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Unleash Potential

DIGITAL TOOLKIT OF RESULTS AND SUCCESS STORIES

IVAIGO

TeneLearning
Educational and training centre

New Horizons

Co-funded by the European Union

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About the project ‘Unleash Potential’

MAIN AIM

To empower long-term unemployed individuals by enhancing their self-confidence, motivation, and creativity, ultimately facilitating their transition into active and productive roles within society and the economy.



ACTIVITIES

1. Kick-off meeting in Italy.
2. Pre- and post-tests evaluations.
3. International workshops and group sessions for psychological support and addressing trauma and fears in Italy.
4. Online midterm meeting.
5. International entrepreneurship workshops to develop innovative ideas and business acumen in Spain.
6. Digital toolkit with project results and videos with success stories.
7. Final meeting in Lithuania lead by the interactive multiplier event.



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OBJECTIVES

1. Enhance self-confidence and self-esteem among the target group.
2. Build motivation and inspire a proactive mindset for pursuing employment opportunities.
3. Cultivate creativity and entrepreneurial skills to foster innovation and self-employment prospects.
4. Provide psychological support to address fears, traumas, and negative beliefs.
5. Develop financial literacy and a positive financial mindset for sustainable economic well-being.
6. Improve employability through effective CV creation and job search techniques.

EXPECTED RESULTS

1. Increased self-confidence and belief in personal abilities among participants.
2. Heightened motivation and a proactive approach towards seeking employment opportunities.
3. Enhanced creativity and entrepreneurial mindset, leading to self-employment ventures.
4. Improved psychological well-being and the ability to cope with fears and traumas.
5. Enhanced financial literacy and a positive financial mindset for economic empowerment.
6. Improved employability through well-crafted CVs and effective job search strategies.
7. Strengthened support networks and mentorship opportunities for ongoing guidance and development.
8. Digital toolkit with project results and videos with success stories.



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Partners

New Horizons

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New Horizons

NEW HORIZONS is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting social development and cultural preservation for the local territory and bridging the local population to the constantly changing world outside by means of education and training, information service, and international cooperation.
It is founded and run by professionals who are designing, implementing, and providing
consultation support for local and international projects in several fields such as Adult, VET, Sports and Culture.

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New Horizons

MISSION

In essence, the founding members aim to construct “new horizons” in the imminent future of the people and crucially young people in their city of residence. Based in Tusa, a small ancient town in the province of Messina (Italy), New Horizons takes the initiative to rediscover, revitalise, and re-launch a struggling town against depopulation, youth unemployment and the shortage of socio-cultural services for its remaining residents. Also, it has another office in Rome.

We also operate from Palermo, the capital city of Sicily, where there is a vibrant environment of social entrepreneurship, cultural initiatives, and international exchanges. We are part of the Innovation Network Palermo, a community aspiring to be a meeting point for professionals of diverse competencies to exchange ideas, new technology and best practices for innovation.



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New Horizons

Specifically, the OBJECTIVES are

- To prepare young adults with necessary skills and competencies, thus increasing their employability;
- To make the local territory an attractive place to live, work and thrive;
- To develop and implement programs in non-formal education for young people & adults;
- To support active citizenship and integration of all people regardless of their social and ethnic backgrounds.

ACTIVITIES

- Project design and implementation
- Research and data collection
- Education, training, and job orientation
- Promotion of arts and culture in the local territory
- International Cooperation



Website: www.newhorizonsaps.org
Facebook: newhorizonsaps
LinkedIn: new-horizons

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IVAIGO

Asociacija IVAIGO is a dynamic organization committed to sustainable development and empowering individuals facing long-term unemployment. By fostering creativity, critical thinking, and professional skills development, Asociacija IVAIGO helps individuals, particularly those from underserved backgrounds, integrate into society and the workforce. The organization collaborates with NGOs, including those supporting refugees, and partners with local municipalities to promote formal and non-formal education initiatives. Through its involvement in international partnerships, including ERASMUS PLUS programs, Asociacija IVAIGO plays a crucial role in addressing societal challenges, enhancing employability, and fostering sustainable community development, aligning closely with the "Unleash Potential" project's goals.



Website: Ivaigo,
Instagram: Ivaigo,
Facebook: Ivaigo

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TeneLearning
Educational and training centre

TeneLearning is an educational and training centre for adults and youth in Tenerife, Spain. Its primary aim involves the dissemination of knowledge and skills, providing support for project completion, expediting participants' career progression and empowering long-term unemployed individuals.



Concentrating on crucial aspects like individual well-being, experiential outdoor learning, innovative methodologies, sustainability, inclusivity, and information technology, TeneLearning is dedicated to fostering the holistic growth of adults in both personal and professional spheres. By promoting both formal and non-formal education within a health-enhancing and inclusive atmosphere, TeneLearning strives to create a conducive environment for learning.



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TeneLearning
Educational and training centre



The organisation possesses several strengths that contribute to its effectiveness in providing a holistic learning experience: tailor-made projects, experienced and certified educators, flexibility in services, diverse focus areas, holistic approach, interactive learning environment, inclusion of digital skills, collaborative learning, and career acceleration focus.

By promoting both formal and non-formal education within a health-enhancing and inclusive atmosphere, TeneLearning strives to create a conducive environment for learning. TeneLearning fosters lifelong learning and provides avenues for participants to acquire new skills, broaden their perspectives, and improve their social inclusion.

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Situation about long term unemployed adults in each partner country



Italy

Unemployment is a serious problem in Italy, which began to worsen alongside with the beginning of the financial crisis in 2008. The crisis in the Italian labor market reached its peak in 2014, when 12.7 percent of the citizens were without a job. Since 2015, the situation has been improving; the unemployment rate started a steady decrease, which continued in the following years.

Unemployment in Italy is characterized by relevant regional disparities.

Between October and December 2020, the highest unemployment rate was registered in the South of Italy. Sicily, Campania, and Calabria the three regions where the share of citizens without a job ranged from 16.5 percent to 17.8 percent. The disparities in unemployment indicators can be observed not only on the regional level, but also among genders. In 2019, almost one in four women in Calabria were without a job, whereas the share of unemployed males was 20.2 percent.

The region with the highest percentage of employed individuals, both men and women, was Trentino-South Tyrol.

Unemployment affects mostly young people with a low education. Nevertheless, a high share of unemployed Italians holds a university degree.

Additionally, the share of females who are economically inactive is very high: 42 percent of Italian women do not take part in the Italian labor market, neither as employed nor as unemployed. Also, the percentage of young people who neither work nor study is higher among females than among males. Once again, the southern regions show the highest shares. For instance, in Sicily, 34 percent of women do not study or work.

Working-age individuals with little or no attachment to the labor market may face several employment barriers that prevent them from fully engaging in work activities, such as:

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- Insufficient work-related capabilities, e.g. a lack of skills, work experience, care responsibilities;
- Lack of financial work incentive to look for a “good” job, e.g., because of low potential pay, relatively generous out-of-work benefits, or access to high levels of income independent of their own work effort;
- Scarce job opportunities, such as a shortage of vacancies in the relevant labor market segment due to economic shocks, cyclical factors, skill mismatches, discrimination, dual labor markets, or other labor market frictions.

Lithuania



In Lithuania, the situation regarding long-term unemployment among adults presents a pressing concern. According to recent statistics, the country has experienced an unemployment rate of around 5.6% as of late 2023, with a significant proportion of this figure representing individuals classified as long-term unemployed, having been without a job for 12 months or longer. The Lithuanian capital, Vilnius, along with major cities such as Kaunas and Klaipėda, have also seen persistent levels of long-term unemployment, particularly among those aged 45 and above.

Economic shifts and market demands contribute to this issue, leading to a mismatch between available jobs and the skills possessed by many long-term unemployed individuals. This mismatch is particularly notable in the manufacturing and service sectors, which are prominent in cities like Kaunas and Vilnius. The lack of modern skills such as digital literacy and entrepreneurial acumen further hinders reintegration into the workforce, exacerbating the problem of long-term unemployment.

Furthermore, psychological factors, such as decreased self-confidence and motivation, play a role in the prolonged unemployment period for many individuals. This issue is particularly acute in cities with high living costs, like Vilnius, where the financial strain on job seekers intensifies. As a result, there is an increasing need for initiatives like "Unleash Potential," which aim to empower long-term unemployed individuals by addressing both their skill sets and psychological well-being, fostering sustainable societal and economic integration.

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Spain

In Spain, the issue of long-term unemployment among adults is a persistent challenge. Since the global financial crisis of 2008, Spain has faced significant unemployment rates, with a peak of over 26% in 2013. While there has been some improvement in recent years, with the unemployment rate decreasing to around 12% in 2023, long-term unemployment remains a concerning issue. Regional disparities are prevalent in Spain: for example, with an unemployment rate hovering around 15%, the Canary Islands represent one of the regions grappling with higher-than-average levels of joblessness.

While unemployment can impact individuals across all age groups, specific age groups encounter unique challenges and vulnerabilities within the labor market. Youth unemployment has been a persistent issue for the country, with rates often exceeding those of the overall population. Additionally, individuals aged 45 and above may encounter difficulties reentering the workforce after a period of unemployment, particularly if they lack up-to-date skills or experience in rapidly evolving industries.

Mismatches between available jobs and the skills possessed by long-term unemployed individuals are a key factor contributing to the persistence of this issue. Psychological factors also play a significant role in prolonging periods of unemployment in Spain. The stigma associated with being long-term unemployed, coupled with feelings of inadequacy and demotivation, can hinder individuals' efforts to seek and secure employment. Moreover, the financial strain of extended unemployment can lead to increased stress and anxiety.

Addressing long-term unemployment in Spain requires a multifaceted approach that encompasses both structural reforms within the labor market and targeted support programs for affected individuals. Initiatives aimed at upskilling unemployed people, as well as providing access to mental health and psychosocial support services, are crucial for facilitating the reintegration of long-term unemployed adults into sustainable employment opportunities.



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New Horizons

COPING STRATEGIES

"Everyone, at some point in life, faces difficult situations. What makes the difference is how we react. The concept of coping teaches us this."

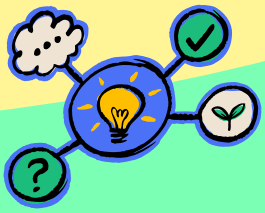


WHAT IS COPING?

The concept of coping refers to the set of behaviors individuals adopt to manage, control, and reduce conflicts, stressful situations, or problematic events.
Function:

- Reduce or manage stress and negative emotions.
- Improve emotional and psychological well-being.

Coping can be adaptive (helping to solve problems) or maladaptive (which may worsen the situation).



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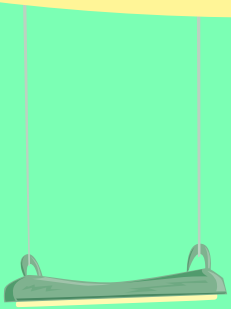
Training materials from the international activity in Tusa, Italy

Three Types of Coping

Problem-focused coping

This coping is an approach aimed at directly addressing the source of stress. It focuses on practical actions intended to modify, eliminate, or reduce the problem causing tension. The goal is to tackle the problem at its root, by changing the situation or behaviors that stem from it, in order to better manage the impact of stress.





Emotion-focused coping

This coping involves managing negative emotions or feelings of discomfort related to a stressful situation. Instead of trying to resolve the external problem, this type of coping focuses on alleviating the emotional impact that stress has on the person. It involves regulating one's emotional response to improve mental well-being and reduce levels of anxiety or frustration.

Avoidance-oriented coping

This coping involves trying to avoid the problematic situation and the emotions associated with it. This strategy provides temporary relief by reducing immediate discomfort, but it can be dysfunctional in the long term. Avoidance prevents awareness of one's emotional states and the development of more effective ways to regulate them. In some cases, disturbing emotions are 'numbed' through harmful behaviors, such as alcohol abuse, drug use, smoking, or eating disorders. Furthermore, avoiding confrontation with difficulties hinders the development of problem-solving skills, making it harder to face future challenges.

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Coping strategies

Problem-focused coping

Coping strategies are the methods that define the process of adapting to stressful situations. The set of cognitive and behavioral efforts employed to manage specific internal and/or external demands that are perceived as exceeding the individual's resources. However, they do not guarantee success. If the strategy is dysfunctional, it can even worsen the stressful situation.



POSITIVE COPING STRATEGIES:

Seeking social support: Turning to friends, family, or professionals for help in dealing with the problem. Planned problem solving: Identifying the root causes of the problem and developing an action plan. Acceptance of personal responsibility: Recognizing one's role in the situation and acting accordingly. Positive reappraisal: Turning the negative experience into an opportunity for growth. Humor: Putting the situation in perspective by finding its humorous side, which can relieve stress.

NEGATIVE COPING STRATEGIES:

Distancing: Avoiding the problem by pretending it doesn't exist. Escape and avoidance: Walking away from the stressful situation without resolving it. Extreme self-control: Suppressing emotions without processing them. Denial: Refusing to accept the reality of the situation. Suppression of competing activities: Focusing solely on one problem at the expense of other aspects of life, risking burnout. Escaping into destructive behaviors: Resorting to temporary, harmful solutions like substance abuse or impulsive actions.



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Training materials from the international activity in Tusa, Italy

WHY IS JOB SEARCHING STRESSFUL?

- **Uncertainty:** Lack of control over the outcome and not knowing when a response will come.
- **Frequent rejections:** Each "no" can lowermotivation.
- **Competition:** The job market is competitive.
- **Financial and social pressures:** Economic needs and expectations from society or family.



THE MAIN SOURCES OF STRESS IN JOB SEARCHING

Length of the process:
Long waiting times between applications and responses.

Personal and others' expectations:
Fear of not meeting expectations.

Negative self-perception:
Doubts about one's own skills

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COPING AND JOB SEARCHING



Coping is essential for managing stress

It can be applied to handle emotions, uncertainty, and rejections during the job search process



Coping strategies help you stay focused, resilient, and proactive despite the challenges

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PROBLEM-FOCUSED COPING STRATEGIES IN JOB SEARCHING

Planning Activities:

Organize a weekly schedule to dedicate time to job searching, improving your resume, and preparing for interviews. This helps maintain motivation and prevents feeling overwhelmed by the process. Practical Example: Set specific times when you exclusively focus on searching for jobs, submitting applications, and tracking responses.



Continuous Improvement:

Don’t stop at the first rejection but learn from mistakes and keep improving. This includes adjusting application strategies, such as reviewing your cover letter, seeking feedback on past interviews, and revising your resume to make it more effective. Practical Example: After an interview, ask the recruiter for feedback to identify strengths and areas for improvement.

Active Interview Preparation:

Research the company, prepare answers to common questions, and simulate interviews with a friend or mentor. This preparation not only reduces stress but also boosts your confidence

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EMOTION-FOCUSED COPING STRATEGIES IN JOB SEARCHING

Mindfulness and meditation:
Practice daily to reduce anxiety and stress accumulated during the job search. Just 10 minutes a day can help calm the mind.



Accepting and processing rejection:
It's normal to face rejection. Give yourself time to process the emotion, then reframe the experience as an opportunity to improve.

Self-compassion:
Acknowledge your efforts without blaming yourself for the difficulties you encounter. You can keep a journal to reflect on your achievements, even small ones.

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AVOIDANCE STRATEGIES IN JOB SEARCHING:



Positive distraction:
Engage in activities you enjoy, such as exercising, reading, or spending time with friends, to prevent stress from taking over.

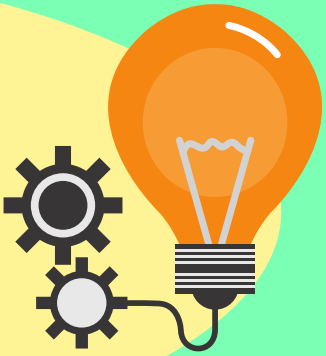
Setting time limits:
Avoid constantly checking emails or updating job platforms by setting a time limit (e.g., once a day).

Not dwelling on rejections:
When you receive a rejection, acknowledge the disappointment but avoid thinking about it continuously. Try writing a "goodbye" letter to the rejection and then set it aside.

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CREATE YOUR COPING KIT

Now it's your turn!



Build your personalized coping kit by choosing the strategies that work best for you.

Divide your kit into:

- Problem-focused strategies: Concrete actions to tackle and resolve problems.
- Emotion-focused strategies: Tools to manage and alleviate emotional stress.
- Healthy avoidance techniques: Positive ways to take a mental break and reduce pressure.

Start creating your personal list!

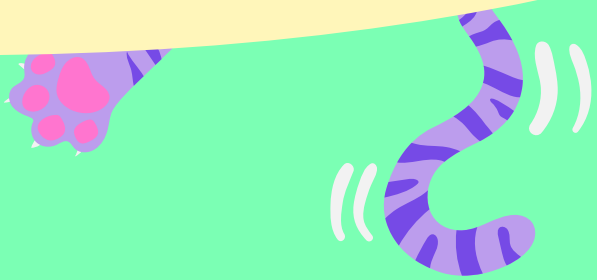
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Addressing psychological barriers

MASTER THE MIND TO OVERCOME PSYCHOLOGICAL BARRIERS

Psychological barriers are factors that hinder or restrict an individual's ability to complete a task. In the context of performance, psychological barriers refer to mental obstacles that prevent optimal achievement. These barriers may limit actions such as writing a CV or approaching someone of interest. Therefore, identifying and addressing psychological barriers is essential.

It is also crucial to understand a person's psychological obstacles because these are usually manifested in thoughts, feelings, attitudes, and opinions. These internal assumptions hold people back from living their lives to the fullest. It is fundamental to acknowledge and tackle these barriers. This way, individuals can boost their resilience and performance, leading to success even in areas where they previously struggled.



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COMMON PSYCHOLOGICAL BARRIERS TO BEST PERFORMANCE

A long-term belief that you are not good enough can lead to a fear of failure, known as **atychiphobia**. Sometimes, people fear disappointing themselves and others.

A student with low scores may stop putting effort into studying if he believes he cannot study well, just as an athlete may stop practicing if he believes he will not be selected for the team.

PERFORMANCE ANXIETY

Individuals suffer from anxiety and stress, and these emotions, in turn, shatter their confidence.

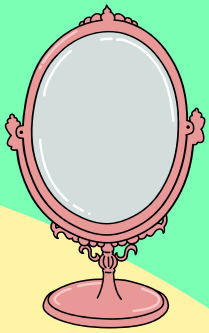
A debater forgets the logic and reasoning during a debate leading to bad performance.



When an athlete or an actor is performing for the first time, he may experience performance anxiety. One aspect of performance anxiety is stage fright which affects the performance

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LOW SELF-ESTEEM



People with low self-esteem do not want to be in the limelight as they do not have belief in themselves, and they are not willing to take any chances. Their strong self-doubts restrict them from initiating any new project. If a workplace employee believes he cannot lead a project, this belief will affect his performance.

LACK OF MOTIVATION

Failure to meet expectations is mostly due to a lack of motivation. Motivation assists individuals in prioritizing tasks and actions by prompting them to consider the task's outcomes and consequences before making decisions.



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PERFECTIONISM

Perfectionism is a persistent personality trait in which people hold high standards for the final outlook of a task, and they are highly critical of their performance. It is a positive aspect of personality as tasks are performed of ideal quality. Still, as it provokes anxiety about delays and noncompetition, it is considered a negative aspect of personality.

Sometimes, just to prove to others that they are flawless, perfectionists may become fixated on a task and unable to complete it on time. For example, a researcher will only submit his research paper to a journal once, and when he is made sure that the paper needs no revision and is perfectly ready for submission.

https://insights.lifemanagementsciencelabs.com/mastering-the-mind-to-surpass-psychological-barriers-to-success/

PROCRASTINATION



A common impediment to achieving the best performance is procrastination, which is based on avoiding and delaying tasks. It can affect productivity as people tend to put off their work, leading them to rush at the last minute.

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IMPOSTOR SYNDROME

The impostor syndrome can make a person think his success is due to luck rather than his efforts and qualifications. These thoughts lead to actions that will hinder optimal performance. For example, a qualified person will think he got the leadership position because other people were unwilling to get it.



TIME MANAGEMENT

When performances are not optimal due to the lack of time management skills. It may happen when the person is a multitasker and lacks organizational skills. Some people also spend hours on mobile scrolling and the Internet.



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OVERCOMING PSYCHOLOGICAL OBSTACLES STRATEGIES & TECHNIQUES

Build self-awareness

It can help identify individuals' shortcomings in leading to better attempts. The reiteration of attempts will influence the outcome of tasks. For example, athletes can be made self-aware about the areas that need improvement.

Self-awareness can be achieved through being aware of your own emotions and the emotions of others and knowing your strengths and weaknesses. Individuals should:

- Set clear boundaries and be aware of their actions;
- Practice mindfulness, meditation, and yoga practices; and
- Regularly self-reflect



PRACTICE GOAL-SETTING AND VISUALIZATION TECHNIQUES

Goal setting gives motivation, and visualization techniques help in giving better patterns to achieve a goal. It reduces anxiety and focuses your attention on the goal.

For example, if a person says that he has to win the final match, he needs to be informed that to reach the final, he has to win the initial matches. To reach the final match, strategies and goal setting are needed for those initial matches.

Setting SMART goals and creating a plan with a timeline. SMART goals are the ones that are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time-bound.

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BUILD SELF-CONFIDENCE

Self-confidence helps individuals to believe they can achieve whatever they want; resilience helps in get back in case of failure.

For example, if an employee has self-doubts about his leadership skills, he can be led by example and given decision-making authority. In sports, athletes can be given the confidence that their decisions during match pressure are appreciable and according to the situation. If proven wrong, it is part of the game, but he needs to maintain confidence in decision-making under pressure.

Self-confidence and resilience can be cultivated:



- Confident body postures;
- Regular physical activity;
- Imagining confidence;
- Participating in new tasks and learning new skills;
- Taking risks and making mistakes;
- Celebrating your achievements and seeking feedback and support.

PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT?

If the psychological barriers prevail, even with mental skills training, it is suggested to seek professional support. The customized treatment plan can reduce shortcomings and enhance individuals' performance.

In sports, when an athlete recognizes any psychological issues, he may contact a psychologist for a personalized treatment plan. The therapist suggests cognitive behavioral therapy, dialectical behavior therapy, or positive psychotherapy, depending on the situation.

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CONCLUSIONS



Psychological barriers affect the execution of tasks and optimal performance originating from factors such as comfort zone adherence and lack of purpose. Recognizing and understanding these obstacles is the first important step.

Acknowledgment reveals the true cause of performance issues, redirecting focus for enhanced performance. Tailored management strategies should be pursued based on the specific psychological barriers and their context.



By employing effective strategies, individuals can conquer these barriers, leading to improved performance and achievement of goals.

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SKILLS Analysis

Strengths
HARD SKILLS

Strengths
SOFT SKILLS

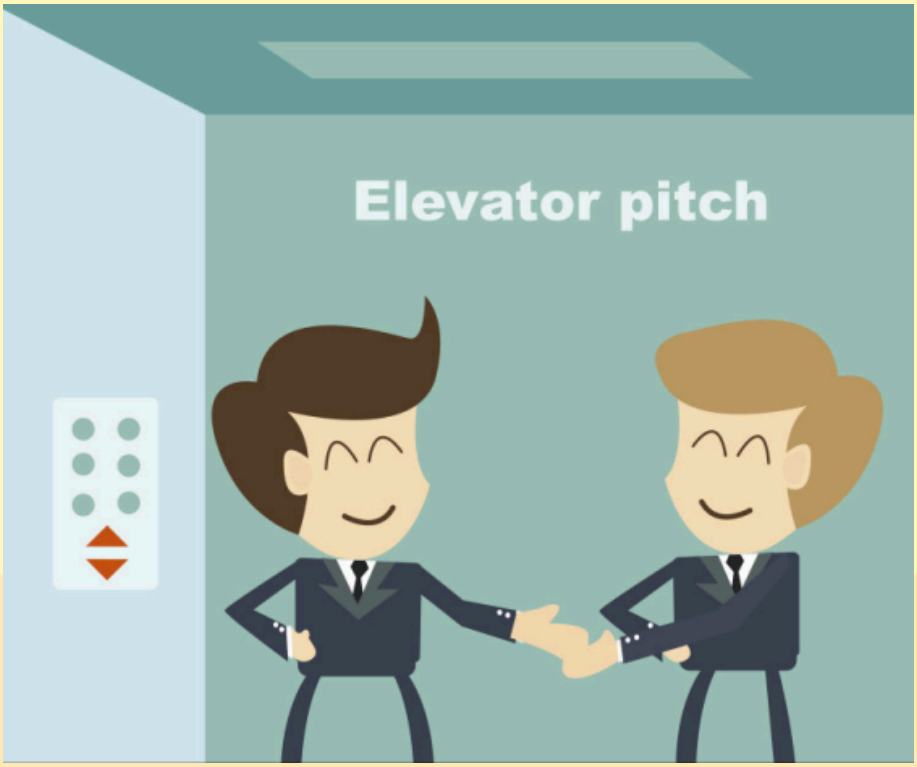
Areas for improvement
HARD SKILLS

Areas for improvement
SOFT SKILLS



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CREATING YOUR OWN ELEVATOR PITCH



ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF YOUR ELEVATOR PITCH

Floor 1	Who you are
Floor 2	What are you doing
Floor 3	What are your competences
Floor 4	What makes you unique
Floor 5	What you want to do in the future

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Creating Your Own Elevator Pitch



50 words max

Example:

Gregorio Sambataro, I am the Director at New Horizons APS.
I manage projects in education.
I possess project management and training skills.
I practice cycling at the amateur level, and I consider myself enterprising and curious.
In the future, I would like to help people and organizations innovate, in keeping with the rapidly changing World of work.

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SWOT ANALYSIS – KEY POINTS

SWOT analysis is a strategic planning tool used to identify an organization's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. It helps businesses and individuals make informed decisions and develop effective strategies.

Strengths (Internal, Positive)

- Competitive advantages (strong brand, skilled workforce, unique resources).
- Financial stability and efficient processes.
- Strong customer relationships and market position.

Weaknesses (Internal, Negative)

- Lack of expertise, poor reputation, or inefficient operations.
- Limited resources (financial, technological, human).
- Weak marketing, low customer retention, or supply chain issues.

Opportunities (External, Positive)

- Market growth, technological advancements, or industry trends.
- Partnerships, new customer segments, or regulatory benefits.
- Unmet customer needs or global expansion opportunities.

Threats (External, Negative)

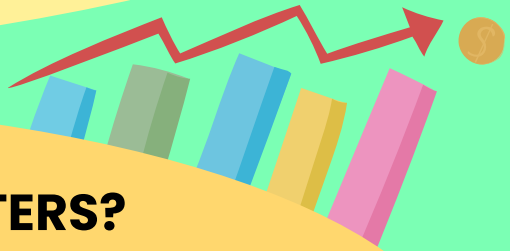
- Economic downturns, new competitors, or changing regulations.
- Technological disruptions or shifts in consumer behavior.
- Supply chain disruptions or geopolitical risks.

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HOW TO USE SWOT EFFECTIVELY



- Leverage strengths to seize opportunities.
- Address weaknesses to reduce threats.
- Monitor external changes and adapt strategies accordingly.
- Use SWOT for decision-making, risk assessment, and competitive advantage.



WHY SWOT ANALYSIS MATTERS?

- Helps businesses make data-driven decisions.
- Identifies areas for growth and improvement.
- Aligns teams around strategic goals.
- Provides a clear framework for competitive advantage.



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SWOT ANALYSIS



STRENGTHS

- What do you do well?
- What unique resources can you draw on?
- What do others see as your strengths?

WEAKNESSES

- What could you improve?
- Where do you have fewer resources than others?
- What are others likely to see as weaknesses?

OPPORTUNITIES

- What opportunities are open to you?
- What trends can you take advantage of?
- How can you turn your strengths into opportunities?

THREATS

- What threats could harm you?
- What is your competition doing?
- What threats do your weaknesses expose you to?



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PHYSICAL RELAXATION: BREATHING TECHNIQUES

Deep Breathing

This technique focuses on deep, controlled breathing to enhance lung capacity and reduce stress. It reduces muscle tension, promoting a sense of calm and relaxation.

How-To:

Inhale slowly through your nose, filling the lower part of your chest, then the middle, and finally the upper part. Exhale slowly through parted lips, emptying your lungs from top to bottom. Pause briefly before the next breath and repeat for several minutes.

4-7-8 Breathing:
Inhale for 4 seconds, hold your breath for 7 seconds, and exhale for 8 seconds. Repeat this cycle 3-4 times.

Box Breathing:
Inhale for 4 seconds, hold for 4 seconds, exhale for 4 seconds, and hold for 4 seconds. Visualize a box with each breath.

Abdominal Breathing:
Inhale for 4 seconds, hold your breath for 7 seconds, and exhale for 8 seconds. Repeat this cycle 3-4 times.



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MINDFUL BOTANICAL WALK AND MEDITATION

Mindfulness is the practice of being present and aware in the moment. It can help reduce stress and anxiety, improve mood, and promote overall well-being.

Welcome to your mindful botanical garden walk! This journey is designed to bring you closer to nature, help you center your mind, and connect with the present moment. This guide will lead you through prompts that encourage awareness of your surroundings, senses, and inner thoughts.



Start with your breath. Take a few deep breaths and focus on the sensation of the air moving in and out of your body. This can help you become more grounded and present.

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PREPARATION

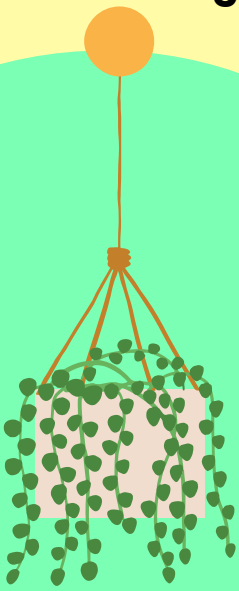
1. **Set an Intention:** Write down why you're here today. What do you hope to gain from this experience?

2. **Pause and Breathe:** Take a few deep breaths. Close your eyes, place a hand over your heart, and set your mind on being fully present.

3. **Prompt:** What are you letting go of to be here today?

ARRIVAL IN THE GARDEN

Engage Your Senses:



- Look around. What colors and shapes stand out?
- Listen. What sounds can you hear - birds, rustling leaves, distant voices?
- Take a deep breath. What scents fill the air?
- Touch a leaf or flower gently. How does it feel?
- Prompt: What do you feel in your body as you take in the garden's beauty?

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MINDFUL WALKING

Slow Your Steps: As you walk slowly, feel each part of your foot making contact with the ground — first the heel, then the ball, and finally your toes. Notice how the earth supports each step. Imagine grounding yourself with each movement, as if you are connecting with the soil beneath you.

Focus on Breathing: Take a deep inhale and allow the fresh air to fill your lungs completely. Feel the coolness of the air as it enters, and the warmth as you exhale. Let your breath sync with your steps, creating a natural rhythm. Each breath is a reminder of the gift of being alive and present.

Prompts:
What sensations do you notice in your body as you walk mindfully?
How does each inhale and exhale make you feel?
What are you grateful for about your body in this moment?



NATURE APPRECIATION

1 Pause at a Beautiful Spot: Find a plant, tree, or area that speaks to you.

2 Observe Details: Notice the colors, textures, and patterns. Think about how this plant has grown and thrived over time.

3 Prompt: How does the uniqueness of this plant or area make you feel? What does it inspire in you?

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REFLECTION ON INNER THOUGHTS

Embrace Stillness: Stand or sit for a few minutes in silence. Focus on how you feel emotionally and mentally.

Prompt: What emotions or thoughts arise in the stillness? Write without judgment.

GRATITUDE FOR NATURE

Express Gratitude: Think of something in nature that you're thankful for today.

Prompt: Write down what you're grateful for and why it's meaningful to you.

CLOSING REFLECTION



Check In: How are you feeling compared to when you arrived?

Set an Intention for Reentry: Think about how you'll carry this sense of peace and mindfulness back into daily life.

Prompt: What lesson or insight from this walk would you like to carry with you?

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SUCCESS STORY for Unleash Potential project

Participant Information: ● Name: Anais Agilera Ramires ● Age: 33 ● Location: Tenerife, Spain



What challenges did you face while being unemployed, and how did it affect your daily life?

Being unemployed was a confusing and uncertain time for me. I struggled with the feeling that I wasn't living up to my potential. My days felt unstructured, and I often found myself procrastinating instead of taking meaningful steps forward. It was also difficult to explain my situation to family and friends, which made me feel isolated.

What were the main reasons you struggled to find a job or start your own business? Did you face any specific barriers or lack certain skills?

The main challenge I faced was a lack of direction. I wasn't entirely sure what I wanted to do, and I didn't have a clear career path in mind. Additionally, I lacked experience in industries I was interested in, such as event management and marketing. Financial limitations also made it difficult for me to explore options like additional training or certifications.

How did you develop the skills needed to find a job or start your business? Which skills did you focus on improving the most?

I began by exploring my interests and setting small, achievable goals. I took online courses in event planning and digital marketing, which allowed me to gain foundational knowledge. I also worked on improving my communication and interpersonal skills by volunteering at local events, which gave me hands-on experience and boosted my confidence.

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What specific skills did you learn or improve that helped you secure a job or launch your business? How did you apply these skills in real life?

Time management and adaptability were key skills I developed during this period. I learned to prioritize tasks and stay consistent with my efforts. For example, I applied my digital marketing skills by helping a local community center promote their activities, which gave me practical experience and a small portfolio to showcase to future employers.

How did emotional intelligence play a role in your journey? Were you able to better understand and manage your emotions, as well as empathize with others, to improve your professional and personal relationships?

Emotional intelligence was critical in keeping me motivated and focused. I learned to manage my feelings of inadequacy and replace them with a mindset of growth and learning. Additionally, connecting with others empathetically during networking events and volunteer opportunities allowed me to build meaningful relationships that opened doors for future opportunities.

Now that you've found a job or started your business, how has your life changed? What positive changes have you experienced, both professionally and personally?

Finding a job in event management has been a life-changing experience. Professionally, I feel more aligned with my passions and see a clear path for growth. Personally, I feel a renewed sense of purpose and self-confidence. I'm now able to contribute to my household financially and feel proud of my accomplishments.

Looking back, what advice would you give to someone who is unemployed or struggling to start a business? What do you think are the most important skills they should work on?

My advice is to take time to explore what truly excites you and align your goals with your passions. Don't be afraid to start small or take unpaid opportunities to gain experience—it all adds up. Focus on developing both technical and soft skills, and remember to network with others. The journey may feel slow, but persistence and self-belief make all the difference.

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SUCCESS STORY for Unleash Potential project

Participant information

● Name Dario ● Age 26 ● Location Anzio (Roma)



What challenges did you face while being unemployed, and how did it affect your daily life?

Being unemployed (or employed in a field which I don't like) for me has always represented a period of deep reflection about who I wanted to be, what I wanted to do and what standard of living I want to keep. These questions all together seem to represent a 2.000-meter mountain, impossible to scale at once. At the foot of this mountain, I realized that the first thing to do was to build myself a suitable tool; I start feelingbetter what I used to appreciate more during my daily life. Like see new places and talk with persons making connection with the people (which has ever been one of my strong points).

What were the main reasons you struggled to find a job or start your own business? Did you face any specific barriers or lack certain skills?

I've always worked in restaurants, and I didn't know how to say not. I used to work every day as a waiter without the true ambition of follow my dream. I guess that the main thing which stopped me has been the lack of awarenessof what could already do. I been frightened by the fears of my parents and friends, which were not mine at all; Then even if I had got the possibility to change my lifestyle, I followed many years in the same way, not even knowing what I would like to do.

How did you develop the skills needed to find a job or start your business? Which skills did you focus on improving the most?

At the foot of my mountain, I understood that to scale up the 2000-meter mountain i had to climb 500-meter for each time, and step by step I found my passion for the languages and the travels. I started the university (mediation of languages) and as soon as I finished it, I leave to improve the languages I studied and of course to see a new places and customs. I've been one year and four months in Tenerife, I still was a waiter, but this time I was focus on what I wanted to increase, my languages and relational skills continued to develop.

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What specific skills did you learn or improve that helped you secure a job or launch your business? How did you apply these skills in real life?

I think the empathy is my main skill, it is a pleasure to well understand what people need or feel. At the restaurant I meet many persons which offered me other job or collaboration, it allows me to do many different things in my life, the last one is meet is named Mauro he is a "chief cabin crew" of the company ITA airways. With the which I'm supposed to start working when the next announcement comes out. Until I talked with him, I didn't even know that I already had all the skill for that job, I just needed to sign to the announcement. (it is what I meant with the lack of awareness)

How did emotional intelligence play a role in your journey? Were you able to better understand and manage your emotions, as well as empathize with others, to improve your professional and personal relationships?

As I said the empathy is my best weapon, it help me to understand what to say with both collogues, guests and eventually my chief, I see before if somebody is getting angry or doesn't like what I'm or somebody else is saying. There is a side of the empathy which can be easily read, which is the body language, I made ma university thesis over it, and since that I started reading it involuntarily, even over my same body, learning more about me and more in general peoples. A good knowledge of body language doesn't allow me only to better understand what persons feel, but also to show what I want people to see of me.

Now that you've found a job or started your business, how has your life changed? What positive changes have you experienced, both professionally and personally?

I'm not actually doing the job that I want. But the knowledge of what I want to do allow me to work on it or all the little things which are around it. I know in what directions I'm going and everything looks better, I'm never going stressed to work because I know that is a temporary job. I feel more motivated to be the best version of myself. Having a purpose helps you to better face your daily life, from the moment you brush your teeth as soon as you wake up to, during the moment in the which you start working and training yourself until you came back home and prepare yourself to rest.

Looking back, what advice would you give to someone who is unemployed or struggling to start a business? What do you think are the most important skills they should work on?

My advice is to find a purpose and follow it until you can. Over more don't despair in quiet moment in which you feel calm with no apparent goal, just focus on what you like or would you like and do all the little things around it which may prove useful in future.

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SUCCESS STORY for Unleash Potential project

Participant Information:
● Name: Mariana Robu ● Age: 34 ● Location: Spain, Tenerife



What challenges did you face while being unemployed, and how did it affect your daily life?

Being unemployed was a challenging time for me. I felt a lot of pressure to find a job quickly, which sometimes made it hard to stay positive. My daily life was a mix of applying for jobs and trying to maintain some kind of routine. I also used the time to learn new skills, but it was hard to stay motivated without clear results. I often felt stuck, but I tried to see it as an opportunity to grow and reflect on what I truly wanted from my career.

What were the main reasons you struggled to find a job or start your own business?
Did you face any specific barriers or lack certain skills?

The main reason I struggled was the lack of experience in my field. Many job postings required several years of work experience, which I didn't have. Additionally, I didn't feel fully confident in my skills at the time, especially in areas like networking and presenting myself professionally. Starting a business also felt overwhelming because I lacked the financial resources and knowledge to take the first steps, and it was also expensive. Furthermore, being a temporary teacher added to the complexity, as I had to constantly move from one school to another.

How did you develop the skills needed to find a job or start your business? Which skills did you focus on improving the most?

I started by identifying the skills I lacked and then worked on improving them step by step. For instance, I realized I needed better digital skills, so I took free online courses in areas like graphic design and social media marketing. I also worked on soft skills, like improving my interview techniques and learning how to write more effective resumes and cover letters. It wasn't easy, but focusing on small, manageable goals helped me stay consistent.

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What specific skills did you learn or improve that helped you secure a job or launch your business? How did you apply these skills in real life?

One skill I improved was time management. When I was unemployed, I set a daily schedule to divide my time between job searching, learning, and personal activities. I also worked on problem-solving skills by tackling challenges one at a time. For example, when I started doing freelance work, I had to figure out how to market my services and manage clients. These skills not only helped me find opportunities but also boosted my confidence.

How did emotional intelligence play a role in your journey? Were you able to better understand and manage your emotions, as well as empathize with others, to improve your professional and personal relationships?

Emotional intelligence was crucial for me. Being unemployed can be emotionally draining, and I had to learn how to manage feelings of frustration and self-doubt. I practiced mindfulness to stay grounded and remind myself that this was just a phase. Empathy also played a role when I networked with others—I made an effort to connect on a personal level, which helped me build stronger relationships and find support during that period.

Now that you've found a job or started your business, how has your life changed?

What positive changes have you experienced, both professionally and personally? Now that I have a job, my life feels much more stable and fulfilling. I have a sense of purpose and a clear direction for my career. Financially, things have improved, which has reduced a lot of stress. Personally, I feel more confident and capable. While the job comes with its own challenges, I'm grateful for the opportunity to grow and learn every day.

Looking back, what advice would you give to someone who is unemployed or struggling to start a business? What do you think are the most important skills they should work on?

My advice would be to stay patient and believe in your ability to overcome challenges. Focus on building skills that are in demand, but also take time to understand what makes you unique. Networking is incredibly important, so don't hesitate to reach out to people in your field. And lastly, don't be afraid of rejection—it's all part of the process. Every step, no matter how small, brings you closer to your goal.

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SUCCESS STORY for Unleash Potential project

Participant Information:

● Name: Katherina Hrynko ● Age: 37 ● Location: Tenerife, Spain



What challenges did you face while being unemployed, and how did it affect your daily life?

Unemployment was a difficult phase where I often felt like I was losing direction. My self-esteem took a hit, and I found it hard to keep a positive outlook. Daily life became repetitive - a constant cycle of job applications, rejections, and uncertainty. It was particularly tough to see my peers advancing in their careers while I felt stuck.

What were the main reasons you struggled to find a job or start your own business? Did you face any specific barriers or lack certain skills?

I struggled with limited professional connections and a lack of knowledge about navigating the job market. Additionally, I lacked expertise in current industry tools and software, which made me feel unqualified. Starting my own business felt intimidating due to financial constraints and insufficient guidance on where to begin.

How did you develop the skills needed to find a job or start your business? Which skills did you focus on improving the most?

I started by attending free workshops and webinars on career development and entrepreneurship. I focused on improving my technical skills, particularly in data visualization and project management, which were relevant to my field. I also worked on soft skills, such as public speaking and networking, to expand my professional circle.

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What specific skills did you learn or improve that helped you secure a job or launch your business? How did you apply these skills in real life?

A crucial skill I developed was strategic thinking. I learned how to prioritize tasks and align them with my long-term goals. Additionally, mastering tools like Excel and Power BI gave me a competitive edge. I used these skills to create a portfolio of projects, which I showcased during interviews to demonstrate my abilities.

How did emotional intelligence play a role in your journey? Were you able to better understand and manage your emotions, as well as empathize with others, to improve your professional and personal relationships?

Emotional intelligence helped me stay resilient during challenging times. By acknowledging my feelings of frustration and fear, I was able to address them constructively. Building empathy also allowed me to connect meaningfully with mentors and peers, creating a supportive network that was invaluable in my journey.

Now that you've found a job or started your business, how has your life changed? What positive changes have you experienced, both professionally and personally?

My life has improved significantly since finding a fulfilling job. Professionally, I feel empowered and equipped to tackle challenges. Personally, I've regained my confidence and have a clearer vision of my goals. Financial stability has also given me the freedom to invest in personal growth and enjoy time with family and friends.

Looking back, what advice would you give to someone who is unemployed or struggling to start a business? What do you think are the most important skills they should work on?

I would advise others to focus on adaptability and continuous learning. It's important to identify your strengths and find ways to showcase them. Building a network and seeking feedback from others can open unexpected opportunities. Remember, every small step forward counts, and perseverance is key to overcoming obstacles.

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SUCCESS STORY for Unleash Potential project

Participant Information:

● Name: Antonio Lipari ● Age: 34 ● Location: Italy, Sicily



What challenges did you face while being unemployed, and how did it affect your daily life?

when I wasn't employed, I actually did two different types of work. on the one hand, I was constantly looking for job offers. at the same time, I enriched my knowledge through studies and various courses so as not to fall behind with the skills required in the job market. it can be said that looking for a job is equally doing a job!

What were the main reasons you struggled to find a job or start your own business? Did you face any specific barriers or lack certain skills?

the main reason for the difficulty in finding a job is that there is a lot of competition, there are many other people looking for the same job. I am currently a teacher. as far as I'm concerned, I can say that the main barrier was the skills to obtain. In fact, in our country the studies necessary to become a teacher are very long and also expensive. This is also very complicated because you always have to move from one school to another as long as you are a temporary teacher

How did you develop the skills needed to find a job or start your business? Which skills did you focus on improving the most?

first of all, I tried to increase my qualifications because to be a teacher it is preferable to have as many academicqualifications as possiblebecause they will be evaluated at the time of application. I focused more on those qualifications that the Italian school is looking for. I had to study again after graduation and attend courses and internships to obtain all the required qualifications. it was hard but this way I achieved what I wanted to do.

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What specific skills did you learn or improve that helped you secure a job or launch your business? How did you apply these skills in real life?

the skills that helped me the most were communication and the ability to relate to others. It is essential for a teacher to know how to communicate well. theoretical skills are not enough if you are not able to make yourself understood by others.

How did emotional intelligence play a role in your journey? Were you able to better understand and manage your emotions, as well as empathize with others, to improve your professional and personal relationships?

I believe that emotional intelligence is fundamental in all areas of work. thanks to it we are able to act better and with awareness and make the best choices for us. thanks to an exercise in emotional intelligence, I am able to decide better on professional choices. in my job, it is necessary to know how to establish the right relationships between colleagues, superiors and students. this is a way of working that is based partly on experience directly at work and partly reflects our personality (which can be more or less suitable for relationships)

Now that you've found a job or started your business, how has your life changed? What positive changes have you experienced, both professionally and personally?

certainly now that I work my life is different from what it was before. I have a new routine, new schedules, and new ways of doing things. there have certainly been many positive changes in this, starting with greater economic independence and greater happiness in doing a job that I really like. I feel happier and fulfilled. on the other hand I also have greater responsibilities and duties that I have to face.

Looking back, what advice would you give to someone who is unemployed or struggling to start a business? What do you think are the most important skills they should work on?

the advice I would like to give is that you should try to do what you like most. if we practice something we love we will surely become better than many others. passion for a type of work is what makes you obtain the best and most satisfying results. furthermore, it is not enough to have good competence, but it must be constantly trained and enriched. after all, you never stop learning and you can always improve!

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SUCCESS STORY for Unleash Potential project

Participant Information:
● Name: Giuseppe Virga ● Age: 38 ● Location: Catania, Italy



What challenges did you face while being unemployed, and how did it affect your daily life?

The biggest challenge after finishing my studies was finding a job. It was extremely frustrating to apply for positions that seemed to match my profile, only to receive no response or be rejected after the first interview. The uncertainty of not knowing when or if another interview opportunity would come added to the stress.

What were the main reasons you struggled to find a job or start your own business? Did you face any specific barriers or lack certain skills?

The primary reason was the gap between my university education and real-world demands. My course was highly theoretical, with a strong focus on concepts rather than practical application. This made it challenging to transition smoothly into the job market.

How did you develop the skills needed to find a job or start your business? Which skills did you focus on improving the most?

I developed my skills mainly by traveling abroad, taking on my first job to cover expenses, meeting people from different cultures, and expanding my perspective both personally and professionally.

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What specific skills did you learn or improve that helped you secure a job or launch your business? How did you apply these skills in real life?

I developed business development and teamwork skills, which I now apply in my daily life by managing my team, structuring their tasks, and working toward increasingly challenging goals.

How did emotional intelligence play a role in your journey? Were you able to better understand and manage your emotions, as well as empathize with others, to improve your professional and personal relationships?

Emotional intelligence was crucial to my career growth. Experience helped me understand and manage my emotions better in everyday life. Empathy, in particular, allowed me to see things from others' perspectives, which has been especially valuable in managing conflicts.

Now that you've found a job or started your business, how has your life changed? What positive changes have you experienced, both professionally and personally?

I've grown both personally and professionally. I now have a job that I enjoy and find fulfilling. Thanks to Erasmus+ and its Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs program, I met an entrepreneur in Sweden who helped me shape my career path, and after my internship, we decided to collaborate. I'm currently responsible for managing other Erasmus+ and Horizon Europe funded projects. Experience has taught me to face everyday challenges with resilience, better understand and manage my emotions, and resolve issues more smoothly.

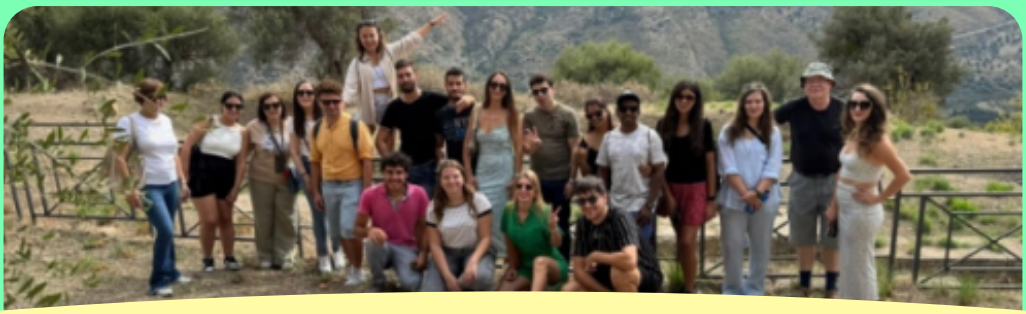
Looking back, what advice would you give to someone who is unemployed or struggling to start a business? What do you think are the most important skills they should work on?

I would advise them to step outside their comfort zone and embrace new challenges. Being in an international environment and listening to others' experiences can provide valuable insights and inspiration.

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SUCCESS STORY for Unleash Potential project

Participant Information:
● Name: Marianna Longo ● Age: 26 ● Location: Italy



What challenges did you face while being unemployed, and how did it affect your daily life?

Being unemployed has brought various challenges, especially emotional ones. The feeling of uncertainty and frustration has sometimes made it difficult to maintain a positive routine. Not having a regular job has impacted my self-esteem, putting pressure on me to prove my worth. However, participating in the UP project was crucial: it helped me structure my resume and improve my financial literacy, as well as understand the psychological barriers that accompany the job search process. Thanks to this and the use of coping strategies, I have continued to organize my days with study and training to stay motivated.

What were the main reasons you struggled to find a job or start your own business?
Did you face any specific barriers or lack certain skills?

The main difficulties were related to the lack of practical work experience, despite my theoretical knowledge and education. The job market is very competitive, and I found it hard to stand out without advanced networking skills. Participating in the UP project gave me a clearer vision of these challenges, helping me identify specific barriers and overcome them through resume preparation and the use of coping strategies.

How did you develop the skills needed to find a job or start your business?
Which skills did you focus on improving the most?

I have developed my skills mainly through continuous learning and specific courses in my field. I attended online seminars and engaged in self-learning. I particularly focused on soft skills such as effective communication, time management, and resilience, which are crucial in the world of work.

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What specific skills did you learn or improve that helped you secure a job or launch your business? How did you apply these skills in real life?

I also focused on developing problem-solving skills and effective time management. These abilities, combined with what I learned in the UP project, helped me optimize my resume, prepare targeted applications, and face interviews with greater confidence.

How did emotional intelligence play a role in your journey? Were you able to better understand and manage your emotions, as well as empathize with others, to improve your professional and personal relationships?

Emotional intelligence has been fundamental. I learned to manage my emotions, especially in moments of disappointment and uncertainty, while maintaining a positive attitude. The ability to empathize with others has allowed me to build stronger relationships, both in personal and professional contexts. This empathy has been useful in job interviews and professional interactions, where understanding others is crucial.

Now that you've found a job or started your business, how has your life changed? What positive changes have you experienced, both professionally and personally?

Even though I haven't found a job yet, I continue to see my journey as an opportunity for growth. Every small personal achievement, like completing a new course, represents a positive change. I feel more prepared and confident in my path, and this confidence is starting to influence my personal life as well, making me more resilient and optimistic.

Looking back, what advice would you give to someone who is unemployed or struggling to start a business? What do you think are the most important skills they should work on?

I would advise not to get discouraged and to keep investing in education, especially in soft skills such as communication and stress management. Additionally, it's important to be patient with oneself, try to maintain a positive mindset, and build a support network. In my opinion, the most important skills to develop are adaptability, emotional intelligence, and the ability to plan for the long term.

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Participant Information:
● Name: Natalia Voronova ● Age: 36 ● Location: Catania, Italy



What challenges did you face while being unemployed, and how did it affect your daily life?

After my work experience in New York, adapting to the uncertainty of job hunting was difficult. I had to deal with the sudden shift from a fast-paced environment to waiting for responses to my applications. It was tough to stay motivated, as many positions either didn't align with my experience or I felt overqualified for them. This period left me feeling a bit unanchored, as I missed the sense of purpose that my previous job had given me.

What were the main reasons you struggled to find a job or start your own business? Did you face any specific barriers or lack certain skills?

One of the main barriers was the change in demand for my skill set. The teaching methods I used in New York didn't entirely align with what was expected in European schools. Additionally, I lacked familiarity with the local job markets in Italy and Spain, which made it challenging to know where to apply and how to navigate the requirements.

How did you develop the skills needed to find a job or start your business? Which skills did you focus on improving the most?

To adapt, I attended several teacher training courses that were specific to European curriculums. I also focused on improving my language skills in Italian and Spanish to communicate more effectively with colleagues, students, and parents. Being in a new cultural setting taught me flexibility and made me more open to trying different teaching approaches.

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What specific skills did you learn or improve that helped you secure a job or launch your business? How did you apply these skills in real life?

I honed my classroom management and lesson planning skills to better suit mixed-language groups. In real life, this meant finding ways to connect with students who spoke limited English by making lessons more interactive and culturally relevant. These adjustments have been vital in helping my students feel more engaged and supported.

How did emotional intelligence play a role in your journey? Were you able to better understand and manage your emotions, as well as empathize with others, to improve your professional and personal relationships?

Emotional intelligence became essential, especially when I felt overwhelmed by the cultural and professional transitions. Learning to manage my own frustrations helped me stay positive and calm in the classroom. Empathy, especially for students who struggle with English, allowed me to create a more encouraging environment where they feel safe to make mistakes and learn.

Now that you've found a job or started your business, how has your life changed? What positive changes have you experienced, both professionally and personally?

Working in Italy and Spain has enriched my life in unexpected ways. I've grown as a teacher by adapting to diverse classrooms, and personally, I've developed a love for European culture and languages. Teaching English abroad has also made me more resourceful and creative in my methods. I feel a deeper connection with my students and appreciate the chance to contribute to their growth.

Looking back, what advice would you give to someone who is unemployed or struggling to start a business? What do you think are the most important skills they should work on?

I would recommend that they stay adaptable and seek out ways to expand their skill set, particularly those relevant to their target job market. Engaging with the local culture and language can open up new perspectives and make the job search smoother. It's also important to build a support network of colleagues and mentors who can offer guidance during challenging times.

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SUCCESS STORY for Unleash Potential project

Participant Information:
● Name: Nodir ● Age: 38 ● Location: Lithuania, Vilnius



What challenges did you face while being unemployed, and how did it affect your daily life?

Financial stress: limited income causes worry. This project helped me shift my focus and offered a productive distraction.

What were the main reasons you struggled to find a job or start your own business? Did you face any specific barriers or lack certain skills?

I faced worries about speaking the Lithuanian language, but through this project, I practiced the language and built many friendships and connections within the society.

How did you develop the skills needed to find a job or start your business? Which skills did you focus on improving the most?

I developed my skills by practicing Lithuanian, expanding my network and improving my communication. I focused mostly on language proficiency and building connections, which helped me integrate better and open up more opportunities.

What specific skills did you learn or improve that helped you secure a job or launch your business? How did you apply these skills in real life?

I secured my current job through the Red Cross Lithuania and the unemployment center in Vilnius, which was instrumental in my job search. During this process, I learned and improved several key skills.

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How did emotional intelligence play a role in your journey? Were you able to better understand and manage your emotions, as well as empathize with others, to improve your professional and personal relationships?

Emotional intelligence has significantly shaped my life journey, impacting both my professional and personal relationships in various ways: 1) self-awareness; 2) self-regulation and 3) empathy development.

Now that you've found a job or started your business, how has your life changed? What positive changes have you experienced, both professionally and personally?

My current role has challenged me to learn new skills and enhance my existing ones. This continuous growth has made me more competent and confident in my abilities.

Looking back, what advice would you give to someone who is unemployed or struggling to start a business? What do you think are the most important skills they should work on?

I would like to advise them to start to improve their Lithuanian language skills if they are foreigners here, it helps to start their business.

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SUCCESS STORY for Unleash Potential project

Participant Information:

● Name: Rita ● Age: 59 ● Location: Lithuania, Vilnius



What challenges did you face while being unemployed, and how did it affect your daily life?

I was unemployed because I had to look after my sick father, it didn't affect me very much but it had some negative aspects of course.

What were the main reasons you struggled to find a job or start your own business? Did you face any specific barriers or lack certain skills?

Health problems and age. I am considered as close to retirement.

How did you develop the skills needed to find a job or start your business? Which skills did you focus on improving the most?

I tried to keep up to date with job vacancies and the job market. I checked what positions I would fit it in and how my skills could contribute with.

What specific skills did you learn or improve that helped you secure a job or launch your business? How did you apply these skills in real life?

Current skills were mostly enough. I just needed improved my skills with different jobs and courses, projects.

How did emotional intelligence play a role in your journey? Were you able to better understand and manage your emotions, as well as empathize with others, to improve your professional and personal relationships?

In the midst of other worries, there was no time to be dramatic about work, I was needed elsewhere and I saw the meaning in it.

Now that you've found a job or started your business, how has your life changed? What positive changes have you experienced, both professionally and personally?

Very busy, now I have no time for my family.

Looking back, what advice would you give to someone who is unemployed or struggling to start a business? What do you think are the most important skills they should work on?

Volunteering is very meaningful, going everywhere, taking an interest in everything.

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