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VolExpo: Volunteering Management Expedition Online Training Event

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Handbook

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Introduction

Ladies and Gentlemen, we are giving you a guide which is the result of a creative and inspiring group of international volunteers and specialists working in the NGO sector. 11th – 13th March 2021 were carried out - **Online Training Event**, in project VolExpo Volunteering Management Expedition. The project aims to disseminate the experience of 9 European countries in the field of improving tools that strengthen the professionalization of the sector. For the needs of workshops we chose only 4 out of 31 tools that we presented during the project.

Why are we doing this project?

All around Europe, both at a national level and in European projects, education and volunteering professionals design every year an array of highly useful tools and methods for volunteer management. However, many of them are underused despite heavy dissemination efforts. At the same time, European volunteer managers and coordinators lack opportunities for professional development, as the Erasmus+ project FUTUR3 has discovered. The project consortium has identified a need to share, improve and localise existing tools instead of spending time inventing new ones. This requires naturally a greater deal of work than simply sharing practices.

What you will find in guide?

In this guide, you will find not only selected tools, but also conclusions drawn from our workshop work. The primary goal of our creative efforts was tool evaluation (SWOT analysis) and finding ways to put them into practice. During the workshops, we will work on the following issues: how to use these motives in everyday work with volunteers? How to use these tools in practice?

We want invite you to read and evaluate our ideas for the use of tools selected by us.

All of the materials you will need can be downloaded here: [link to LTTA guide for participants](#):

Not: pdf yapmadan önce Sarı boyalı kısma <http://www.volexpo.eu/ltta.php> linki gömülecek. Diğer Sarı kısımlardaki gerekli linkler GDrive a gömümüş.

Tool 1. Be a hero, be a mentor!

Is a handbook for volunteer mentors. This handbook offers theoretical insights, glimpses of background information and practical tools on a variety of topics related to mentoring. It is meant for people who have taken up the demanding yet rewarding task to become a mentor to a volunteering placement.

Read more: [Be a hero, be a mentor! – method description](#)

[Be a hero, be a mentor! - Handbook](#)

SWOT analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>It comprises with the real life situations among the mentors and the their volunteers.</p> <p>The psychological power of example can be a great motivator to the volunteer, even if they are having doubts about their abilities.</p> <p>The friendly approach increases the effectiveness.</p> <p>Flexible tool that can be personalized in each case.</p> <p>The structure of the tool is logistic which helps the better understanding of the content and following the instructions.</p>	<p>The weakness shall be seen while the application process. We cannot be sure about its practicality.</p> <p>The risk of conflict is present even with separation of mentor, mentee and supervisor. Arising conflicts can lead to decreased efficiency of the tool.</p> <p>The decision through the implementation might be another challenge.</p> <p>Very time intensive; requires many trained Mentors (limit to the number of people that can be mentored by each person).</p> <p>The content is excessively concentrated. More examples from the real practice would be a great help.</p>
Opportunities	Threats
<p>It would be a great opportunity to discuss the tools among the experts from different parts of Europe.</p> <p>Opportunity to make a real difference in someone's life.</p> <p>Flexibility in regards to which model should be used depending on the activity and having different opinions and exchanging them with other people from around the world.</p> <p>The chance to improve the management skills both for volunteers and managers.</p> <p>Encouragement from the mentor for the volunteers to extend their horizons, learn and help out in the future</p> <p>The translation for native languages of the tool would be a great help for mentors who are not good at English.</p>	<p>There is no visible threat as it the compilation of already available techniques.</p> <p>If there are power struggles between the mentor and mentee, if they disagree on the goals of the mentorship or if the mentee does not agree with the model chosen</p> <p>The weakness presented, the risk of conflict, poses a threat to its efficiency, though not a major one and not meaningful enough to dismiss the advantages of this tool.</p> <p>Possible unwanted manner for the ones who are not involved enough to EVS circle</p> <p>The mentor may lose her creativity and emotionally led activity in case of fully copy of the instructions of the tool.</p>

Possible implementation methods.

1. How to use the tools in practice in different organization? What do you think is important with working with this tool? Tips and ideas.

2. What resources do you need (materials, workshops, questionnaires skills etc.)? What is needed to use the tool in “real environment”? Examples how to implement the tool.

- Working group. A good, strong and respectable mentor and a willing group that will follow them
- A mentor must understand and be aware of the needs and motivations of his or her volunteers, asking questions on a timely. This attitude makes the volunteer feel valued as a person and as a volunteer and becomes more motivated because he/she feels that there is a follow-up.
- The relationship among the volunteers and the mentor should be like the one among the students and teacher. A teacher must predict the needs and priorities of his/her students to take the necessary precautions.
- To avoid conflict the Mentor must be attentive to the behaviour of his volunteers and whenever necessary speak individually using active listening, in order to understand the cause of the conflict and thus be able to reach a resolution of the conflict. For this type of conversation, the Mentor should choose a quiet environment where they can talk freely and without interruptions.
- The use of the tool is depended on the preconditions and preliminary education of the volunteer: e.g. type of education, diploma, age, length of previous practice on similar field etc.. It is recommended to adapt this excellent tool individually to the certain volunteer and mentor.
- It would be advisable for the mentor to give special support to volunteers who are displaced from their country and especially in a different culture, especially in the first days, so that there is an easier integration.
- One of the most effective way maybe:1st step: keeping a general workshop with common discussion in the end with the participation of all volunteer.2nd step: continue the education individually according to the needs of certain volunteer.
- The Mentor must take into consideration cultural differences at various levels: religious aspects, food (e.g. not eating pork), not entering a house with shoes on, language barriers, etc.

- In order to accomplish all this there should be periodic follow-up meetings, questionnaires, active listening, etc.
- We think it is important to have a relatively small to medium sized organization because having little mentors to a large number of volunteers will be detrimental and keeping the tool from working as well as it could. Having many mentors is also a bad idea because of the resources needed.
- You would need a workshop to make this model known when it is being implemented, but also many more workshops to train the mentors, you would need a team to revise an application, a CV or any other piece of paper that recommends someone as a mentor.
- It would be useful to organise workshops to present the part of the tool that are relevant for the organisation and work on them using for example questionnaires.
- Have workshops for mentors, so that they can decide to approach mentee differently and in a more productive way for both.
- To benefit from others' experiences is important while using this tool. especially we can have great tips and ideas from example cases. We should be very careful when choosing the methods.

Project-based activities may be a good way to implement this tool. The needed resources might vary such as ICT tools.

- Materials: workshops, questionnaires, learning through sharing real experiences (cases).

Tool 2. Octagon model.

The octagon model helps a volunteer manager get a better understanding on the great variety of different motivations which attract people into volunteering. Using this model, you can create a tool that will perfectly match the task to the needs of the volunteers you work with or manage.

Read more: [Oktagon model](#)

SWOT analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
allocating tasks easy use clear suits everyone self-reflection proper matching It is experience based, written tool	have to use it regularly overwhelming have to come up with a questionnaire monitoring template
Opportunities	Threats
works online works in a group helps the organization helps the group flow helps the communication helps the awareness personal development, and fruitful collaboration	gives insecurity wrong questionnaire - the danger of creating an inaccurate questionnaire lack of reaction from the mentor lack of experience from the mentor

Possible implementation methods.

1. How to use the tools in practice in different organization? What do you think is important with working with this tool? Tips and ideas.

2. What resources do you need (materials, workshops, questionnaires skills etc.)? What is needed to use the tool in "real environment"? Examples how to implement the tool.

- Krisztina HU: This tool is important, because the motivation of the volunteers is important to know. We can't work fruitful without this.
- Krisztina HU: It would be nice a questionnaire, which can help to identify the 8 types of the motivations.
- Dzaner & Elif, MK, TR: It requires a proper screening tool, about the volunteers. Also, personality determining questionnaires can also be included, in cooperation with the octagon model.
- A guide was created explaining how to use the model, link in English ([PDF](#)) [The Octagon Model of Volunteer Motivation: Results of a Phenomenological Analysis \(researchgate.net\)](#)
- Detect which tasks are in connections with which volunteer.
- Creating a questionnaire . You can create a questionnaire based on the concepts used.
- Workshops.
- Acknowledge the getting and giving in organizations.
- Implementing in "real life"
 - one on one between volunteers and the mentor
 - groups
 - do it in a creative way (workshop)
 - list of tasks - you can create a list of possible activities in the organization based on this model,
 - match the tasks with the motivations.
- This tool can be used to adjust the activity to the competences and needs of the volunteers.

Tool 3. Intercultural communication.

This handbook is a great tool for explaining the problems of intercultural relationships both in theory and in the form of practical tips. It is an interesting textbook on which you will learn about the history, scale, and probabilities of migration, and the psychological underpinnings of these phenomena. The manual is very extensive, therefore we chose only one area of analysis for the workshop: stereotypes and cultural standards.

Read more:

[Stereotypes](#) and cultural standards

If you are interested, here you can additionally download whole [Handbook in English](#)

SWOT analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>diversity</p> <p>easy to understand</p> <p>self-reflection</p> <p>openness</p> <p>we can change others' perspective</p> <p>access to different point of views</p> <p>feel of solidarity</p> <p>has advantages to be used in positive interaction</p> <p>globalization</p>	<p>too theoretical</p> <p>hard to capture every person on the spectrum</p> <p>sensitive</p> <p>can lead to stereotypes</p> <p>Formulation of ideas can make or break this tool</p> <p>too large area of application</p> <p>threatened by the media</p>
Opportunities	Threats
<p>widely useable</p> <p>with a proper template it can be more practical</p> <p>we can change others' perspectives</p> <p>can be combined with other tools</p> <p>identifying the threats in organization and analyse them</p> <p>learning and accepting different ideas</p> <p>recognize privileges</p> <p>a great tool to meet the people together again</p> <p>making common sense</p> <p>for managers: ask yourself: what stereotypes are threatening your organization? A new look at working in NGOs</p>	<p>hard to integrate</p> <p>you can misuse it</p> <p>It can easily lead to conflict if there is a misunderstanding of intent between the two parties</p> <p>can lead to passive hate and ignorance</p> <p>I can't see any powerful threats</p> <p>needs to be studied carefully not to cause any wrong way of use</p>

Possible implementation methods.

1. How to use the tools in practice in different organization? What do you think is important with working with this tool? Tips and ideas.

2. What resources do you need (materials, workshops, questionnaires skills etc.)? What is needed to use the tool in “real environment”? Examples how to implement the tool.

- In some organizations we have weekly meetings (Monday meetings for example) and it could be a good opportunity to bring the intercultural communication as a topic. We already started implementing it discussing on topics such as human rights, discrimination, stereotypes, communication, etc. We believe communication is one of the most powerful tools to be used with the volunteers. It is an opportunity to hear from them and be heard and try to reach a solution that fits everyone's concerns and ideas.
- Create a list of stereotypes in order to create a questionnaire and panel in which we can discuss about prejudices, privileges, and solutions for the problems.
- Digital tools: Zoom, Prezi, Slido, Padlet, Microsoft teams, Google meeting, Facebook/Instagram live
- Personal example to show how the tool works and encouraging to implement it to culture instead of rules and regulations.
- To have a webinar (1 hour) to introduce the tool and how to use it...
- Small films with examples, to inspire users... To My, a to Oni HD, Co się stanie, kiedy przestaniemy szufladkować ludzi? - YouTube
- Observe: be flexible and open-minded, state that stereotypes are not necessarily bad, they help us thinking about the positive side, talk about fear, try to understand it.
- Where and how can we use it? Open discussions, regulations = lack of freedom of speech, group rules that everybody agrees to, rudeness depends on the cultures themselves, proper screening (in interviews), theatre of the oppressed.
- Rules and regulations:
 - personal example to show how the tool works and encouraging to implement it to culture instead of rules and regulations;
 - it violates freedom of speech if regulations would be applied;
 - if not accepting the people who are not willing to change their attitudes towards negative stereotypes, then discrimination takes place;

- introduce a collective gain, which could eliminate the difference, and involve common characteristics.
- Understanding
 - theatre of the oppressed;
 - to have webinar, to introduce the tool and how to use it;
 - short films with examples, to inspire users;
 - knowledge and observation (of the volunteers)
 - better screenings, personality traits, modified interviews;
 - state that stereotypes are not necessarily bad, it protects us from unknown (fear), you solve it by understanding
 - eliminate ignorance
- We cannot never GIVE UP. We have to react for negative stereotypes! Always

Tool 4. Strategies for effectively communication

Volunteers are the heart of the organization. Unfortunately, many organizations fail to communicate effectively with their volunteers for a variety of reasons. For example, they may not provide enough time and space for one-on-one interactions or they don't have any proper mechanisms in place to receive feedback. Poor communication leaves the organization at risk for increased misunderstandings, unhappy volunteers, and volunteer attrition. It might even deter some volunteers from getting involved at all!

Read more: [Strategies for effectively communication](#)

SWOT analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>continuous connection between the volunteers and the coordinator</p> <p>Emphasise the importance of both individual and group communication</p> <p>With a more complete strategy, there is a plan, and not just communication when we remember.</p> <p>Contains general advices for all fields of voluntary works</p> <p>Mentors can be sure that organization is working properly</p>	<p>It is a theoretical framework and doesn't have tips/examples about implementation</p> <p>The larger the group, the harder it is to have personal communication with each volunteer.</p> <p>Language barrier</p> <p>Do not deal with the required attitude of mentor e.g. it is an advantages: smiling, joke, kind, gentle during the communication.</p> <p>Difference in personalities between coordinator and volunteers</p>
Opportunities	Threats
<p>we can offer the best activities for the volunteers</p> <p>we can work with the volunteers long time</p> <p>Better volunteer retention and higher volunteer satisfaction</p> <p>Concrete and well-structured bond among volunteers</p>	<p>if the group is developed, it is hard to involve the new ones</p> <p>Once we start a form of communication, we create volunteer expectations--we have to be careful to create strategies and systems that are sustainable even if the volunteer manager changes.</p> <p>Difficulties to maintain in large and growing groups</p> <p>When there would be volunteers not interested in mission, they might interrupt or overwhelm others during their speech.</p> <p>Mentors need to be prepared for the cultural differences.</p>

Possible implementation methods.

1. How to use the tools in practice in different organization? What do you think is important with working with this tool? Tips and ideas.

2. What resources do you need (materials, workshops, questionnaires skills etc.)? What is needed to use the tool in “real environment”? Examples how to implement the tool.

- If someone does his tasks properly we should thank, or compliment, but when the person doesn't, we should ask if there is any problem. We need to be careful what we say
- It can be good to organise volunteer actions, or trainings to know the volunteers well and to start the communication with them
- Timing of the task - don't give task without deadline!
- Information is important for the volunteers about the organisation, but not everything at the same time... - feel free to ask us...
- Because of the Covid , we meet on zoom or teams to have discussion about different topic connected with organisation. Play some puns or monopoly online.
- Involving volunteers in planning and getting their opinions will increase their motivation. This will enable them to do their work by adopting more.
- Involve volunteers in communicating: have volunteers contact other volunteers, especially since we cannot have big meetings with COVID.
- Find ways to adapt the tool to the situation we are facing nowadays; for example maintain contact with volunteers through online meetings
- I always like to start with an evaluation: how are we communicating now? Which area (of the 5) are we having the most trouble with? Maybe ask volunteers what THEY think, by doing a survey or something similar.
- Organise workshops or meetings in order that mentors and volunteer managers know how to communicate with the volunteers. Organise guidelines, so that a way of continuity and coherence is assured.
- Always keep in contact with your volunteers, even if it is a particular difficult time make sure you find time to let them feel valued
- Certificate, the information about the tasks are clear for the volunteers. Be sure, the volunteer understand you well - ask, ask... Certificate - making questions to the volunteers - if he/she understand everything well

Facilitation

Facilitation is the act of engaging participants in creating, discovering, and applying learning insights. In contrast to presentation, which is typically characterized by a “sage on the stage” delivering content to an audience, facilitation usually involves a “guide on the side” who asks questions, moderates discussions, introduces activities, and helps participants learn.

In case of VolExpo Online Training Event, it was also needed to integrate the participants, get to know each other as well as get them into “working mood”. With this large number of participants available via internet, it is generally difficult to “connect” with each other. That is why, before the actual work on the tools, we prepare set of short “warm up” activities.

1. Methods and techniques

We can divide all the facilitation activities into 3 groups:

- Mood questions:
 - What kind of water you are feeling today? (for example peaceful ocean, wild river, heavy rain etc.)
 - What movie title you are today?
 - What song title you are today?

Participants replies using group chat or Mentimeter tool (word map) and later facilitator can ask them to comment or explain their choice.

Asking this kind of question, gives you picture what is the mood of participants, what kind of energy level they have as well as attitude to the whole event.

During VolExpo LTTA we asked them the same question at the beginning and the end of each day so we had comparison, what changed during the day.

- Expectation questions

It is always good, to ask participants at the beginning what are their expectation toward the training, what they would like to learn.

During last day of training, it is good to ask them again, if their expectation was met. That will be important for evaluation of the LTTA

- Warm up / Activation Activities

- Virtual background

Ask participants to change their background with a picture that tell something about them and let them comment their choice.

- Virtual coffee break

Although all the participants are online, you do not need to resign from coffee break. You ask participants to bring their favourite coffee mugs with them to the screen and let them talk freely. At the end, you can take a lovely photo as a reminder.

- What is your favourite colour?

This is two-part activity. Firstly, you ask what is their favourite colour and secondly you gives participant 1 minute to find something in this colour and bring it to the scree to show other and why it is your choice.

- Virtual scavenger hunt

You gives participant 5 minutes to collect different objects that fit to the requirement of your choice, for example: something that starts on letter “r”, the softest thing you own, something smaller than your fingernail etc. It is up to you and your imagination. Later participants have to comment.

- Advertise the object

You ask participant to find any object they want and they have to advertise this item to the rest of the group as “the most amazing thing in the whole world”.

All presented methods and techniques are just an example how to lead the non-formal part of the training. It can be modified, changed and adapted for different needs and target groups. Also, what is important, some of the techniques can be use in face-to-face workshops as well.