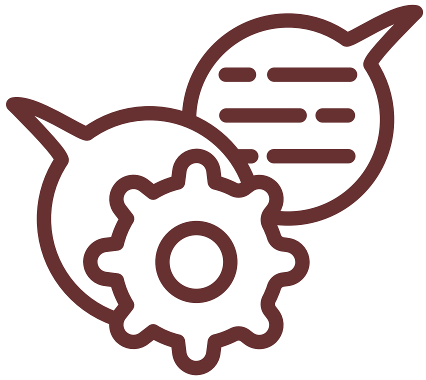
Notes:

- Encourage changemakers to revise their stakeholder map regularly as projects evolve.
- Highlight differences between formal and informal communication expectations.

Useful resources:

- Bryson, J. & Alston, F. (2011) *Creating Your Strategic Plan*. Wiley.
- Whitmore, J. (2017) *Coaching for Performance*. Nicholas Brealey.

Title: Advanced feedback mechanisms



Purpose: help young changemakers deliver and receive feedback in a structured, constructive, and professional manner, improving collaboration and communication with stakeholders.

Type of tool: feedback communication tool / interpersonal skills practice.

Expertise level required from the coach: intermediate.

Stage in the coachee's process: during mid- and late-stage project development, especially when evaluating progress or preparing for stakeholder dialogue.

Instructions for coaches:

1. Conduct feedback role-plays, alternating between giving and receiving feedback. Evaluate coachees on clarity, tone, empathy, and the actionability of their feedback.
2. Delivering feedback: introduce the SBI+F Model (Situation, Behaviour, Impact + Future) and guide coachees to practise using it. This model supports clarity, emotional neutrality, and actionability.

   Example:

   - Situation: "During our last meeting, we discussed upcoming project milestones."
   - Behaviour: "You provided minimal input on the risk assessment."
   - Impact: "This left some risks unaddressed, potentially delaying the timeline."
   - Future: "Could we allocate time in our next meeting to discuss your insights on risk mitigation?"
3. Encouraging feedback: support coachees in asking open-ended, partnership-oriented questions, such as:
   - "What aspects of our collaboration could we improve?"
   - "How can we better support your priorities?"

Notes:

- Encourage coachees to maintain a neutral tone and avoid evaluative language.
- Remind them that feedback is a two-way process that strengthens relationships

Useful resources:

- Stone, D., Patton, B. and Heen, S. (2010) *Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss What Matters Most*. New York: Penguin.
- Centre for Creative Leadership (2019) *Communication Skills for Leaders*. Greensboro: CCL Press.

Title: RACI Model in communication

Purpose: help young changemakers clarify roles and responsibilities in team tasks and stakeholder engagement, ensuring efficient communication and preventing misunderstandings.

Type of tool: project communication and role-definition tool.

Expertise level required from the coach: beginner to intermediate.

Stage in the coachee's process: during project planning, task distribution, and preparation for stakeholder interactions.

Instructions for coaches:

1. Introduce the RACI categories:
   - Responsible (R): executes the task.
   - Accountable (A): ensures completion and approves final outputs.-
   - Consulted (C): provides input or expertise.
   - Informed (I): must be kept aware of progress and decisions.

Guide coachees in applying the model:

1. Identify the task: choose a concrete group task (e.g., planning an event, contacting stakeholders, coordinating logistics).
2. Assign each RACI role: support the group in determining who will take on each role, ensuring there is always *one Accountable* person.
3. Discuss responsibilities: clarify what each role means for day-to-day actions and communication.
4. Create a RACI chart: have coachees record the roles for transparency and easy reference.
5. Practise communication using the RACI chart: role-play how team members would communicate with stakeholders depending on their assigned role.

Example of direct communication to the Council Representative (Informed Role):

> *Subject: Update on Tree-Planting Event Logistics*
>
> *Dear [Council Representative],*
>
> *I'm reaching out to keep you updated on the progress of our upcoming tree-planting event. Jamie, our Event Coordinator, has submitted the permit request and will follow up shortly to confirm its approval. We've also considered feedback from previous events and have made adjustments to align with community preferences.*
>
> *If you have any questions or suggestions, feel free to reach out. We'll keep you informed as we finalize the details.*
>
> *Best regards,*
>
> *Nico*
>
> *Team Leader, Green Future*

Benefits of the RACI Model in stakeholder communication:

- Clarifies roles: avoids confusion over responsibilities.
- Streamlines communication: ensures stakeholders receive the right information without overwhelming them.
- Supports proactive engagement: keeps stakeholders informed, fostering trust and collaboration.

By using the RACI model, you can help coachees structure their communication with stakeholders effectively, ensuring smoother project execution.

Notes:

- Encourage teams to revisit the RACI chart when tasks evolve.
- RACI prevents confusion and supports smoother stakeholder communication.

Useful resources:

- Bryson, J. (2018) *Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Heath, R. (2013) *Strategic Issues Management*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE.
- Lencioni, P. (2002) *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Reflection

Effective stakeholder communication is the foundation of meaningful collaboration and impactful change. As youth workers, your role is to empower coachees to build relationships grounded in trust, respect, and shared goals. By mastering advanced communication strategies, you equip them to navigate complex stakeholder dynamics with confidence and professionalism.

Every interaction is an opportunity to strengthen connections, align visions, and inspire action. Through thoughtful dialogue, transparent feedback, and creative problem-solving, you help foster authentic communication that amplifies the impact of your initiatives.

Tips & tricks

Anticipate and address stakeholder concerns proactively

Tip: preemptively address potential concerns by considering stakeholder viewpoints during planning phases. This helps mitigate resistance and builds confidence in your project.

Trick: conduct stakeholder scenario analysis sessions using templates in tools like Lucidchart. Simulate potential objections and prepare responses or adjustments accordingly.

Leverage storytelling to build connection

Tip: use storytelling to communicate your project's vision and impact in a relatable way. Stories resonate emotionally, helping stakeholders connect with your mission on a deeper level.

Trick: create a repository of success stories or case studies and share them during meetings or presentations.

Simplify complex data for stakeholders

Tip: presenting data in a simplified, visually engaging manner ensures stakeholders can easily grasp key insights and make informed decisions.

Trick: use tools like Tableau or Infogram to create interactive dashboards and visual reports that break down complex data into clear, actionable insights.

Establish a stakeholder communication calendar

Tip: consistent, scheduled communication prevents stakeholders from feeling out of the loop and builds trust.

Trick: use calendar tools like Asana or Google Calendar to schedule regular updates, meetings, and milestone reviews. Share the calendar with stakeholders to keep everyone aligned.

Warning signs

As a coach, you may need to provide additional guidance if you notice that your stakeholders:

- Are confused about their roles: they don't understand their responsibilities or how they fit into the project, leading to disengagement or ineffective contributions.
- Are out of touch with communication: they rarely receive updates or feedback, resulting in a lack of involvement or diminished interest.
- Show misaligned interests: their activities or feedback do not align with the project's goals or their own interests, causing frustration or lack of motivation.
- Struggle with project goals: they seem unclear about the project's goals or expected outcomes, which can lead to misalignment and confusion.

- Resist or ignore feedback: they are dismissive of feedback or unwilling to engage in discussions, impacting collaboration and progress.
- Feel overlooked: smaller or less vocal stakeholders are not given adequate attention, leading to gaps in support and potential issues.

DO's	DON'Ts
✓ Ensure that even those stakeholders who seem less influential or have minimal impact are acknowledged and engaged. ✓ Adapt your tone and messaging to match each stakeholder's communication preferences and professional culture. ✓ Set clear expectations around communication timelines and response times to manage workflow and avoid unnecessary pressure. ✓ Prepare answers to potential queries in advance to demonstrate readiness and competence during discussions.	✗ Avoid skipping foundational information—ensure all stakeholders understand key project aspects regardless of their prior involvement. ✗ Address time-sensitive questions promptly to maintain trust and project momentum. ✗ Maintain realistic commitments to avoid eroding credibility if expectations aren't met. ✗ Avoid sending impersonal or standardized updates that fail to acknowledge the stakeholder's specific role or contribution.

8.4 Leadership

Purpose isn't just about what young people do; it's about the deeper reasons behind their actions and the mindset they bring to their work. Different situations require different leadership styles, just as communication styles must adapt to context and needs. There is no "perfect" style—effective leadership comes from adjusting approaches based on the circumstances. The five primary leadership styles—Authoritarian, Participative, Delegative, Transactional, and Transformational—each have unique strengths. An Authoritarian style works well in crises, a Participative approach fosters collaboration, Delegative leadership encourages autonomy, Transactional focuses on structure and rewards, and Transformational inspires long-term vision.

Understanding these styles helps youth workers guide young changemakers in developing flexible, intentional, and supportive leadership practices.

Educate yourself first

Before helping young changemakers explore leadership styles, it is essential to build your own understanding of leadership theories and evidence-based practices. Knowing how leadership behaviours influence group dynamics, motivation, and collaboration allows you to respond thoughtfully to the needs of each young person.

The following resources provide clear, accessible foundations for strengthening your leadership knowledge:

- Northouse, P. (2016). *Leadership: Theory and Practice*. SAGE Publications.
  A widely used introduction to leadership theory, offering clear explanations of major leadership models and their practical applications—ideal for youth workers who want a solid grounding in leadership principles.
- Kouzes, J.M. & Posner, B.Z. (2022). *The Leadership Challenge: How to Make Extraordinary Things Happen in Organizations* (7th ed.). Wiley.
  A comprehensive and research-based guide presenting five core practices of exemplary leadership, offering practical tools to inspire, motivate, and engage teams effectively.

Case study: Shifting from negative to supportive leadership

Context:

During a coaching session with Green Vision, a youth-led environmental group, it became clear that their leader, Tom, was struggling with a negative leadership style. Tom's habit of dismissing ideas and offering critical feedback like, "This won't work; we've failed before," had led to a noticeable decline in team morale and participation.

Intervention:

Recognizing the impact this situation was having on the group, the coach stepped in to address the issue. They organized feedback sessions with Tom, helping him see how his approach was affecting the team. By guiding him through leadership training, the coach helped Tom shift to a more supportive and encouraging style. He learned how to foster a positive environment, which, in turn, allowed the team to collaborate more effectively.

Outcome:

As a result, Green Vision began to thrive. The team showed renewed enthusiasm for their environmental projects, morale improved, and they worked together with greater cohesion. This change in leadership not only enhanced engagement but also boosted the overall effectiveness of their initiatives.

Tools

As a coach, part of your role is to help young people develop the skills they need to become effective leaders. Leadership isn't one-size-fits-all, and every leader will face different challenges that require different approaches. By guiding your coachees to explore different leadership styles, you'll help them understand that leadership is adaptable, and the key is knowing how to choose the right style for the situation. Below are some essential tools through which you can help your coachees develop positive leadership.

Title: Awareness

Purpose: help young changemakers strengthen self-awareness as the foundation of responsible and ethical leadership.

Type of tool: self-reflection and personal development tool.

Expertise level required from the coach: beginner.

Stage in the coachee's process: at the start of coaching and throughout the leadership development journey.

Instructions for coaches:

Self-awareness is essential for effective leadership. Encourage coachees to reflect regularly on their actions and decisions to ensure alignment with their core values. You can guide them through the following practices:

- Daily reflection: ask coachees to spend five minutes at the end of each day reflecting on how their actions aligned with their values and long-term goals. This helps them stay connected to their purpose.
- Values check: before making important decisions, encourage coachees to ask themselves whether their choices support their ethical beliefs and long-term vision. This helps keep their leadership grounded in integrity.
- Mindful action: guide coachees to take actions that reflect their moral compass. Remind them to avoid behaviours that conflict with their principles. A leader's actions should always express their values.

By practising consistent reflection and awareness, coachees learn to lead in a way that is authentic and aligned with who they want to be.

Note:

- Some young people may need support identifying their core values; consider pairing this activity with a values-mapping exercise.

Useful resources:

- Hackman, J.R. (2002). *Leading Teams: Setting the Stage for Great Performances*. Publisher: Harvard Business Review Press.
- Provides practical guidance on how leaders can structure and support effective teamwork.
- Ibarra, H. (2015). *Act Like a Leader, Think Like a Leader*. Publisher: Harvard Business Review Press. Offers actionable strategies for developing adaptable and confident leadership behaviours.

Title: Respect in leadership

Purpose: help young changemakers practise respectful communication and behaviour as key elements of positive leadership.

Type of tool: interpersonal communication and relational-skills tool.

Expertise level required from the coach: beginner to intermediate.

Stage in the coachee's process: useful during team-building, when establishing group norms, or when addressing early signs of tension or exclusion.

Instructions for coaches:

Respect is central to effective leadership. Leaders who demonstrate respect build trust, cooperation, and inclusion. Help coachees practise respect through the following:

1. Active listening: encourage coachees to listen without interrupting or pre-judging. When leaders listen actively, they demonstrate that they value the perspectives and input of others.
2. Equal treatment: encourage coachees to treat all team members fairly and impartially, regardless of background or opinion. Leaders must ensure that everyone feels respected and included.
3. Acknowledging contributions: guide coachees to recognise the efforts and unique strengths of each team member. Regular appreciation fosters gratitude, motivation, and positive team relationships.

These practices help young leaders build an environment of trust, collaboration, and mutual respect.

Note:

- Encourage coachees to use inclusive language and avoid assumptions when interacting with peers.

Useful resources:

- Senge, P. (2006) *The Fifth Discipline* [book].
  Provides practical insights into systems thinking and collaborative leadership, helping young leaders understand how respectful behaviour strengthens group dynamics.
- Brown, B. (2012) *The Power of Vulnerability* [TED Talk].
  Explores how empathy and authenticity improve communication and trust, supporting young leaders in developing respectful relationships.

Title: Vision

Purpose: help young changemakers develop and communicate a clear and inspiring vision for their projects or initiatives.

Type of tool: vision-building and communication tool.

Expertise level required from the coach: intermediate.

Stage in the coachee's process: ideally during early project planning and whenever team alignment is needed.

Instructions for coaches:

A clear vision guides leaders and inspires teams. Support your coachees in developing a strong, motivating vision through:

1. Goal setting: teach coachees to break down long-term goals into smaller, achievable steps. This makes the vision actionable and helps maintain focus.
2. Communicating the vision: encourage coachees to regularly share the bigger picture with their team. Consistent reminders keep everyone aligned and motivated, reinforcing how each person's work contributes to the overall purpose.
3. Adaptability: help coachees understand that strategies may need to shift as circumstances change. Flexibility ensures that the vision remains relevant and achievable.

By defining and communicating a clear vision, young leaders empower their teams to work with direction and shared purpose.

Note:

- Remind coachees that a vision must be simple enough to explain in one or two sentences.

Useful resources:

- Duckworth, A. (2013) *Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance* [TED Talk].
  Explores how long-term vision, persistence and passion help young leaders stay focused and committed to their goals.
- Levi, D. (2016) *Group Dynamics for Teams* [book].
  Provides practical insights on team motivation, shared goals and collaborative vision-building—useful for young leaders guiding group projects.

Reflection

Great leadership is about more than taking charge—*it's about creating a vision that inspires others and fostering an environment where every voice matters*. In your role as a coach, you have the unique opportunity to shape the next generation of leaders by helping young people discover their strengths, embrace challenges, and build meaningful connections.

By encouraging self-reflection, promoting empathy, and modeling resilience, you empower young leaders to grow not only in their confidence but also in their ability to lead with authenticity and purpose. Leadership is a continuous journey of learning and growth, and each step taken enriches both the individual and their community.

Your efforts in cultivating leadership skills will ripple outward, creating teams and communities where collaboration thrives and impactful change becomes a collective achievement.

Tips and tricks

Define your leadership purpose

Tip: help your coachees align their actions with a clear sense of purpose that guides their leadership journey.

Trick: encourage them to reflect on their core values regularly to stay grounded. You can introduce tools like journaling or digital platforms like Notion to document their thoughts and track their growth.

Build trust with your team

Tip: trust is key to effective leadership—help your coachees understand the importance of investing in it continuously..

Trick: teach them to practice transparency by sharing regular updates with their team and being open about challenges. This fosters trust and makes their leadership more authentic and approachable

Embrace emotional intelligence

Tip: self-awareness and empathy are critical for connecting with a team—guide your coachees in cultivating emotional intelligence.

Trick: suggest regular emotional intelligence assessments to identify areas for growth. Incorporating mindfulness practices into their routine can help improve emotional regulation, allowing them to lead with calm and understanding.

Motivate through empowerment

Tip: empowering their team is a powerful leadership tool—encourage your coachees to give autonomy and recognize contributions.

Trick: show them how to set SMART goals in collaboration with their team. By regularly reviewing progress and offering constructive feedback, they can keep motivation high and help others succeed.

Lead with integrity

Tip: consistency between values and actions builds credibility and trust—help your coachees understand the importance of integrity in leadership.

Trick: encourage them to create a personal code of ethics and review it regularly to ensure their decisions reflect their core values. Suggest they share these ethical principles with their team to foster a culture of trust and accountability.

Warning signs

As a youth worker or coach, you may need to step in if you notice that a leader:

- Lacks a clear sense of purpose and frequently changes direction, causing confusion within the team.
- Fails to establish trust with team members, leading to low morale and high turnover.
- Shows low emotional intelligence, resulting in frequent conflicts or misunderstandings.
- Relies too heavily on control, stifling creativity and innovation within the team.
- Neglects the importance of ethical behavior, leading to a lack of credibility and respect.

DO's	DON'Ts
✔ Encourage group members to participate in decisions, ensuring everyone's voice is heard and valued. ✔ Delegate tasks and responsibilities that align with each member's strengths, boosting their confidence and skills ✔ Create a safe space where all group members feel comfortable expressing their thoughts and opinions. ✔ Demonstrate the values and behaviors you wish to see in the group, such as honesty, empathy, and accountability.	✘ Don't shy away from difficult conversations: address issues directly and with empathy. ✘ Avoid micromanaging: trust your team to take ownership of their tasks. ✘ Never dismiss or ignore the ideas and opinions of others, even if they differ from your own. ✘ Avoid playing favorites: treat all team members with fairness and equity.

8.5 Conflict resolution / nonviolent communication

Nonviolent Communication (NVC), developed by psychologist Marshall Rosenberg, is a powerful framework designed to foster empathy, understanding, and connection. Its structured approach allows individuals to navigate difficult conversations and resolve conflicts constructively. Alongside NVC, conflict resolution techniques provide complementary strategies for addressing disputes, identifying root causes, and fostering sustainable solutions. Together, these methods not only reduce tension but also enhance relationships and promote harmonious environments.

For coaches, NVC and conflict resolution are more than just tools—they are transformative strategies that foster personal growth and group cohesion. By reframing conflicts as opportunities for learning and connection, youth workers can empower young people to develop emotional resilience, strengthen group dynamics, and collaboratively address challenges. This dual approach equips youth workers with the skills to turn conflicts into catalysts for growth and lasting understanding.

Educate yourself first

Before introducing young people to Nonviolent Communication (NVC) or conflict resolution, it is important to familiarise yourself with the concepts and methods behind these approaches. A solid understanding will help you model the skills you want coachees to develop and choose the right tools for each situation.

- Rosenberg, M.B. (2015). *Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life*. PuddleDancer Press. Provides a clear introduction to the NVC framework with practical examples for applying empathy-based communication in everyday conflicts.
- Fisher, R., Ury, W., & Patton, B. (2011). *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In*. Penguin Books.Presents a practical model for interest-based negotiation, supporting young people in reaching fair and sustainable agreements.
- Galtung, J. (2000). *Conflict Transformation by Peaceful Means: The TRANSCEND Method*. United Nations. Offers an accessible guide to conflict analysis and transformation, helping coaches lead groups toward constructive, long-term solutions.

Case study: applying NVC in youth conflict resolution

Context: During a coaching session, a coach observed a youth group facing frequent internal conflicts. Members often argued and interrupted each other, leading to frustration and reduced participation. The coach recognized the need to intervene and use Nonviolent Communication (NVC) to help the group resolve their issues.

Intervention:

1. Observation: the coach started by observing the group's interactions without judgment. They noted behaviors like interrupting and speaking over one another, which contributed to the rising tension.
2. Addressing feelings: next, the coach addressed the group openly, expressing their concern: "I've noticed some tension in our meetings, and it worries me that these disagreements are affecting our teamwork." This helped everyone acknowledge the discomfort.
3. Identifying needs: the coach guided the group to identify underlying needs, highlighting the desire for respect and understanding. They said: "It seems we all want to feel heard and valued, and that might be contributing to our frustration."
4. Making a request: finally, the coach suggested practicing active listening during discussions. "Can we commit to allowing each person to speak without interruption and to use the NVC framework?" This encouraged a shift toward more respectful communication.

Outcome:

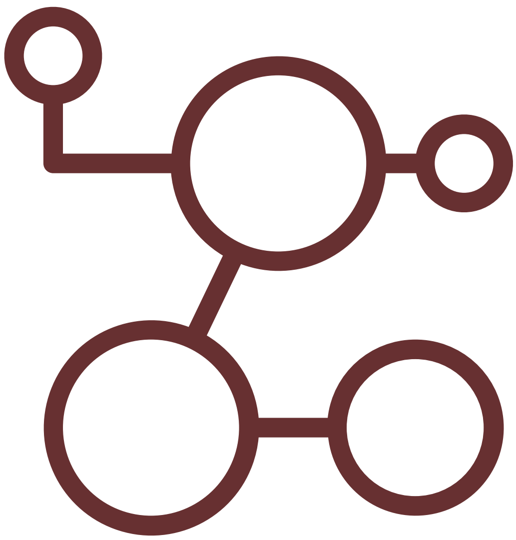
The group learned to express their feelings constructively and fostered a more supportive dynamic. They transformed conflicts into opportunities for growth, improving their collaboration and focus on shared goals.

Tools

Conflict is an inevitable part of life. Whether in personal relationships, professional settings, or youth groups, disagreements and misunderstandings will arise. These conflicts often stem from differing perspectives, needs, or values. While conflicts themselves are unavoidable, how we choose to respond to them is within our control.

For youth workers, this means helping young people understand that conflict is not inherently negative. Instead, it can serve as a powerful catalyst for personal growth, deeper understanding, and stronger relationships. The key lies in equipping individuals with the tools to navigate conflicts constructively, transforming tension into an opportunity for learning and connection.

The following tools provide structured approaches to help youth workers guide their coachees in resolving conflicts effectively and sustainably. Each tool includes real-life examples to illustrate how these exercises can be applied effectively in youth group settings.



Title: Conflict mapping

Purpose: help coachees visualise and understand the dynamics of a conflict, including the parties involved, their relationships, and the core issues at stake.

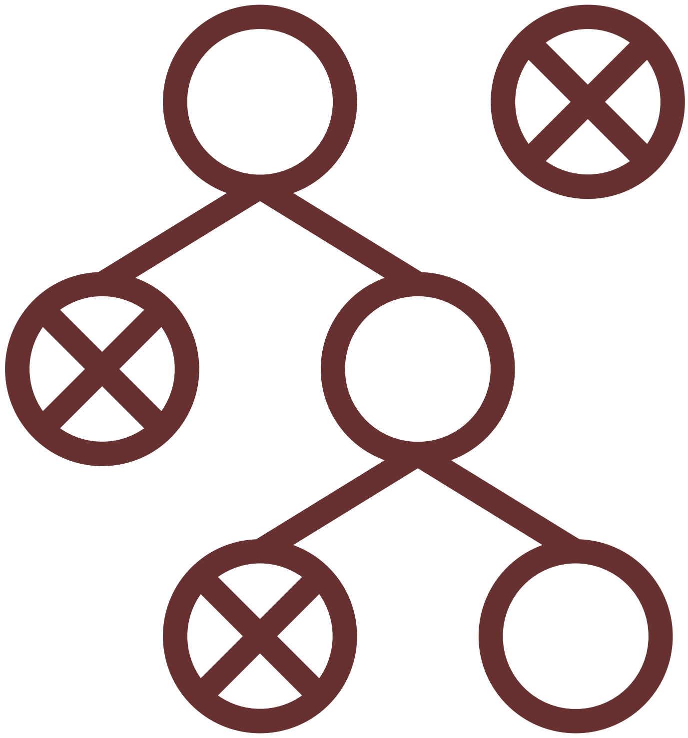
Type of tool: structured reflection and visual analysis tool.

Expertise level required from the coach: beginner to intermediate.

Stage in the coachee's process: early on in conflict exploration, when understanding perspectives and relationships is necessary.

Instructions for coaches:

1. Identify the parties: ask your coachees to list everyone involved in the conflict, including direct participants and those indirectly affected.
2. Map the relationships: using a large sheet of paper or a digital tool (e.g., Miro), coachees draw circles representing each party. Arrows between circles show relationships, labelled as cooperative, neutral, or tense.
3. Highlight the issues: coachees write down the key points of disagreement near each arrow, such as "task distribution" or "communication style."



Real-life example:

Tension arises between two youth group members, Sarah and Alex, over task responsibilities. Other group members, while not directly involved, feel the strain during meetings. During a group discussion, the coach asks:

- "What specific behaviours have you noticed contributing to the tension?"
- "How do each of you view the roles and responsibilities in this project?"

The visual map helps Sarah and Alex see how their conflict impacts the group and opens the door for more constructive dialogue.

Notes:

- Encourage coachees to be descriptive, not accusatory, when mapping behaviours or issues.
- Keep maps confidential unless participants choose to share them.

Useful resources:

- Search for Common Ground (2020) *Conflict Analysis Guide* [online].
  Provides clear, practical steps for analysing actors, relationships, power dynamics and conflict drivers—useful for supporting young people in visual mapping and structured reflection.
- Saferworld (n.d.) *Conflict Analysis Guide* [online].
  Offers a step-by-step framework for mapping stakeholders, identifying sources of tension and examining relational patterns in conflict situations. Available at: saferworld-global.org/downloads/conflict-analysis-guide (Accessed: 28/11/2025).

Title: Perspective reframing

Purpose: help coachees shift their focus from rigid positions to underlying interests, fostering empathy and understanding.

Type of tool: cognitive reframing and conflict interpretation tool.

Expertise level required from the coach: intermediate.

Stage in the coachee's process: whenever coachees become stuck in their positions or assumptions.

Instructions for coaches

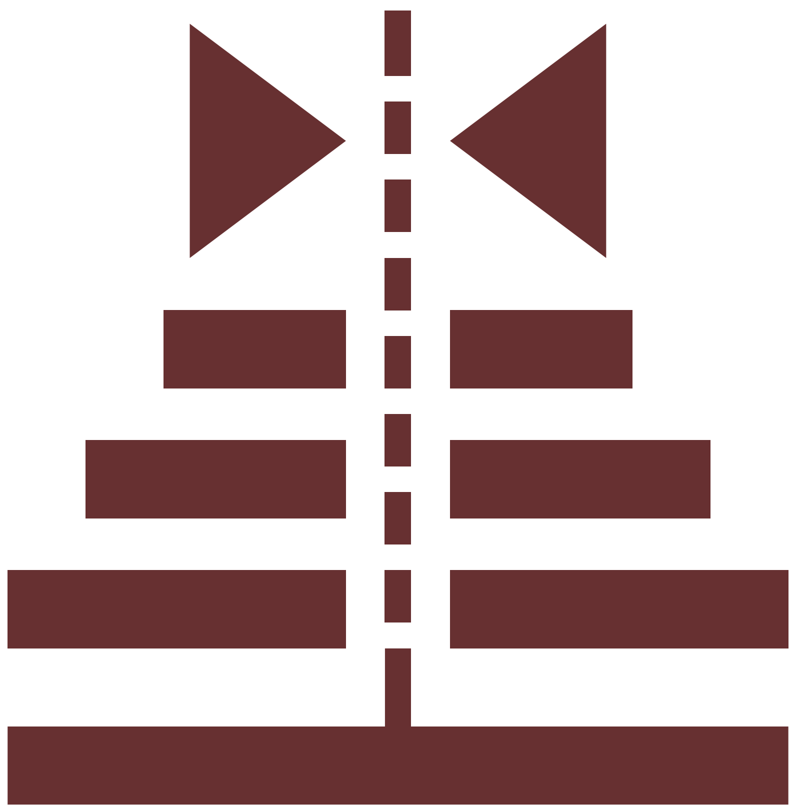
1. Present the conflict: ask each party to share their position.
   Example: "I always end up doing the hardest parts, and it's not fair."
2. Reframe positions as interests: guide coachees to identify the unmet needs or interests behind their statements.
   Position: "I don't want to do all the hard work."
   Interest: "I want fair workload distribution."
3. Explore shared values
   Highlight common goals, such as group success or team harmony.

Notes:

- Reframing helps reduce emotional charge and supports problem-solving.
- Keep the conversation curiosity-driven.

Useful resources:

- Harvard Negotiation Project (n.d.) *Interests vs. Positions* [online].
  Short article explaining the difference between surface positions and underlying interests—an essential concept for effective reframing and collaborative problem-solving. Available at: Program on Negotiation, Harvard Law School (Accessed: 28/11/2025).
- MindTools (n.d.) *Perceptual Positions* [online].
  Guide introducing a simple technique to explore a conflict from multiple viewpoints, helping reduce emotional tension and increase empathy. Available at: MindTools (Accessed: 28/11/2025).



Title: Constructive dialogue framework

Purpose: structure conversations for productive and respectful conflict resolution.

Type of tool: dialogue facilitation framework.

Expertise level required from the coach: intermediate.

Stage in the coachee's process: whenever two or more coachees need to re-establish understanding and communicate needs clearly.

Instructions for coaches:

1. Set the ground rules: establish norms such as no interruptions, active listening, and confidentiality.
2. Structured sharing: each party speaks using "I" statements.
   Example: "I feel frustrated when I'm not consulted about decisions."
3. Facilitate clarification and reflection: ask listeners to paraphrase for accuracy:
   "What I'm hearing is that you want to be more involved in decision-making. Is that correct?"
4. Collaborative problem-solving: once mutual understanding is established, co-create actionable solutions

Note:

- Ensure emotional safety before beginning the activity.

Useful resources:

- DUF – The Danish Youth Council (n.d.) *The Dialogue Handbook: The Art of Conducting a Dialogue and Facilitating Dialogue Workshops* [online].
  A practical handbook offering clear structures, dialogue principles and facilitation techniques to support respectful, solution-focused conversations. Available at: DUF – The Danish Youth Council (Accessed: 28/11/2025).
- IREX (n.d.) *Conflict Resolution and Peer Mediation Toolkit* [online].
  Toolkit providing step-by-step guidance on mediating conflicts, practising active listening and facilitating constructive dialogue among youth groups. Available at: IREX (Accessed: 28/11/2025).

Reflection

Conflict is an inevitable part of human interaction, but it doesn't have to be destructive. When approached with the right tools and mindset, conflict becomes a valuable opportunity for growth, understanding, and stronger relationships. As youth workers, your role is to guide young people in embracing conflict as a learning experience and equipping them with the skills to navigate disagreements constructively.

By fostering empathy, promoting open dialogue, and encouraging collaborative problem-solving, you help your coachees build resilience and confidence. These are not just skills for resolving conflicts—they are life skills that empower individuals to contribute positively to their communities and beyond. Ultimately, the ability to transform conflict into connection is a cornerstone of building a more understanding and compassionate world.

Tips & tricks

Start with self-empathy

Tip: acknowledge your emotions before engaging in conversation.

Trick: breathe deeply and ask, “What am I feeling and what do I need?” before meetings.

Regularly check-in with your group

Tip: regularly check how everyone is feeling.

Trick: start meetings with a quick “emotional check-in,” asking for a word that describes their current state.

Use nonviolent language

Tip: choose neutral and constructive words.

Trick: replace “should” with “could,” and practice rephrasing your common phrases more kindly.

Observe without evaluating

Tip: describe observations factually, without judgment.

Trick: write down your observations and review them to remove any evaluative language.

Develop a “needs inventory”

Tip: help others identify and express their needs clearly.

Trick: create and refer to a list of common needs (e.g., respect, autonomy) during conflicts.

Schedule regular reflection sessions

Tip: regularly review and improve communication practices.

Trick: set aside time each week for personal or group reflection and feedback.

Warning signs

As a coach or youth worker, you may need to revisit or intensify your NVC efforts if:

- Participants struggle with expressing needs: if group members often resort to blaming or aggressive language, more practice in identifying and articulating needs may be necessary.
- Lack of empathy: if empathy seems low within the group, with members often dismissing each other’s feelings, focus on building listening skills.
- Requests are misinterpreted: when requests are often met with resistance or confusion, it may indicate a need for clearer communication practices.

DO's	DON'Ts
✔ Encourage coachees to rephrase what others have said to ensure mutual understanding before responding.	✘ Don't confuse NVC with passivity: NVC isn't about avoiding conflict but addressing it with respect and clarity.
✔ Create a shared vocabulary for needs.	✘ Discourage coachees from pushing for quick resolutions; allow time for all voices and feelings to be fully expressed and heard.
✔ Recognize and celebrate instances where coachees effectively use NVC, reinforcing its positive impact.	✘ Don't assume NVC will resolve all conflicts: NVC it doesn't guarantee that all conflicts will be resolved easily or immediately.
✔ Promote the use of "I feel" or "I need" statements to help coachees express their emotions and needs without placing blame.	
✔ Guide the group to prioritize understanding each other's emotions and needs before trying to solve any issues.	

8.6 Conclusion

As a youth worker or coach, your role in fostering effective communication and positive leadership is crucial to the development and empowerment of young people. By honing skills such as active listening, assertive dialogue, and thoughtful engagement, you create an environment where youth feel genuinely heard and valued. This commitment to clear, empathetic communication not only enhances relationships but also inspires confidence and drives meaningful participation. As role models and mentors, your actions and attitudes set a standard for the young people you work with, guiding them towards their own potential. Your ability to recognize and nurture their strengths is key to helping them flourish and succeed. Every interaction holds the potential to build trust, drive progress, and unlock the transformative power of their potential, reinforcing the vital role you play in shaping their future.

8.7 Resources referenced in this chapter

Books

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Bryson, J.M. & Alston, F.K. (2011) *Creating Your Strategic Plan*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

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[Author unknown] (n.d.) *Youth Voice & Participation Handbook* [online]. Available at: https://share.google/Al0d4DG9IpC2RwaqX (Accessed: 28/11/2025).

YouTube / video resources

Brown, B. (2012) *The Power of Vulnerability* [YouTube]. TEDxHouston.

Duckworth, A. (2013) *Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance* [YouTube]. TED Talks.

8.8 Additional recommended resources

The following resources offer further insights into communication, conflict resolution, leadership, youth participation and stakeholder engagement. Coaches may consult them to deepen understanding and support young changemakers more effectively.

Books

The following resources offer further insights into communication, conflict resolution, leadership, youth participation and stakeholder engagement. Coaches may consult them to deepen understanding and support young changemakers more effectively.

Bungay Stanier, M. (2016) *The Coaching Habit*. Toronto: Box of Crayons Press.

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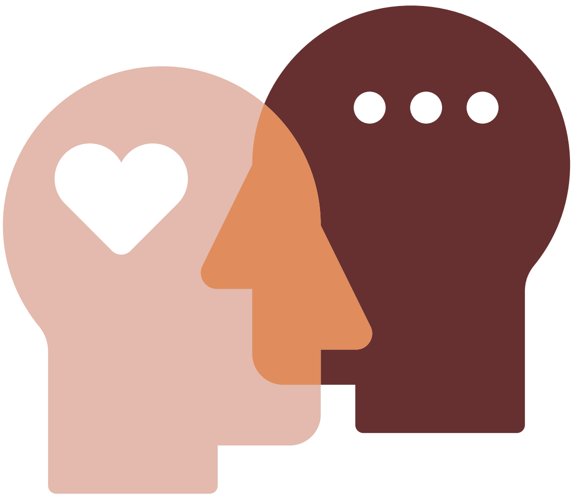

9.

Mental wellbeing

9.1 Introduction

A strong mental health foundation empowers individuals to cope with stress, develop resilience, and foster healthy relationships. It directly impacts academic performance, career aspirations, and overall quality of life. By investing in mental health early on, we equip young people with essential skills for managing emotions, making informed decisions, and seeking support when needed. Additionally, prioritizing mental well-being promotes self-awareness, confidence, and a positive self-image, laying the groundwork for a fulfilling and successful future.

As guides and mentors, we assist young people in navigating mental health challenges, developing coping strategies, and cultivating resilience. We create safe and supportive environments for youth to explore and address their mental health needs. Through workshops, seminars, and discussions on mental health and mental self-care topics, we provide valuable knowledge and skills to empower young people in effectively managing their mental well-being.

Interventions

This module has been designed to be flexible and should be tailored to meet the needs of the young people based on their background, diversity and personal experiences, as well as compliment the facilitator's own style of practice. It is acknowledged that every facilitator will bring with them their own skills and resources from which they can draw on when working with young people.

This module is designed as a tool to aid young individuals in cultivating essential skills for improved mental well-being. However, it is important to note that this resource is not a replacement for professional assistance. In cases of significant distress or mental health concerns, it is crucial to seek support from mental health professionals or institutions.

Learning objectives:

- How to foster self-awareness, self-compassion, and the ability to articulate mental well-being needs.
- Empower young changemakers to recognize their abilities and achievements, fostering self-confidence.
- Encourage self-reflection and constructive feedback to build a resilient mindset and a positive self-image.
- Equip young changemakers with the knowledge and tools to effectively manage stress and prevent burnout.
- Help coachees build resilience by integrating consistent stress management practices into their daily lives.

9.2 Mental wellbeing needs for young changemakers

Young changemakers face unique mental well-being challenges as they navigate both the demands of driving social impact and the complexities of finding their place in a rapidly changing world. To sustain their efforts, they must develop emotional resilience, practice regular self-care, and build strong support networks of family, friends, and mentors. Mindfulness and stress management are crucial for maintaining emotional balance and preventing burnout. Ensuring their work aligns with personal values fosters motivation, while self-awareness and self-compassion are essential for maintaining a positive self-image and overall mental well-being.

Educate yourself first

Before diving into the tools and strategies to support mental well-being for young changemakers, it's crucial to build a solid foundation of knowledge. Understanding the complexities of mental health, the unique challenges faced by young individuals and the best practices for resilience and self-care will empower you to deliver the right support in the right context. In this section, you'll find a list of resources—books, articles, and online courses—that provide essential insights into mental well-being. These resources will equip you with the understanding needed to effectively guide young changemakers on their journey, ensuring they have the tools to thrive while making a difference:

- Wellbeing Project (n.d.) *Wellbeing Project*
  On The Wellbeing Project website, you can explore a wealth of resources and insights designed to support the mental health and personal well-being of changemakers.
- YoungMinds (n.d.) *How to have a conversation with young people about mental health*
  Check out the practical tips in How to have a conversation with young people about mental health article on how to effectively have conversations with young people about mental health.
- Healthwatch England (2016) *Healthwatch Rutland - Young people's views of mental health and wellbeing*
  In this YouTube video ,you'll gain insights into how young people perceive mental health and well-being, offering a perspective that can help deepen your understanding of their challenges and needs.
- The Possibilists (2023) *Report 2023*
  On The Possibilists website's Report, you'll find the 2023 study that offers insights into the experiences, challenges, and mental well-being of young changemakers worldwide, providing valuable data and perspectives to better understand and support their unique needs.

Case study: the benefits of mental well-being practices

Context:

A group of young changemakers participated in a one-month program designed to build resilience and enhance mental well-being. Throughout the program, they learned tools like mindfulness, self-compassion, and effective stress management.

Intervention:

The facilitators encouraged each participant to create a personal well-being plan, integrating these tools into their daily routines. They also engaged in regular group discussions and self-reflection activities to track progress.

Outcome:

At the end of the program, the participants reported increased self-awareness, better emotional regulation, and a stronger sense of self-confidence. Many felt more equipped to handle challenges and were able to sustain their changemaking efforts over the long term, proving that consistent mental well-being practices lead to lasting success.

Tools

Title: Group discussions

Purpose: group discussions are designed to help young changemakers identify and articulate their mental well-being needs by sharing experiences and challenges in a supportive environment. This can reveal common mental well-being needs.

Type of tool: reflective and collaborative exercise.

Expertise level required from the coach: intermediate.

Stage in the coachee's process: awareness building and needs assessment.

Instructions for coaches:

1. Set the tone: create a safe and open environment where participants feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and experiences without judgment.
2. Facilitate open dialogue: encourage each participant to share their challenges and how they impact their mental well-being. Ensure everyone has an opportunity to speak.
3. Identify common themes: as the discussion progresses, help the group identify common challenges or stressors, which can highlight collective needs.
4. Encourage peer support: foster a supportive atmosphere where participants can offer advice, share coping strategies, and provide encouragement to one another.
5. Reflect and summarize: after the discussion, summarize the key points and common themes, and encourage participants to reflect on what they've learned about their own and others' mental well-being needs.

Notes:

- Gently encourage quieter participants to share their thoughts, while ensuring that more vocal participants don't dominate the conversation.
- If the discussion reveals unexpected themes or challenges, be flexible in your approach, and consider revisiting these topics in future sessions.
- Remind participants that what is shared in the group remains confidential, which helps build trust and openness.

Useful resources:

- Techniques for Leading Group Discussions (Community Tool Box, no date) offer practical strategies for creating an inclusive and supportive environment, ensuring that all participants feel comfortable sharing their experiences.

Title: Self-reflection journals

Purpose: self-reflection journals can help young changemakers explore and understand their thoughts, emotions, and experiences, promoting self-awareness and emotional intelligence. Regular journaling encourages reflection on personal growth and mental well-being needs.

Type of tool: reflective writing exercise.

Expertise level required from the coach: basic.

Stage in the coachee's process: awareness building and emotional processing.

Instructions for coaches:

1. Introduce the concept: explain the purpose of self-reflection and how regular journaling can enhance self-awareness and mental well-being.
2. Provide prompts: offer a variety of prompts that encourage the coachee to explore their feelings, challenges, successes, and goals.
3. Encourage consistency: suggest that the coachee journal regularly, whether daily or weekly, to build a habit of self-reflection.

4. Review and discuss: periodically review journal entries with the coachee (with their consent) to identify patterns, challenges, and areas of growth.
5. Adapt prompts as needed: adjust the prompts based on the coachee's progress and evolving needs, ensuring the journaling process remains relevant and meaningful.

Notes:

- Ensure that the coachee understands that their journal is a private space. Only review entries if they willingly share them with you.
- Pay attention to any recurring themes of distress, anxiety, or negativity in the journals. These may indicate areas where additional support or intervention is needed.
- While it's important to address challenges, also guide the coachee to reflect on their strengths, achievements, and moments of joy to maintain a balanced perspective.

Useful resources:

- Schmidt, J. (2015) *The Value of Self-Reflection*
  The value of self-reflection TEDx talk and how to break our auto-pilot cycle and develop a deeper understanding of life.

Title: Vision for well-being exercise

Purpose: to help young changemakers create a holistic vision for their mental and emotional well-being, integrating self-care and balanced living into their changemaking efforts.

Type of tool: creative visualization and goal-setting exercise.

Expertise level required from the coach: intermediate.

Stage in the coachee's process: Goal-setting and maintaining well-being.

Instructions for coaches:

1. Introduce the concept: begin by discussing the importance of a holistic approach to goal-setting, emphasizing that mental and emotional well-being are just as crucial as career goals. Explain how integrating well-being into their vision can support sustained success and fulfillment in their changemaking efforts.
2. Create the vision board: provide materials (poster boards, magazines, markers, etc.) or suggest digital tools for creating a vision board. Guide the coachees to think about how they want to feel in their daily lives, the self-care practices they need to maintain, and the key relationships they wish to nurture. Encourage them to include images, words, and symbols that represent their well-being goals.
3. Encourage reflection: set up regular check-ins where coachees revisit their vision boards. Discuss their progress and any adjustments they might need to make to stay aligned with their well-being goals. Remind them that this board is a dynamic tool, meant to evolve as their needs and circumstances change.

Notes:

- Pay attention to how coachees react during the exercise. If someone becomes emotional or hesitant, it may indicate deeper issues that need to be addressed or explored further.
- Help coachees strike a balance between their aspirations and what is realistically achievable, so their vision board remains motivating rather than overwhelming.
- Be flexible with the process. Some coachees may need more time or different materials to fully express their vision, so be prepared to adjust the exercise to suit their needs.

Useful resources:

- Calm (n.d.) *Mental health goals [online]*.
  Mental health goals provides practical insights on setting and achieving mental wellbeing goals.

Reflection

As you guide young changemakers through this chapter on mental well-being, it's essential to focus on creating a safe and supportive environment where they feel comfortable exploring their emotional needs. Regular check-ins and adaptability are crucial, as each individual's journey will be unique. Encourage them to balance ambition with self-care, ensuring their goals align with their well-being. Be vigilant for signs of struggle, such as difficulty expressing emotions or becoming overwhelmed by exercises. These may indicate deeper issues that need further attention, professional help or a different approach.

With these considerations in mind, the following tips and tricks, along with potential warning signs, will help you effectively guide your coachees through the exercises in this chapter.

Tips & tricks

Be attuned to group dynamics

Tip: when working in a group, monitor the emotional and social interactions within the group to ensure a positive and supportive environment during discussions.

Trick: if you notice signs of tension or discomfort, intervene gently by acknowledging the emotions and guiding the conversation back to a constructive tone. This helps maintain a safe space where all participants feel comfortable sharing.

Normalize Imperfection

Tip: encourage coachees to embrace the idea that their journal entries don't need to be perfect. This reduces the pressure to write flawlessly and promotes more honest self-expression.

Trick: remind them that the purpose of the journal is personal growth, not polished writing. Suggest they write freely without editing, focusing on capturing their true thoughts and feelings rather than worrying about grammar or structure.

Encourage Personalization

Tip: encourage coachees to make their vision boards deeply personal by incorporating items that hold special meaning for them.

Trick: suggest they include personal artifacts like mementos, images of loved ones, or symbols of important life values. This personalization strengthens the emotional connection to their well-being goals, making the vision board a more powerful and motivating tool.

Warning signs

As a coach, you may need to provide additional guidance if your coachee:

- struggles to express mental well-being needs: if the coachee has difficulty articulating their emotional challenges during group discussions, this may indicate unrecognized or unaddressed needs;
- avoids self-reflection: if the coachee resists journaling or consistently focuses only on negative experiences without acknowledging strengths, it may signal deeper emotional struggles;
- becomes overwhelmed during visioning exercises: if the coachee becomes anxious or frustrated while creating a vision board, it could indicate unrealistic expectations or a disconnect between their goals and well-being.

9.3 Self-confidence / imposter syndrome

Self-confidence is the belief in one's abilities and judgment, enabling individuals to face challenges and take action with assurance. It's a critical aspect of personal and professional success. However, many people, especially high achievers, struggle with imposter syndrome—a psychological pattern where they doubt their accomplishments and fear being exposed as a "fraud." Despite evidence of their competence, those with imposter syndrome attribute their success to luck or external factors rather than their own abilities, leading to anxiety and self-doubt (Our Content team, 2024).

Educate yourself first

Before tackling imposter syndrome and building self-confidence, it's essential to understand the underlying psychological patterns and challenges. This section provides carefully selected links and resources that offer in-depth knowledge on self-confidence, the nature of imposter syndrome, and effective strategies to overcome self-doubt. By educating yourself first, you'll be equipped with the insights necessary to apply the tools and techniques in this chapter effectively, ensuring they are delivered in a way that truly resonates and brings about lasting change.

- Ackerman, C. E. (2018) *Self-confidence — what it is and how to build it [online]*.
  The Positive Psychology article on self-confidence serves as an essential resource for gaining a comprehensive understanding of self-confidence and its connection to overcoming imposter syndrome.
- Naser et al. (2022) *Impostor phenomenon and its relationship to self-esteem among students at an international medical college in the Middle East: a cross-sectional study*, Frontiers in Medicine
  In this article, you'll find an in-depth exploration of imposter syndrome, its psychological underpinnings, and its impact on self-confidence.
- EducationNext (2023) *How young people can avoid imposter syndrome*.
  In the article on avoiding imposter syndrome, you'll find practical advice and strategies specifically aimed at helping young people recognize and overcome imposter syndrome, boosting their self-confidence

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Case study: overcoming imposter syndrome in changemaking

Context:

Luka, an aspiring social entrepreneur, had successfully launched a youth mentorship initiative. Despite his achievements, he consistently struggled with imposter syndrome, feeling as though he didn't deserve his success. He attributed his accomplishments to luck, and feared that others would soon discover he wasn't as competent as they believed.

Intervention:

During a coaching session, Luka's mentor encouraged him to share his story and the impact of his work. Through the "Role Reversal Exercise," John mentored a younger changemaker, which allowed him to reflect on his abilities. The feedback from his mentee helped John see how much value he truly brought to the table.

Outcome:

Luka's confidence grew significantly after realizing that his success wasn't accidental. By revisiting past achievements and acknowledging his unique contributions, he started to embrace his identity as a competent changemaker, which helped reduce his feelings of imposter syndrome.

Tools

Title: Vision board creation

Purpose: this vision board creation process helps young changemakers build self-confidence by keeping their goals and the positive outcomes they envision at the forefront of their minds, motivating them to continue pursuing their impact with assurance and purpose.

Type of tool: creative visualization tool.

Expertise level required from the coach: basic.

Stage in the coachee's process: goal-setting and motivation building.

Instructions for coaches:

1. Define goals and aspirations: have the young changemaker reflect on their goals, dreams, and the impact they want to create. Encourage them to think about both short-term and long-term objectives.
2. Gather materials: provide supplies like a large poster board, magazines, scissors, glue, markers, and any other art materials. Digital tools can also be used to create a virtual vision board.
3. Visualize success: ask them to visualize their success in achieving these goals. What does it look like? How does it feel? Encourage them to think of specific images, words, and symbols that represent these achievements.
4. Collect inspirational images and words: have them search through magazines or online for images, words, and quotes that resonate with their goals and aspirations. These should be things that inspire them and reflect their vision.
5. Arrange and assemble: guide them in arranging the collected images and words on the board. Encourage them to place the most important goals in prominent positions. The board should feel personal and motivating.
6. Reflect and affirm: once the vision board is complete, encourage the young changemaker to reflect on it daily. They should take a few moments each day to look at the board, visualize their goals, and reaffirm their belief in their ability to achieve them.
7. Display the vision board: the vision board should be displayed in a prominent place where it can serve as a constant reminder of their goals and potential. Regularly seeing their aspirations will reinforce their confidence and commitment to their journey.

Notes:

- Pay attention to the emotional responses of the coachee during the exercise, as this can provide insights into their motivations and potential obstacles.
- Create a supportive and non-judgmental space where the coachee feels comfortable expressing their dreams and visions.
- Be flexible and open to revisiting the vision board if the coachee's goals evolve over time, ensuring the board remains a dynamic tool for growth.

Useful resources:

- Balk, M. (2024) *How to create a vision board [online]*
  Article offers a comprehensive guide on how to create a vision board, detailing the process from setting goals to selecting inspirational images and words.

Title: Role reversal exercise

Purpose: this exercise helps young changemakers combat imposter syndrome by placing them in a teaching role, reinforcing their confidence in their skills and knowledge, allowing them to see their value and abilities from a new perspective.

Type of tool: mentorship and empowerment activity.

Expertise level required from the coach: intermediate.

Stage in the coachee's process: confidence building and self-affirmation.

Instructions for coaches:

1. Identify a skill or strength: have the young changemaker identify a specific skill or area where they feel confident or have received positive feedback.
2. Select a mentee: pair the changemaker with someone who can benefit from their expertise, such as a peer or a younger individual interested in the same field.
3. Plan a mentorship session: guide the changemaker in planning a session where they will teach or mentor the selected mentee, focusing on the skill or strength identified.
4. Conduct the session: during the mentorship session, encourage the changemaker to share their knowledge and experience confidently. This process reinforces their own competence.
5. Reflect on the experience: after the session, ask the changemaker to reflect on the experience, focusing on what they learned about themselves and how it challenged their imposter syndrome.
6. Acknowledge growth: help the changemaker acknowledge the growth they experienced through mentoring, reinforcing their self-confidence and reducing feelings of imposter syndrome.

Notes:

- Make sure the skill or strength identified by the changemaker truly aligns with their interests and confidence level. This ensures they feel comfortable and authentic in the teaching role.
- While guiding the process, allow the changemaker to take ownership of the session. This independence is key to reinforcing their confidence.
- Understand that building confidence and overcoming imposter syndrome takes time. Be patient and celebrate small victories along the way.

Title: Success stories sharing

Purpose: this activity helps young changemakers build self-confidence by reflecting on and sharing their personal success stories with peers, reinforcing the value of their contributions and achievements. By doing so, it helps combat imposter syndrome by providing external validation and affirming the coachee's accomplishments.

Type of tool: reflective and peer validation activity.

Expertise level required from the coach: intermediate.

Stage in the coachee's process: confidence building and positive reinforcement.

Instructions for coaches:

1. Success story selection: guide the coachee to choose a meaningful success or achievement they are proud of, focusing on the process and impact.
2. Organize a sharing session: arrange a small group session or one-on-one with a mentor where the coachee can share their story, emphasizing the challenges they overcame.
3. Encourage positive feedback: facilitate a feedback discussion where peers or the mentor provide affirmations and highlight the strengths and qualities displayed in the story, helping to reduce imposter syndrome.

Notes:

- If the coachee struggles to identify a success story, gently guide them by highlighting past achievements you've observed, which can help them recognize their own successes.

- While positive feedback is crucial, ensure it's specific and constructive. This helps the coachee internalize the praise and understand the concrete strengths they demonstrated.
- After the session, remind the coachee of the positive feedback they received, and encourage them to reflect on how their confidence has grown over time. This reinforcement helps in combating lingering feelings of imposter syndrome.

Useful resources:

- FasterCapital (n.d.) *The power of sharing success stories*.
  The Power Of Sharing Success Stories explores the importance of sharing success stories as a tool for personal and professional growth.

Reflection

As you work through this chapter with young changemakers, it's crucial to maintain a holistic approach that addresses both their emotional and cognitive needs. Regularly check in with your coachees to see their comfort level and progress, adapting your methods as necessary. Celebrate small achievements to build momentum and confidence. Encourage a growth mindset, reminding them that setbacks are opportunities for learning. Always be attuned to signs of stress or self-doubt, and offer additional support when needed to ensure a positive and empowering experience.

With these insights in mind, the following tips, tricks, and warning signs will equip you to effectively guide your coachees through the exercises outlined in this chapter.

Tips & tricks

Use a free online vision board maker

Tip: suggest a free online vision board maker to create a digital version of your coachees vision board.

Trick: introduce coachees to online tools that offer templates and customization options (like Canva, Venngage, Fotor..). Encourage them to save their digital vision board as their device background or screen saver, ensuring they see it regularly and stay motivated by their goals.

Reflect on the teaching experience

Tip: after the exercise, guide the coachee to reflect on their experience to solidify the learning and confidence gained.

Trick: have the coachee write down or discuss key moments where they felt confident or received positive feedback during the session, helping them internalize these affirmations and reduce imposter syndrome.

Normalize vulnerability[14]

Tip: try sharing your own experiences with self-doubt or imposter syndrome to create a safe and open environment for your coachee.

Trick: begin the session by briefly discussing a time when you faced similar challenges. This not only builds trust but also encourages the coachee to be more open about their own vulnerabilities, making the exercise more effective in combating imposter syndrome.

Warning signs

As a coach, you may need to provide additional guidance if your coachee:

- Struggles to Identify Achievements: If the coachee consistently has difficulty recognizing or accepting their successes, they may be deeply entrenched in imposter syndrome.
- Displays Persistent Self-Doubt: Watch for signs that the coachee dismisses positive feedback or attributes success solely to external factors rather than their own abilities.

14 Dan Cable, "How to Build Confidence About Showing Vulnerability", Harvard Business Review.

- Shows Emotional Distress During Exercises: If the coachee becomes visibly anxious, frustrated, or disengaged when discussing their accomplishments or participating in confidence-building exercises, they may require more targeted support and reassurance.

9.4 Stress management / risk on burnout

Stress Management is essential for maintaining mental and physical health, especially in high-pressure environments. Chronic stress, if unmanaged, can lead to burnout—a state of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion caused by prolonged stress. Burnout often manifests as feelings of detachment, reduced performance, and a sense of helplessness (Cherry and Gans, 2023).

Educate yourself first

To effectively manage stress and prevent burnout, it's important to start with a solid understanding of these concepts and their impact on mental and physical health. This section offers a selection of resources that provide valuable insights into the mechanisms of stress, the stages and symptoms of burnout, and evidence-based strategies for coping and recovery. By educating yourself first, you'll gain the knowledge necessary to apply stress management techniques effectively, helping yourself and others maintain resilience in high-pressure environments.

- Kohli, N. & Dua, K. (2022) *Stress Among Youth: Causes and its Management in Recent Times*. IJSR.
  This article is a valuable resource for understanding the specific stressors faced by young people today.
- Robinson, L. & Smith, M. (n.d.) *Stress management: techniques and strategies to deal with stress*. HelpGuide.org.
  Stress Management article offers understanding of stress management and burnout prevention. It offers comprehensive insights into the causes and symptoms of stress, along with practical, evidence-based strategies for managing stress effectively.
- Drummond, D. (2016) *Part I: Burnout basics – symptoms, effects, prevalence and prevention*. HelpGuide.org.
  Article Stress and Its Impact on Health is a resource for understanding the physiological and psychological effects of stress, and insights into how chronic stress can lead to burnout.

Case study: managing burnout through boundary setting

Context:

Sarah, a young changemaker leading an environmental advocacy project, was passionate about her work. However, her desire to make an impact led her to overcommit, taking on more tasks than she could handle. This constant stress eventually led her to experience signs of burnout, such as fatigue and emotional exhaustion.

Intervention:

Sarah's coach introduced the concept of boundary-setting. Through a series of reflective exercises, Sarah identified areas in her life where she felt overwhelmed and began creating personal and professional boundaries to protect her time and energy. She also implemented regular digital detoxes and mindfulness exercises to help her recharge.

Outcome:

By setting boundaries and prioritizing self-care, Sarah regained her sense of balance. She was able to continue her work with renewed energy and commitment, understanding the importance of maintaining a sustainable pace in her changemaking efforts.

Tools

Title: Mindful breathing exercises

Purpose: to help young coachees manage immediate stress, increase focus, and stay grounded by practicing mindfulness through controlled breathing.

Type of tool: stress management and mindfulness practice

Expertise level required from the coach: basic.

Stage in the coachee's process: coping mechanism development and emotional regulation.

Instructions for coaches:

1. Introduce the concept: begin by explaining the benefits of mindful breathing, such as reducing stress, enhancing focus, and promoting emotional balance. Emphasize how this simple technique can be a powerful tool for managing overwhelming situations.
2. Set the environment: ensure the coachees are in a comfortable, quiet space where they can relax without distractions. Suggest they close their eyes to better focus on the exercise.
3. Guide the breathing exercise: lead the coachees through a structured 5-minute session. Instruct them to inhale deeply through the nose for a count of four, hold the breath for a count of four, and then exhale slowly through the mouth for a count of six. Repeat this cycle several times.
4. Focus on the breath: encourage coachees to focus entirely on their breathing—how the air feels as it enters and leaves their body. If their minds wander, gently guide them back to concentrating on their breath.
5. Reflect on the experience: after the session, ask coachees to take a moment to notice any changes in their mental or physical state. Encourage them to share their experiences, if comfortable.
6. Encourage consistent practice: recommend that coachees integrate mindful breathing into their daily routine, especially before or during stressful situations. Regular practice can help them maintain a more balanced and calm mindset throughout their day.

Notes:

- Be aware of any coachee who appears uncomfortable or has difficulty relaxing during the exercise. They may need more guidance or a gentler approach.
- Some coachees may initially resist mindfulness practices. Encourage them gently without forcing participation, and offer to revisit the exercise at a later time if needed.
- Mindful breathing can sometimes bring up unexpected emotions. Be ready to offer support if a coachee becomes emotional or anxious during the exercise.

Useful resources:

- Healthline (2024) *10 Breathing Exercises to Try When You're Feeling Stressed*. Healthline.
  For additional guidance on implementing mindful breathing exercises, check out this Healthline page. It offers a variety of breathing techniques designed to reduce stress, enhance focus, and promote relaxation.

Title: Digital detox challenge

Purpose: to help young changemakers reduce digital overload, promote mental clarity, and encourage a healthier balance between online and offline activities.

Type of tool: stress management and well-being exercise.

Expertise level required from the coach: intermediate.

Stage in the coachee's process: reducing overload and enhancing mental clarity.

Instructions for coaches:

1. Introduce the concept: explain the benefits of reducing screen time, such as improved focus, reduced stress, and better sleep quality. Highlight how constant digital engagement can contribute to burnout.
2. Set clear boundaries: encourage coachees to designate specific times each day or week for a digital detox, where they disconnect from social media, emails, and other digital distractions.
3. Provide alternatives: suggest offline activities they can engage in during the detox, such as reading, exercise, or spending time in nature. This helps them fill the time productively.
4. Reflect on the experience: after the detox period, discuss how they felt during the break and any positive changes they noticed in their mental clarity and stress levels.
5. Encourage regular detoxes: recommend incorporating digital detoxes regularly into their routine to maintain a healthy balance between online and offline activities.

Notes:

- Be attentive to any signs of anxiety or discomfort as coachees disconnect. This could indicate underlying dependence on digital engagement that might require a more gradual approach.
- Ensure that coachees have appealing offline activities planned during the detox to prevent boredom or frustration, helping them see the benefits of reduced screen time.
- Acknowledge and celebrate even short periods of successful digital detoxing. Positive reinforcement can encourage coachees to extend the practice over time.

Useful resources:

- Gunn, L. (2023) *How a digital detox can help you [online]*. Nuffield Health.
  How a Digital Detox Can Help You offers valuable insights into the benefits of reducing screen time. It provides practical advice on how to implement a digital detox.

Title: Boundary setting workshop

Purpose: to help young changemakers recognize the importance of establishing personal and professional boundaries to prevent burnout and maintain balance in their lives.

Type of tool: workshop and reflective exercise.

Expertise level required from the coach: advanced.

Stage in the coachee's process: preventing burnout and sustaining well-being

Instructions for coaches:

1. Introduce the concept: start by discussing the importance of boundaries in preventing burnout and maintaining a healthy work-life balance. Explain how clear boundaries can protect their mental well-being.
2. Identify areas for boundaries: facilitate a discussion where coachees reflect on areas in their lives where they feel overwhelmed or overextended. Encourage them to think about where they need to set limits, such as time, emotional energy, or responsibilities.
3. Develop boundary strategies: guide coachees in creating specific strategies for setting and maintaining boundaries. This might include learning to say no, delegating tasks, or scheduling regular breaks.
4. Role-playing scenarios: practice boundary-setting through role-playing exercises, where coachees can simulate conversations where they assert their boundaries in a safe and supportive environment.

5. Reflect and adjust: encourage coachees to reflect on their boundary-setting experiences and make adjustments as needed. Remind them that boundary-setting is an ongoing process and may require flexibility and persistence.

Notes:

- Boundary-setting can be challenging, especially for those who struggle with assertiveness. Be patient and provide gentle encouragement to coachees who may feel uncomfortable.
- Understand that cultural backgrounds can influence how boundaries are perceived and set. Be mindful of these differences and adapt your approach accordingly.
- Remind coachees that boundary-setting is not a one-time event but an ongoing process that may require adjustments as circumstances change. Encourage them to remain open to reevaluating their boundaries as needed.

Useful resources:

- For additional guidance on boundary-setting, check out this article. It offers practical tips on how to establish and maintain personal and professional boundaries, which can help prevent burnout and promote well-being.

Reflection

As you guide young changemakers through the chapter on stress management and burnout prevention, it's essential to maintain a holistic and compassionate approach. Encourage coachees to recognize the early signs of stress and burnout, and help them understand that managing stress is an ongoing process. Regularly check in on their progress, adjusting strategies as needed to fit their evolving circumstances. Pay close attention to any signs of persistent fatigue, detachment, or resistance to boundary-setting, as these may indicate deeper issues requiring more focused intervention.

With these factors in mind, the following tips and tricks, along with key warning signs, will provide valuable guidance as you support your coachees through the exercises in this chapter.

Tips & tricks

Integrate Visualization
Tip: Visualization enhances the effectiveness of mindful breathing exercises by engaging the mind in a calming mental image, making the practice more powerful and relaxing.
Trick: Guide coachees to imagine stress leaving their body with each exhale and calmness entering with each inhale. This visualization adds depth to the exercise, making it easier for coachees to connect with the process and achieve a deeper state of relaxation.

Schedule detoxes during low-demand times
Tip: Planning digital detoxes during periods of lower commitments helps coachees minimize stress and anxiety about missing important updates. This approach ensures the detox is a positive experience rather than a source of additional stress.
Trick: Suggest coachees identify times when their workload or social obligations are lighter and schedule their detoxes during these periods. This strategic timing reduces the temptation to check devices and makes it easier for them to fully disconnect.

Provide real-life examples
Tip: Sharing real-life examples of successful boundary-setting helps coachees better understand how to apply these principles in their own lives. It makes the concept more relatable and demonstrates that effective boundaries are achievable.
Trick: Use your own experiences or case studies to illustrate how setting boundaries can lead to positive outcomes. This helps coachees see the practical benefits and encourages them to take action in their own situations.

Warning signs

As a coach, you may need to provide additional guidance if your coachee:

- Exhibits Persistent Fatigue: If the coachee appears constantly tired or mentions being exhausted despite rest, it may indicate they are approaching burnout and need to address their stress levels urgently.
- Displays Increased Irritability or Detachment: Notice if the coachee becomes more irritable or seems emotionally detached, as these can be early signs of burnout. This might require an intervention to reassess their workload and stress management strategies.
- Avoids Discussions About Boundaries: Reluctance to engage in boundary-setting exercises or discussions might signal a deeper issue with assertiveness or fear of confrontation, which could exacerbate stress and lead to burnout.

9.5 Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, we've explored the multifaceted aspects of mental well-being, from building self-confidence and managing stress to preventing burnout. The tools and strategies provided are designed to empower young individuals to maintain their mental and emotional health as they navigate their journeys.

It's essential to recognize that mental well-being is not a static state but a dynamic process requiring ongoing attention and care. The challenges faced by young changemakers are unique, and thus, their approach to mental well-being must be tailored to fit their individual needs. Regular reflection, self-awareness, and boundary-setting are critical practices that support sustainable growth and prevent burnout.

As a coach, your role extends beyond merely guiding through exercises; it's about fostering an environment where young changemakers feel supported and understood. Your role is to guide and support these young changemakers in developing resilience, understanding their emotional needs, and implementing the strategies that will help them thrive. Pay close attention to warning signs that may indicate deeper struggles, and be prepared to adapt your approach as needed. Encouraging open dialogue and creating a safe space for these discussions will empower your coachees to address their mental well-being proactively.

The insights and tools from this chapter will not only help young changemakers maintain their well-being but also equip them with lifelong skills for resilience and self-care. With these foundations in place, they can continue their impactful work with confidence and balance.

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About the project

"Lead to Succeed: Competence-Based Coaching for Young Changemakers" is an Erasmus+ KA220 Cooperation Partnership in Youth (2023–2025), bringing together five organisations from across Europe to design, test, and implement a coaching programme for young people leading sustainability initiatives.

Across Europe, many young people are actively working on environmental and social sustainability projects. However, they often face obstacles such as limited funding, lack of networks, burnout, or insufficient project management experience. Research shows that well-structured coaching support can substantially increase the success and impact of youth-led initiatives.

The Lead to Succeed project was created to respond to this need. Its aims are to:

1. Develop and validate a long-term, modular coaching programme that helps young people lead their sustainability projects more effectively.
2. Strengthen the capacity of youth workers and organisations to provide professional coaching to young changemakers.
3. Build a transnational network of organisations and stakeholders committed to supporting youth-led sustainability initiatives.

Over two years, the five partnering organisations have co-created and tested a coaching framework that combines group-based workshops and individual coaching sessions. The programme consists of several modules focusing on key competences and areas of growth, including:

- Project management and organisational skills;
- Fundraising and financial security;
- Branding and marketing;
- Interpersonal communication and leadership;
- Mental self-care and resilience.

The Coaching Programme Manual is one of the main deliverables of the Lead to Succeed project. It has been developed and validated through a two-year collaborative process among the partnering organisations and serves as a practical tool to equip youth workers and youth work organisations across Europe with the knowledge and tools to support young changemakers in developing and running their environmental sustainability initiatives.

About us (the partnership)

The Lead to Succeed partnership unites five organisations from across Europe with complementary expertise in youth work, non-formal education, sustainability, and mental wellbeing. Together, they combine practical experience and innovation to empower the next generation of young changemakers.

Advocates Who Thrive (The Netherlands) - Coordinator

A non-governmental organisation based in The Hague that empowers (future) advocates to take action for social justice, sustainability, and inclusion. Advocates Who Thrive provides them with training and coaching opportunities that build their confidence, mental wellbeing and leadership competences.

Website: www.advocateswhothrive.com

Roes Cooperativa KOIN.S.EP. (Greece) - Partner

A social cooperative enterprise based in Athens, founded by trainers, social workers, and educators dedicated to non-formal and experiential learning. Roes aims to create learning opportunities that promote personal growth, professional development, social inclusion, and sustainability.

Website: www.roes.coop

Asociación “Eo, Eo” (Spain) - Partner

A youth organisation from Alhaurín de la Torre (Málaga) that promotes inclusion, participation, and social engagement among young people. Eo,Eo works particularly with youth facing economic or social barriers, offering educational and volunteering opportunities that strengthen active citizenship and wellbeing.

Website: www.eoeo.es

Liberal Alternative Institute (North Macedonia) - Partner

Based in Tetovo, LAI promotes youth empowerment, civic participation, and entrepreneurship. It provides training and capacity-building programmes that help young people develop leadership skills, advocate for social change, and contribute to democratic and sustainable communities.

Website: www.lai.mk

Zavod Odprta Dlan Zagorje ob Savi (Slovenia) - Partner

A non-profit institute specialising in psychosocial support and youth work. ZOD conducts individual and group programmes on mental health, communication, and resilience. Its contribution to *Lead to Succeed* focuses on strengthening the mental wellbeing and interpersonal competences of young changemakers and youth workers.

Website: www.zod.sl

Implementation protocol -
Guiding framework for organisations applying the Lead to Succeed programme

This Protocol builds on the experience of the Erasmus+ partners who developed the Lead to Succeed (LTS) programme. Its purpose is to support organisations that wish to bring LTS into their own context in a way that feels clear, meaningful and realistic.

While the programme's principles and modules are shared, each organisation will apply them differently depending on its mission, resources, and community. The aim here is not to present a single 'correct' model, but to offer a structure that helps you develop your own approach. The Protocol provides guidance, reflective questions, and practical considerations to help ensure that your coaching service stays aligned with LTS values: empowerment, inclusivity and the sustainable growth of young changemakers.

Laying the groundwork

Good preparation makes implementation smoother and more intentional. Before you start, take time to clarify your organisation's reasons for engaging with LTS.

- Which needs or gaps in your current work could LTS address?
- How does the programme connect with your broader mission and existing services?

A clear purpose helps keep your planning focused and enables both internal and external stakeholders to understand the value of the service.

Next, consider which modules or elements of Lead to Succeed are most relevant for your starting phase. Some organisations may wish to begin with one or two modules that match their expertise, while others may opt for a broader approach. Both approaches are valid— the important thing is that the initial focus is manageable and fits your team's current capacity.

It's also helpful to set a realistic timeline. Implementation takes time and usually involves learning and adjusting as you go. Outlining what you aim to achieve within six months or a year provides a sense of direction while still allowing flexibility.

Designing the coaching service

Rather than defining the exact shape of your coaching programme immediately, start by identifying the principles that should guide your design. Ask yourself:

- What type of service model best suits your organisation — e.g. a fixed-term programme with clear start and end dates or a more flexible model with continuous enrolment?
- Will your service focus on individual coaching, group learning or a combination of both?
- How will you make sure that coachees needs, goals and wellbeing remain at the centre?
- In what ways can your structure encourage peer learning and reflection?

You may draw inspiration from the models used by the initial partners. Some blended group sessions with one-to-one coaching, while others worked with open, modular formats. What matters most is the alignment between your goals and the methods you choose.

As you design the structure, think also about the journey of a coachee. How will participants enter the programme, orient themselves, engage in sessions, and reflect on their growth? These touchpoints shape the overall experience and contribute to the quality of learning and development.

Example - Advocates Who Thrive (Netherlands)

"AWT chose a model that combines group and individual coaching sessions to balance peer learning with personal guidance. Each two-month cycle includes three themed group workshops and three individual coaching sessions per coachee. The group sessions create space for shared learning and inspiration, while the individual sessions provide personalised support, including reflection prompts and optional assignments."

Resourcing and partnerships

For your service to be sustainable, it's important to align your human, financial and organisational resources. Start by mapping the skills and time available within your team. You may need different roles - coaches, facilitators, coordinators, administrative support, safeguarding leads. Clarifying who can take on which responsibilities helps avoid overload and strengthens teamwork.

If gaps appear, consider potential partnerships. Collaborating with youth organisations, mental health professionals, or training institutions can enhance the quality and reach of your service. When partnering with external experts, ensure clear agreements regarding roles, expectations, compensation and intellectual property.

From a financial point of view, think beyond short-term funding. Explore funding combinations such as grants, sponsorships, organisational budgets or participant contributions that could support the service in the long run.

Example - Zavod Odprta Dlan (Slovenia)

"ZOD built their service around collaboration with partner organisations. Internal trainers lead workshops and provided supervision, while trained partner staff can later facilitate sessions independently under ZOD guidance. This approach expands reach while maintaining quality and fit well within existing projects and funding structures."

Recruitment and engagement

The success of Lead to Succeed lies in engaging motivated young people. Recruiting coachees who genuinely wish to grow helps create a dynamic and supportive group. Reflect on how you will reach your target group (existing networks, partner organisations, youth centres, social media) and what criteria will guide your selection where relevant.

Equally important is the onboarding process. A short intake conversation helps clarify expectations and ensure the programme is the right fit for each coachee. Once young people join, consistent communication and a welcoming atmosphere help maintain motivation.

Encourage coachees to take ownership of their learning journey by setting personal goals, tracking progress, and sharing reflections with peers and coaches.

Example - Asociación Eo,Eo (Spain)

Eo,Eo recruits participants mainly through their strong partnership with the University of Málaga, supported by outreach through youth organisations and volunteers. Short onboarding conversations help align expectations, while regular check-ins and a warm community atmosphere keep coachees engaged and motivated."

Quality, monitoring, and learning

Implementing Lead to Succeed is not a one-off activity but an ongoing learning process. Plan early how you will collect and use feedback, both from coachees and from the team delivering the service.

Feedback can be collected through various methods: short surveys, post-session reflections, informal conversations, team debriefs. Before choosing your tools, clarify what you want to understand: the coachee experience, relevance of the content, facilitation quality or the overall programme structure. This helps ensure feedback is useful rather than generic.

Create regular moments for internal reflection. These can happen after each programme edition, quarterly or after key sessions. Over time, this builds stronger quality and deeper learning within your organisation.

Example - Roes Cooperativa (Greece)

Roes Cooperativa integrates continuous quality monitoring into their coaching practice by using short Google Forms after each session to gather structured feedback on clarity, relevance and emotional experience. Coaches combine these digital reflections with their own observations and a brief internal debrief, allowing the team to quickly identify what works well and what needs adjustment. Guided by their internal evaluation procedures, the organisation reviews this information regularly to refine session flow, update methods and respond to emerging needs.

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Sustainability and future growth

As your coaching service becomes established, you may want to explore opportunities for growth. This might include reaching new groups of youth, expanding module offerings or training additional coaches.

Before expanding, ensure your foundation is strong - quality assurance, data protection, communication and coordination processes should all be reliable. Sustainable growth requires balance: staying true to Lead to Succeed values while adapting to your community's emerging needs.

Implementation is not a fixed path but an evolving practice. Each organisation contributes not only to programme delivery, but also to the collective learning that shapes the future of Lead to Succeed.

Example - Liberal Alternative Institute (North Macedonia)

Liberal Alternative Institute ensures sustainable growth by prioritizing strong foundations before expansion. They maintain rigorous quality assurance and data protection standards, while fostering transparent communication among coaches and participants. Growth strategies include introducing modules tailored to emerging youth needs and training additional coaches to uphold programme values. Their approach balances innovation with fidelity to Lead to Succeed principles, ensuring that every step forward strengthens both the organisation and the wider community.

Closing reflection

This Protocol offers a framework to help you move from concept to practice. Each section represents a step in an ongoing journey: from clarifying your purpose, to designing a meaningful structure, to creating lasting impact for the young people.

Approach it as a living process, open to reflection, experimentation, and adjustment. The strength of Lead to Succeed lies precisely in its flexibility: a shared foundation that allows every organisation to shape the programme in ways that resonate with their mission and the needs of young changemakers.

Final note

This Manual is more than a guide; it is a companion for the meaningful, often transformative journey you undertake with young changemakers. Whether you are supporting them as they refine their sustainability projects, navigate uncertainty, or deepen their self-awareness, the tools and approaches here are designed to adapt to their realities and honour their individuality.

As you bring these practices to life, remember that coaching is not only about offering direction. It is about creating spaces where young people feel seen, heard, and empowered to grow at their own pace. In these spaces, confidence takes root, resilience strengthens, and visions begin to take shape. Your presence, care, and professionalism make that possible.

This Manual carries the collective experience, learning, and hopes of the Lead to Succeed partnership. It represents our shared commitment to walking alongside those who dare to create positive change. By using it, you join a wider community of coaches and youth workers who believe in the potential of young people. Not as future leaders, but as leaders already shaping today.

As we close these pages, we offer our gratitude for the work you do, and our trust in the impact you will continue to make. May this Manual accompany you as you support young changemakers in turning their ideas into action, their challenges into learning, and their aspirations into tangible steps toward a more sustainable and inclusive future.

Before we close, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to Tanya Kutovaya and Marko Pavlovič for their valuable contributions to the development of this Manual. Through your insight, critical reflection, practical experience, and steady support, you have helped shape a resource that is both thoughtful and grounded in reality. Your commitment strengthened this work in ways that are woven throughout these pages.

Finally, we thank all youth workers, coaches, and young participants who, through their questions, courage, and willingness to experiment, inspired the approaches captured here. This Manual carries your voices, even where they are not explicitly named.

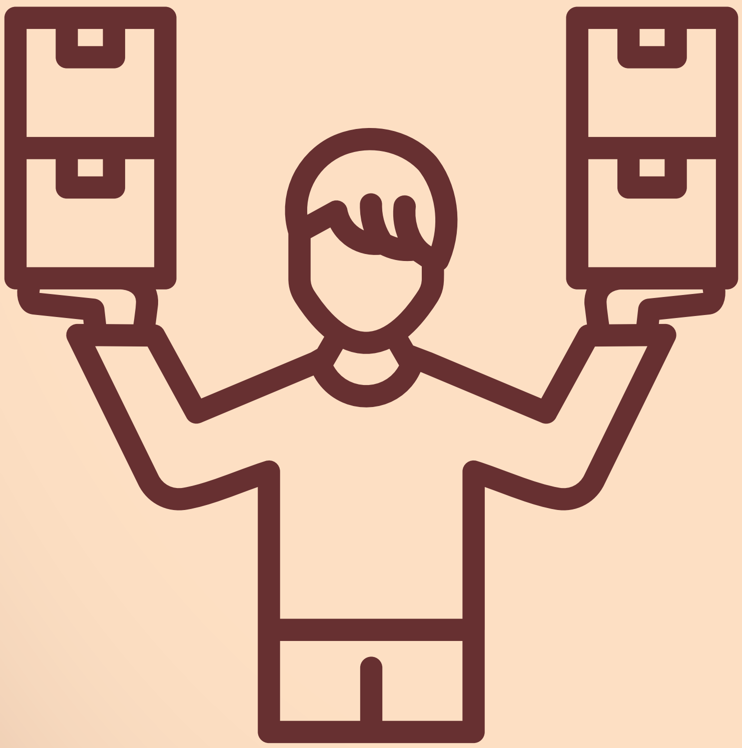
Thank you for being part of this journey. The difference you make matters, and it continues long after these pages end.

Sincerely,

the Lead to Succeed Team

Appendix - Supporting Materials

1. Character strengths inventory
2. Scenario planning — conflict with a friend
3. Coach adapts methods to the client’s strengths



Character strengths inventory

think about who you are as a person. Indicate whether each Strength is mostly like you, sometimes like you, or not often like you. Realize that people have different strengths and that you can choose to build new strengths throughout your life.

Strength	Description	mostly like me	Sometimes like me	Not often like me
Creativity	I like to think of new and better ways of doing things.			
Curiosity	I am always asking questions and love to discover new things.			
Judgment	I look at all sides of an issue to come up with the right answer.			
Love of learn-ing	I love to learn new things.			
Wisdom	I am considered wise because I evaluate things from different perspectives.			
Bravery	I speak up for what is right, even if others do not agree with me.			
Perseverance	I finish what I start, even if it becomes difficult.			
Honesty	I speak the truth and I take re-sponsibility for my feelings and behaviors.			
Zest	I live life as an adventure filled with excitement and energy.			
Love	I value the close relationships I have with others.			
Kidness	I enjoy helping others, even if I do not know them well.			
Social intelli-gence	I pay attention to the motives and feelings of others.			
Teamwork	I always do my share and I work hard for the success of my group.			
Fairness	I treat all people in a fair and just manner.			

Strength	Description	mostly like me	Some-times like me	Not often like me
Leadership	I am good at providing leader-ship and direction when I am with a group of people.			
Forgiveness	I am willing to forgive someone who has done something wrong.			
Humility	I am humble and let my actions speak more than my words.			
Prudence	I am careful about what I do and strive not to do things I might later regret.			
Self- control	I pay attention and am always in control of what I do and say.			
An apprecia-tion of beauty and excel-lence	I appreciate the beautiful and wonderful things in life.			
Gratitude	I pay attention to the good things that happen to me and express my thanks.			
Hope	I believe that good things are coming to me now.			
Humor	I like to laugh, smile, and see the good in all situations.			
Spirituality				

Looking over this list, what do you think are your five most important strengths?

Looking over this list, what are the strengths you would most like to develop?

These Character Strengths were first included in Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. (2004). Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification. Oxford: Oxford University Press. This inventory of strengths was developed based on material from the VIA Institute on Character. A more comprehensive survey of personal strengths is available on their website. http://www.viacharacter.org

Scenario planning — Conflict with a friend

The following conversation illustrates a coaching session where the client explores a conflict with a friend using scenario planning to identify options, anticipate challenges, and consider next steps.

Coach: Thanks for coming in today. Before we get started, what would you like to focus on during this session

Client: I want to talk about a conflict with my friend, and it's been really stressing me out.

Coach: Okay. By the end of our session, what would you like to walk away with?

Client: I'd like to understand how I want to handle the situation and what I can do next.

Coach: Great. So your goal today is to consider ways you want to respond to this conflict and choose a next step that feels right.Does that sound right?

Client: Yes.

Reality

Coach: Let's take a moment to understand what happened.How do you see things?

Client: We had a disagreement, and we both got defensive. We haven't spoken since.

Coach: What effect is this having on you now?

Client: I keep thinking about it, and I'm worried the friendship is damaged.

Coach: And what matters most in this friendship from your perspective?

Client: Honesty and feeling understood.

Coach: Okay, that's good to know. What do you think your friend might be experiencing in this situation?

Client: Maybe they felt attacked... or maybe they thought I wasn't listening.

Coach: What leads you to that conclusion?

Client: They became defensive and closed up.

Options

Coach: Thank you for laying that out. Would you be open to exploring a few scenarios together?

Client: Yes... i think so.

Coach: Let's imagine a few different directions this could go.What's one possible scenario for how you could respond?

Client: I could text them and ask to talk.

Coach: Okay. And what might be the best outcome of that scenario?

Client: We clear the air.

Coach: And the risk?

Client: They might ignore me.

Coach: Okay, that's a valid risk. What could you do in this case?

Client: I could give them more space and wait a few days.

Coach: And what could be the benefit of that?

Client: Maybe they will calm down.

Coach: And the downside?

Client: It might make the distance worse.

Coach: Great. Let's explore one more scenario, even one that feels unlikely. What else could you do?

Client: I could send them a message acknowledging my part without asking for anything.

Coach: And how does that scenario feel compared with the others?

Client: It feels honest… but also vulnerable.

Will / Next steps

Coach: Consider the scenarios you explored; which one best fits the kind of friend you want to be?

Client: Reaching out and acknowledging my part.

Coach: What makes that the right next step for you?

Client: I value our friendship, and I want to show that I care, even if it's uncomfortable.

Coach: What exactly will you do, and when?

Client: I will send them a message this evening.

Coach: Sounds clear. How committed do you feel to taking that action, on a scale from 1 to 10?

Client: Maybe an 8.

Coach: What would help bring it to a 9?

Client: Writing the message first and then reading it out loud to make sure it feels right. Coach: Good. Anything else you need before we close?

Client: No, this really helped clarify things.

Coach: I'm glad. You explored this with openness. Let me know how it goes.

Coach adapts methods to the client's strengths - Session scenario

A coaching conversation where the coach adjusts their approach based on the client's comfort level and past strengths.

Coach: Before we start, what would you like to focus on today?

Client: I want to get clearer about why I'm feeling stuck at work and what I can do next.

Coach: Great. One way we could explore that is through a verbal walkthrough—talking through the situation step by step. How does that approach feel for you?

Client: Honestly... a bit overwhelming. I find it hard to talk through things when they're messy.

Coach: Thank you for saying that. Let's shift our method.
In past sessions, you've used writing exercises really effectively, especially when you wrote out your thoughts in short bullet points. You organised things clearly, and it helped you feel grounded. Would you like to use that approach again?

Client: Yes. Writing it out works much better for me.

Coach: Great. Let's build on that strength.
Take a few minutes to write down three things that feel unclear for you at work right now, just brief notes.

The client writes for a couple of minutes.

Client: Okay, I'm done.

Coach: When you look at what you wrote, what stands out?

Client: I notice that all three are about priorities. I don't know what's most important.

Coach: That's useful. We can work on that.
Now, let's use another method that aligns with your strength in creating clarity from complexity.
Could you sort your notes into two columns:

- What I can influence
- What I can't

Client: Yes, that feels manageable.

The client sorts the notes.

Coach: What do you notice as you separate them?

Client: Most of what's stressing me is actually in the "can influence" column.

Coach: That's a powerful insight.What's in the "can influence" column, what's one small action you could take next?

Client: I could draft a simple list of priorities and share it with my manager to confirm.

Coach: That fits beautifully with your strength in creating structure.When will you do that?

Client: I can draft it today.

Coach: Excellent. Anything else you need before we close?

Client: No, this was really helpful. The writing made everything much clearer.

Coach: I'm glad. You worked with a method that genuinely supports how you think and organise information. Let's keep using approaches that play to those strengths.