FLOWS – Further Learning, Outreach and Working Skills

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Learning Unit 3:
The FLOWS counselling process

WP5: FLOWS training for practitioners

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AGENDA

LE 3 - FLOWS counselling process

1. What is the FLOWS tool?

2. The application of the FLOWS tool

3. FLOWS tool development

4. FLOWS process model and analysis

5. FLOWS competences

6. Exercise

LEARNER OUTCOMES

This learning unit provides the following:

1. Understand the development and background of the FLOWS tool and how the tool can be used in practice.

2. Understand the theoretical background and key concepts that support the FLOWS tool.

3. Learn about the assessment process and how they can help overcome some of the issues and concerns your organisations and participants face in a rapidly changing world of work.

4. Learn how to use the tool to help participants recognise their own competencies - already acquired in everyday life.

5. Decide when it is bestto use the tool in the counselling process.

What is the FLOWS tool?

A tool to help young people identify and develop their transversal skills to facilitate their integration into the labour market:

An interactive, animated questionnaire with videos and audio recordings. It asks participants how often they carry out various activities in everyday life.

The focus is on recording skills through everyday activities that are also relevant to the world of work.

As a result of the interaction with the tool, a summarised report on hidden strengths and talents is created.

The report shows the three greatest strengths of the participants in four overarching categories.

Context and theories behind the FLOWS tool

According to Colardyn & Bjornavold (2004), the assessment of non-formal and informal learning relies heavily on standards. The measurement tools developed should fulfil the requirements of reliability, validity and quality.

Social cognitive career theory (SCCT) states that individuals are directly and vicariously exposed to a variety of career-related activities at school, at home, and in their communities during childhood and adolescence and throughout their lives.

Through continuous activity, practice and feedback, people hone their skills, develop personal standards of performance, develop a sense of their effectiveness at specific tasks and thus acquire valuable competences.

Context and theories behind the FLOWS tool

People are most likely to develop interest in activities in which they feel effective and from which they expect positive outcomes. When people develop interest in an activity, they are also likely to develop goals to maintain or increase their engagement.

Further activities lead to experiences of coping or failure, which in turn help to review self-efficacy, outcome expectations and ultimately interests in an ongoing feedback loop.

The additional benefits of the FLOWS tool

The FLOWS tool aims to strengthen the individual's self-efficacy, resilience and motivation to perform.

Through a positive feedback dialogue, the individual is shown the skills, abilities and knowledge from daily life.

The feedback profile, which is presented and discussed with beneficiaries after completing the questionnaire, links the individual's day-to-day learning to specific work environments and tasks.

"People's beliefs about their abilities have a profound influence on those abilities."
- Albert Bandura (1994)

Target group in the FLOWS project

People who have difficulties gaining a foothold in the labour market.

People with a low level of
education

Lack of suitable work experience

Socially disadvantaged people

Single parents

Ethnic minorities

Recovering drug users

Early school leavers

Long-term unemployed

Group exercise: Everyday skills

1. In groups, compile a list of two everyday activities.

1. Look at the activities and list the tasks associated with each activity.

3. what skills do you need to fulfil the tasks?

4. Tick the activities that you have learnt **outside of school/study or the work environment.**

FLOWS tool development (1)

1. Country research focussing on the future world of work and the development of soft skills

2. Country-specific focus groups - users and counsellors

3. Everyday tasks - questionnaire and analysis

4. Development of competences for the FLOWS tool

5. Development of FLOWS reports

6. Development of the platform

7. Training for FLOWS practitioners

8. Integration and translation of the tool

9. Evaluation of the tool
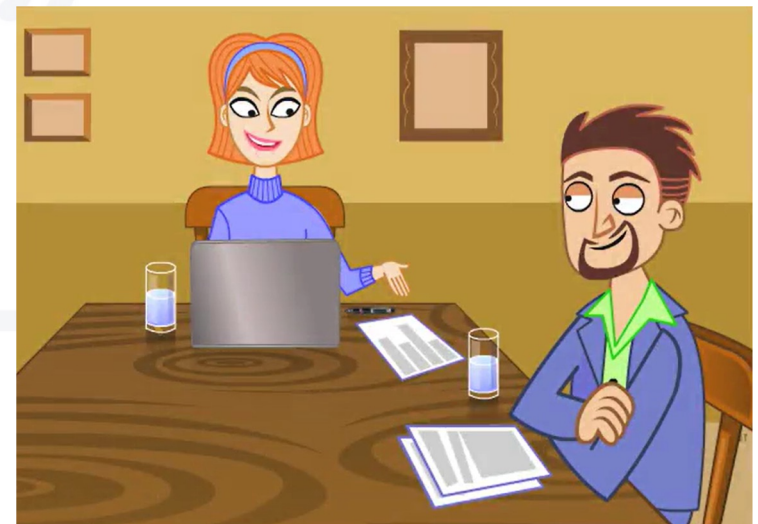
FLOWS tool development (2)

The country research on the world of work and the focus groups with young people on their access to the labour market revealed important areas of development that should be considered in guidance, such as **learning/work and communication**, but also *care, well-being, shopping, leisure and travel*. In addition, young people develop many skills in areas such as the use of technology and media use.

During the research phase, the partners also highlighted the transversal or soft skills that are relevant for employers and the labour market and that are not necessarily developed through formal education or a certified degree, such as **creativity, adaptability, time management, problem solving, conflict resolution, teamwork, integrity, self-awareness, empathy, resilience, active listening** and many others...

The next challenge was to create a list of cross-cutting competences to be measured with our FLOWS tool that are related to the areas mentioned above. Therefore, the partnership decided to summarise them into the OECD's four main categories or macro-competences: Creating New Value; Taking Responsibility; Managing Tensions and Dilemmas; Communication. Although most of the skills or sub-competences have been assigned to one category only, some can be repeated in more than one category, such as creativity and problem solving, as they are equally important for both macro-competences.

Process model methodology

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Purchasing
Mainte nance
Use of media
Leisure and travelling
Learning/ Working        ──▶  Different types  ──▶  Analysis  ──┬──▶  Creating new values      ──┐
Use of technology              of activities                    ├──▶  Taking responsibility        ├──▶  Career match
Personal care and                                               ├──▶  Reconciling tensions and    │
well-being                                                      │     dilemmas                    │
Communication                                                   └──▶  Communication               ┘
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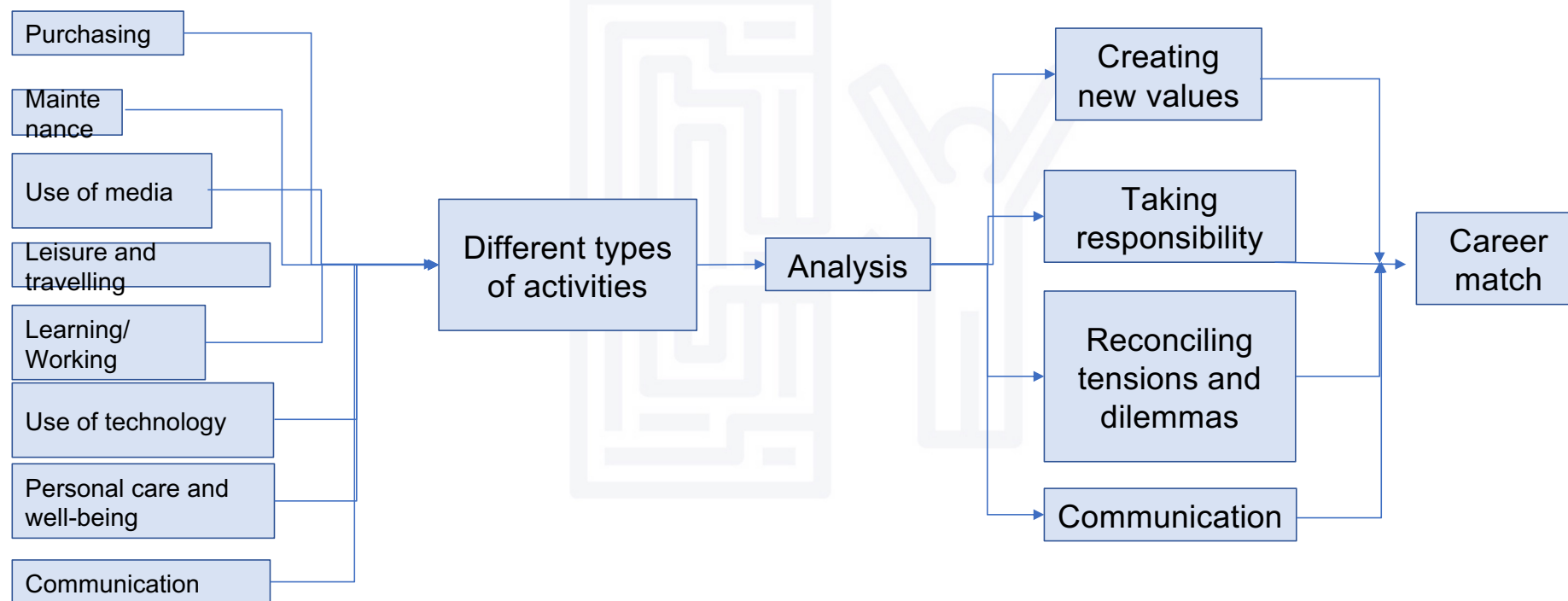
Task analysis... The matrix

4 experts determined the average values and then the significance value for each activity in order to weigh the value of the answers (Never, Not very often, Sometimes, Often, Very often)

The matrix is made up of the following components:

4 overarching categories: Creating new values; Taking responsibility; Balancing tensions and dilemmas; Communication

44 sub-competences: 10-12 per category

8 areas: Shopping; Caring; Media use; Leisure & travel; Learning/working; Use of technology; Personal care/well-being; Communication

73 Everyday activities: 6-14 per area

Analysing the tasks... Psychometrics

The data sheet was used to assess the "importance level" of each competency within each activity and the frequency of the activity.

For each activity, a line was filled in the data sheet to analyse the extent to which each competency was required to perform the activity.

This was done by four "raters" from across the partnership who (individually) rated each task against each of the 44 sub-competences to determine whether the task addressed the competence.

At the same time, each sub-competence is represented by a series of activities in the tool, adjusting its weight so that it is equally likely to be highlighted as a top competence for the participant.

How was the matrix constructed?

Each activity was evaluated with regard to the individual key competences as follows: the key competence is not required for carrying out the activity (0); key competence is required, but only to a small extent (1); key competence is required (2).

An example: The task "Planning time - shopping" was analysed: For each competence (column), a number between 0 and 2 was entered in the row for "Planning time - shopping".

While sub-competences such as "Resilience" or "Active listening" were rated 0 for this activity, others such as "Time management" or "Agility" were rated 2, while the values for another activity such as "Helping or volunteering in my community" could be rated exactly the opposite.

The Excel spreadsheet then became a matrix indicating how much (not at all - a little - a lot) of each competency is required to perform that activity based on the agreed competencies for a future world of work.

This information will feed into the analysis of the data following the piloting of the FLOWS tool.

FLOWS competences
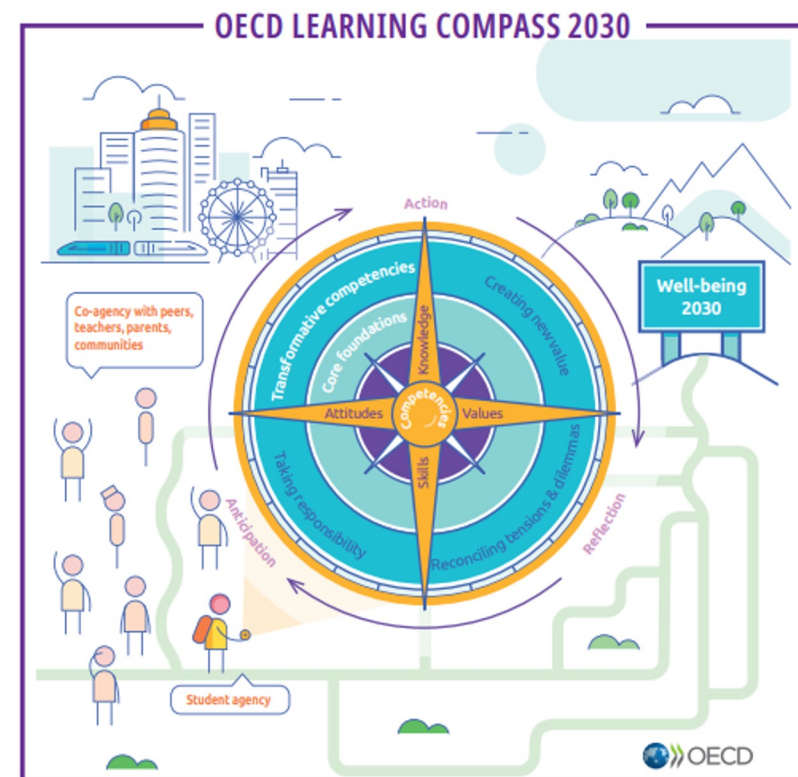
The definition of "FLOWS competences" is based on:

1) OECD Future of Education and Skills 2030 - Conceptual Learning Framework: TRANSFORMATIVE COMPETENCES FOR 2030

2) FLOWS WP2 research results, categorised by the following them

Creating new values

Taking responsibility

Reconciling tensions and dilemmas

Communication

FLOWS competences (2)

Transformative competences can be seen as generic competences that help learners to navigate a range of different situations and experiences (Grayling, 2017[1]). In this sense, they are highly transferable: These skills can be used throughout life.

The ability to deal with uncertainty, to develop new attitudes and values and to act productively and meaningfully even when goals shift remains, for the time being, a uniquely human skill (Laukonnen, Biddel and Gallagher, 2018[2]).

Digitalisation in the workplace cannot compete with people's ability to create new value, balance tensions or take responsibility. These skills are increasingly needed in societies that are becoming more diverse and interdependent as they develop.

For example, it is less likely that jobs requiring creative intelligence will be automated in the coming decades (Berger, T. and Frey, B., 2015[3]).

Dealing with tensions and dilemmas requires reading and understanding complex and ambiguous contexts - a skill that cannot (yet) be easily programmed into an algorithm.

The FLOWS competences

NEUE WERTE SCHAFFEN

Flexibilität   Anpassungsfähigkeit

Kreativität   Neugierde   Originalität

Initiative   Ideenreichtum

Aufgeschlossenheit   Kritisches Denken

Problemlösung   Zusammenarbeit

Beweglichkeit

ÜBERNAHME VON VERANTWORTUNG

Selbstregulierung   Umgang mit Emotionen

Selbstkontrolle / Kontrollüberzeugung

Moralischer Kompass   Selbsterkenntnis

Mitgefühl   Stresstoleranz

Respekt für andere   Vertrauen aufbauen

VERSÖHNUNG DER SPANNUNGEN

Engagement   Einfühlungsvermögen

Respekt   Kognitive Flexibilität

Perspektivübernahme   Kreativität

Problemlösung   Konfliktbewältigung

Resilienz   Verantwortung

KOMMUNIKATION

Teamarbeit   Zeitmanagement

Sprechen   Schreiben

Anleitung zur Service-Orientierung

Soziale Wahrnehmungsfähigkeit
Koordination

Aktives Lernen   Aktives Zuhören

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Example - Creating new values: Flexibility

Definition: Openness to change and diversity in the workplace or in everyday life.

Example tasks: (from everyday life)

You enjoy taking new paths on your daily walk and trying out new products in the supermarket when your usual brand is not available.

Everyday activities

Searching for items on mobile devices; organising activities (sometimes via social media); interested in learning new skills or doing something (crafts, hobbies, etc.)

Example environment:

Theatres, outdoors, changing locations daily, non-traditional work environments, art centres, rapidly changing environments, IT

Sample jobs:

Retail sales, project work, start-up companies

The application of the FLOWS tool in career counselling

LU3: Entire counselling process

Using the FLOWS tool (1)

For disadvantaged jobseekers - without good education and work experience - it can be difficult to document the skills they have developed over the course of their lives.

This is all the more true as disadvantaged jobseekers may not have a work history to fall back on.

Organisations working with these target groups often find it difficult to identify and measure skills that have been developed informally rather than formally and are therefore unable to get a clear picture of a person's skills and abilities.

However, these competences are very important and are often transferable to the workplace, education and training. The lack of identification of these competences can have an impact on how we perceive and support participants in the counselling process.

Using the FLOWS tool (1)

If you are not aware of the skills, knowledge and abilities you have acquired, you cannot recognise and present them as valuable for your own development.

This is one reason why disadvantaged people often end up in low-paid, low-income jobs with few opportunities for advancement or further training, or find themselves in training programmes for which they are not suited.

The FLOWS partnership recognises that individuals have developed hidden skills, abilities and different knowledge bases through non-formal and informal learning that could be a good stepping stone for them.

The FLOWS tool provides jobseekers with an objective measurement tool to help them discover their hidden strengths and skills.

FLOWS as a process of meaning-making (1)

Guidance practice is often seen as a 'learning' relationship in which participants are supported to explore themselves in a holistic process, e.g. in personal, social and professional terms.

Most systems are based on participants being aware of their skills and abilities, being able to demonstrate them through their education and work experience and finally documenting them in their CV.

The process of self-assessment by the participants is important. This includes interests, skills, values, aptitude, professional and educational experience.

FLOWS as a meaning-making process (2)

Tools and resources such as FLOWS support the individual in self-assessment and provide evidence of what has been learnt. The FLOWS tool emphasises learning through everyday situations. These can be documented and therefore utilised.

Looking back on the individual's experiences not only strengthens self-esteem and self-efficacy, but also reveals further possibilities for future training and career opportunities.
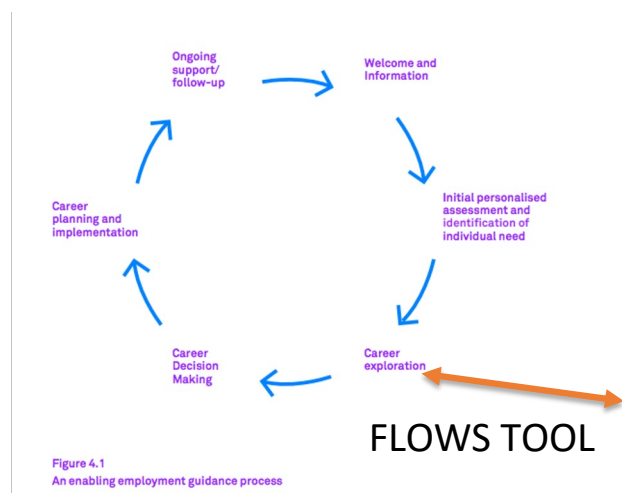
FLOWS offers a methodology that enables disadvantaged people to objectively assess and visualise their hidden skills, abilities and knowledge, thereby raising their awareness.

Exercise: Discuss in the group

- Which career counselling methods do you use and is there a link between FLOWS and one of these methods?

- When is it best to use FLOWS?

- When should FLOWS not be used?

- Is there an area where you need support when using the FLOWS tool?

Example process in employment counselling

Ongoing support/ follow-up

Welcome and Information

Initial personalised assessment and identification of individual need

Career planning and implementation

Career Decision Making

Career exploration

FLOWS TOOL

Figure 4.1
An enabling employment guidance process

Outline your current counselling process and determine at which step you would like to use the FLOWS tool.

Desired results

1. Strengthening of self-confidence
2. Improved self-esteem
3. Increased self-efficacy
4. Resilience on the labour market
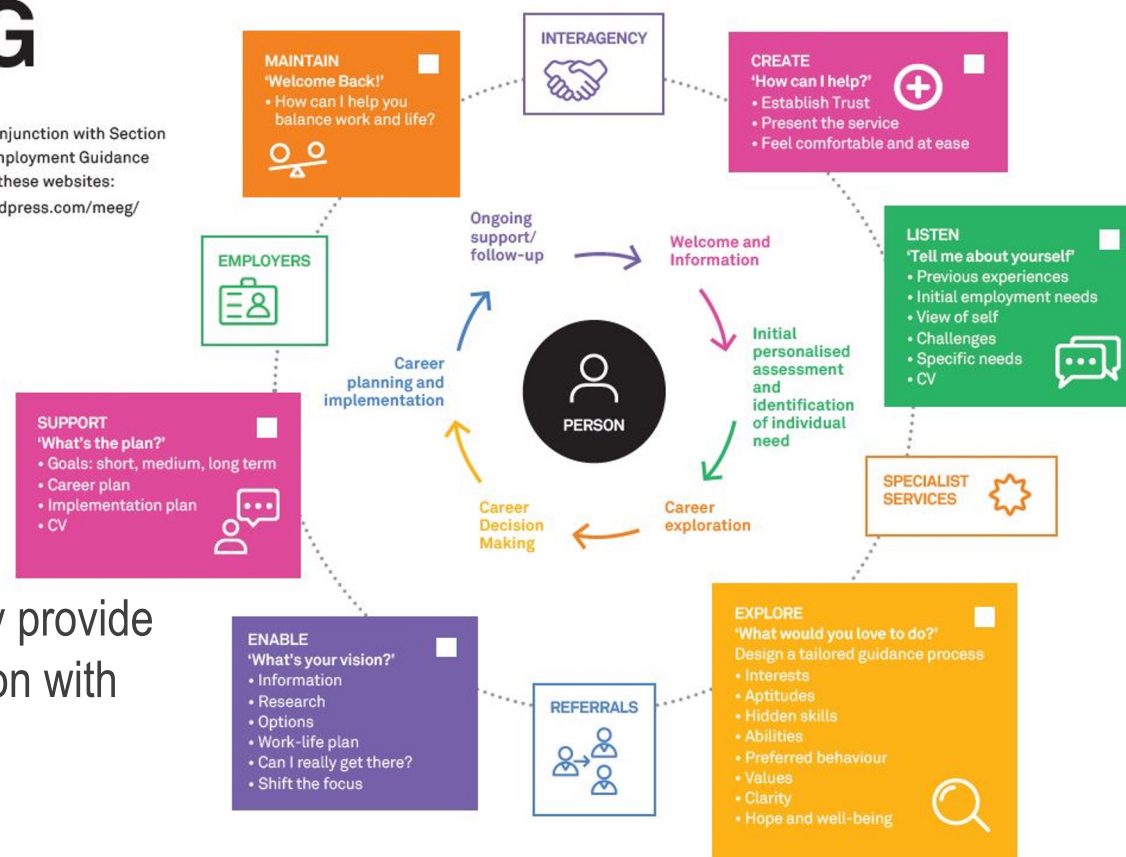
The MEEG process may provide you and your organisation with interesting ideas.

Thank you for your attention!