backpackjournalism

How to survive as a mentor?

How to survive as a mentor?

How to help young people gain journalistic competencies, media literacy and critical thinking

HOW TO SURVIVE AS A MENTOR?

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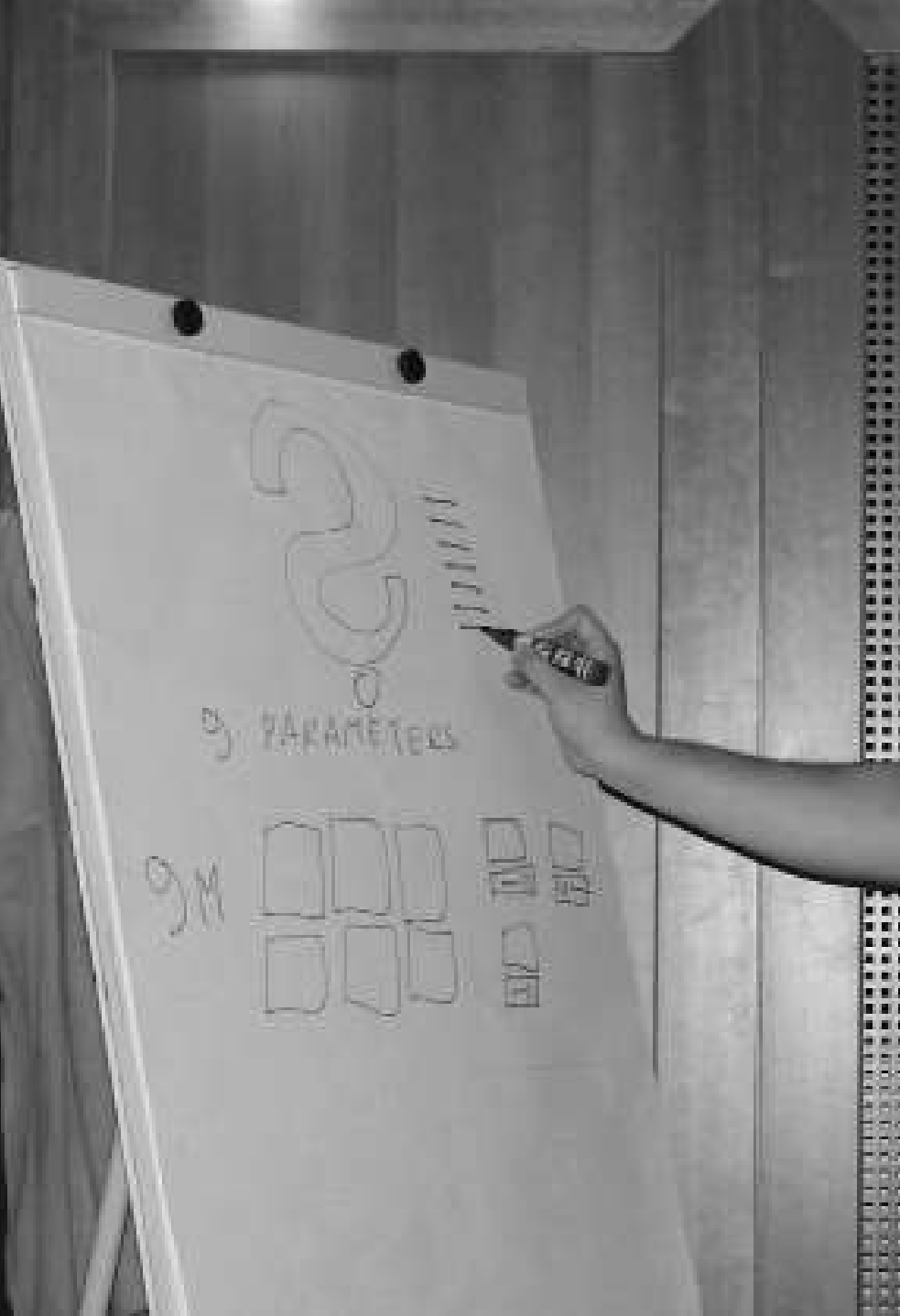
This is not a handbook for Backpack Journalists. It is a handbook for Backpack Journalism mentors. But who is a mentor? A mentor is an experienced person working with young people in the area of Backpack Journalism. He/she helps young people while gaining journalistic competencies. He/she encourages media literacy, critical thinking, and active citizenship. He/she assists young people when creating media content and helps them with their team relationships.

Backpack Journalism mentors usually work with groups or individuals in Backpack Journalism camps or workshops.

It is important for a mentor to always be aware of both his/her own **role** (Chapter 2) and the **needs** of the young people (Chapters 2 and 3). He/she has to know how to **organize** a Backpack Journalism camp and workshop (Chapters 4 and 5). From the outside, he/she should **observe** teams of young Backpack Journalists and **assist** them (Chapter 6). And–of course–he/she must also be able to **survive** in his/her own team of mentors (Chapter 7).

We wish you a successful mentorship!


PARAMETERS

Chapter 1

What does it mean to be a mentor?

Authors: Ewa Pietras, Matej Cepin, Cosmin Ionita

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In this chapter, you will have the opportunity to explore topics such as what a mentor should know, who exactly a mentor is, and what special mentor tasks are when working with young people in the field of Backpack Journalism.

WHO IS A BACKPACK JOURNALISM MENTOR?

A Backpack Journalism mentor is a person who works with young people in the field of Backpack Journalism. By preparing and being present at camps or workshops, he/she directs young individuals or teams of young people. He/she supports them while creating journalistic content, encouraging them to be media literate, fostering critical thinking skills, and advocating active citizenship. He/she is available when the young people are confronted with challenges. At the same time, he/she has to offer some core competencies, whether they be from the fields of journalism, technology, or social interaction.

WHAT IS HIS/HER ROLE?

As a role, being a Backpack Journalism mentor contains a lot of responsibility, and is also a lot of fun. It is about creating new opportunities for both others and oneself. It is about giving parts of oneself to others. It is about building a part of the new reality we want to create by showing other people how to make a change.

In order to mentor others, we must first learn how. We need to be competent in our subject, but we also need to know how to create situations where people can feel open minded, creative, and comfortable enough to learn as much as possible. Workshops offer an opportunity to provide people with different kinds of knowledge. Not only theoretical knowledge like in school, but also knowledge that is more practical. We should encourage young people to gain real life skills.

For example, you can know about traffic regulations, understand what makes a car move, and even know how an engine works, but that knowledge doesn't mean that you know how to drive. You can only gain that knowledge through experience driving a car.

In group learning and in learning by experience, every participant within the group is responsible for the common learning process. A mentor's role is to create possibilities, solve problems, and find tasks for the participants through which they can learn as much as possible by themselves.

WHAT ARE THE TASKS OF A BACKPACK JOURNALISM MENTOR?

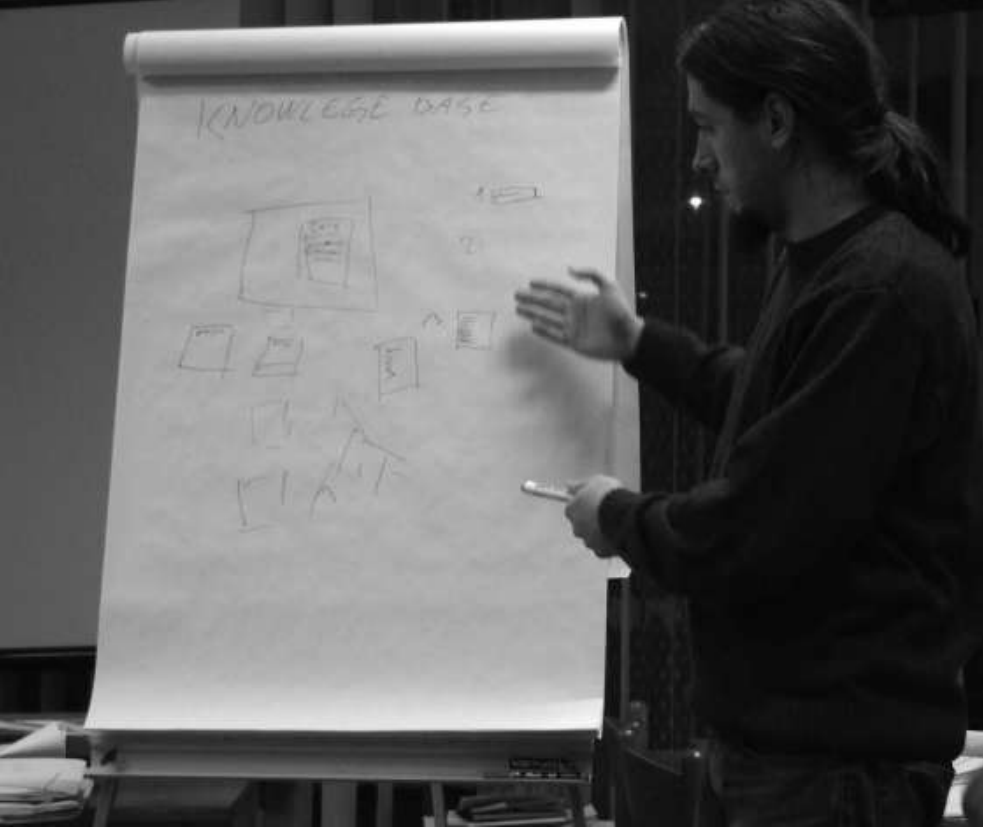
A Backpack Journalism mentor should:

- Plan and organize events like camps and workshops
- Establish a creative, productive, and motivating atmosphere at these events
- Assist teams of Backpack Journalists with their work
- Run educational workshops
- Be aware of the intercultural environment at the events
- Evaluate his/her work and facilitate evaluation of the participants' work
- Constructively cooperate with other mentors

WHAT COMPETENCIES SHOULD EVERY MENTOR HAVE?

To be a mentor, you need to have some core values and capacities to make your work possible.

Firstly, you need to be prepared for lifelong learning. There can't be a moment when you feel like your knowledge is good enough.



You must feel as though you have a chance to learn something new every day. You should always desire to follow this feeling. Working with yourself is very important so that you are always learning new things and improving your qualifications. You should always be aware of the participants' needs. You must recognize these needs and respond to them the best way you can.

You can achieve as many positive results as you brought with yourself in the beginning. So if you are expecting results from the participants, ask yourself if you need to be more qualified for the course. Make sure the program is always at the level of your qualifications, or higher if possible. Never let the quality of your program be beneath what you're capable of. This often requires a lot of self-reflection.

You need to create a bond with the participants, while also keeping a healthy distance.

You should be able to:

- Create and organize the group without controlling them too much.
- Utilize a style of mentoring that encourages others to develop their ideas.
- Develop organizational skills.
- Motivate both others and yourself.
- Diagnose and assist in solving problems.
- React flexibly to changes in the groups' needs.

ARE THERE SOME SPECIAL COMPETENCIES THAT A BACKPACK JOURNALISM MENTOR SHOULD POSSESS?

Yes, there are. We divide the competencies that a Backpack Journalism mentor should possess into five groups:

- **competencies related to journalism:** concepts of Backpack Journalism and citizen

journalism, journalistic ethics, knowing laws, knowing different genres, etc.

- **competencies related to telling a story through various media:** using various media to transmit your message to others, facilitate communication amongst others, etc.
- **competencies related to technology:** using technology such as recording devices, computers, computer software and social networks to promote active and responsible citizenship, etc.
- **competencies related to social skills:** working in a team, dealing with intercultural issues, organizing a media, motivating people, etc.
- **competencies related to mentorship:** being a mentor, organizing learning processes, organizing Backpack Journalism events, etc.

5 DON'T WORRY! YOU DON'T NEED TO BE SUPERHUMAN TO ACHIEVE ALL OF THESE. YOU DON'T NEED TO BE FAMILIAR WITH ALL THE COMPETENCIES LISTED ABOVE. THAT IS WHY WE HAVE TEAMS! HOWEVER, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU BUILD A TEAM OF MENTORS SO THAT YOU - AND YOUR TEAM - WILL BE ABLE TO COVER ALL OF THE POINTS LISTED ABOVE!

WHAT IS THE ADDED VALUE OF BACKPACK JOURNALISM AS A METHOD?

Backpack Journalism is not only about creating media content. It is much more! Through becoming Backpack Journalists, young people can gain many competencies that can be transferred later to other life situations. By becoming a Backpack Journalist, young person can become more employable and better equipped with more social and soft skills. He/she can improve his/her mobility, critical thinking, media literacy, and active citizenship. Finally, Backpack Journalism is also about building a better society.

What makes Backpack Journalism so inspiring is the fact that it really covers a wide range of competencies. There aren't many other activities that enable people to progress in the field of all Eight Key Competencies for Lifelong Learning:

- Communication in the mother tongue
- Communication in foreign languages
- Mathematical competency and basic competencies in science and technology
- Digital competency
- Learning to learn
- Social and civic competency
- Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship
- Cultural awareness and expression

5 LOOK AT THESE EIGHT KEY COMPETENCIES AGAIN FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF BACKPACK JOURNALISM. IT REALLY DOES CONTRIBUTE TO THEM ALL!

WHY MENTORSHIP?

A mentor's main role is helping others to improve their qualifications. Thus, it's important for mentorship to always be about others. You need to find ways to share your knowledge with others in a way that is easily understood.

The others are the most important aspect of mentorship. You have to adapt to their way of learning, to their problems, and to their attitudes. Improving their knowledge should be your primary goal. You should not try to teach them by repeating things; you should instead provide them with the abilities to learn things on their own. Your method of helping should be focused on the learning process. People learn the most by doing something for themselves; and your role is to help them in this process.

You can't situate yourself in the position of a guru who says what is right or wrong. Most often, you are not the one to judge. Reflection about learning processes and the products that participants have made is a crucial learning phase. So what is the role of a mentor in all of this? He/she should help and support the individuals throughout the process. Being a mentor does not mean having absolute power. People should obey the rules because they want to or because they feel that it's to the right thing to do. It is important to create group rules that state what behaviors are wanted and which are not.

Your role is to identify everyone's expectations, both the group's and your own, and

join them together. Most people are prepared by formal education to be passive. They are accustomed to receiving ready-made products. You need to find a way for them to learn the content by themselves while still proving them with help should it be needed.

You should be there for others, but you must maintain the right distance, so as not to let others abuse you. You must be clear about the range of your own authority. If you know your worth, others will see it too.

That is why when you choose a mentor you should keep in mind that a mentor should: Provide you with support and encouragement

- Help you to learn from your mistakes
- Offer opportunities for collaboration, joint presentations, and departmental talks
- Help you to learn about writing and submitting manuscripts for publication
- Be interested in your career field
- Be able to provide support and training in your field
- Model a successful academic career and training in your field
- Be committed to helping mentees make the next move in their career development
- Demonstrate personal integrity
- Introduce you to colleagues
- Help you to identify and work with your strengths and weaknesses
- Provide opportunities for you to develop independence

» http://gradschool.about.com/od/admissionsadvice/a/choosementor.htm

MENTORSHIP DOES NOT ONLY OCCUR IN BACKPACK JOURNALISM, RIGHT?

Of course not! There are many types of mentors throughout the world! Which one are you closest to?

- **Educational mentorship:** Students are encouraged to find a mentor for different reasons: improving their educational results, getting to a certain level academically, stepping into a new academic domain, increasing academic performance, etc. Having a mentor is always a great option for attaining results, as a mentor can help guide you until you reach your desired outcome.
- **Professional mentorship:** In nearly every profession, there are continuous changes and evolutions. That is why finding someone from whom you can continue to learn is important. This person will keep you current and connected with the changes in your professional field. Only someone in your own professional field can occupy this role.
- **Organizational mentorship:** In every organization or institution, there are always updates and changing events. If you are too into your work, you will not see the big picture and you will fail to understand the meaning of your role and how you could improve your performance. That is why an organizational mentor can help you see the changes and trends faster, easier, and before it's too late and you are out of the picture.
- **Life mentorship:** Everyday stress can disrupt your work and personal life. That is why a life mentor can help you set the boundaries and establish an equilibrium between fun, social relationships, hobbies, duties, professional relationships, and objectives.

» Further reading: Eight Types of Mentors: Which Ones Do You Need? by Caela Farren, Ph.D., MasteryWorks, Inc.

These are just some examples of different situations where people can benefit from mentoring. It is important how you create the relationship, but it is also important to be the right mentor for a specific participant's needs. A sports mentor will never be able to help you in school as much as an educational mentor could. An organizational mentor will not help you as a life mentor. Different skills, knowl-

edge, and backgrounds are needed for different situations. You have to choose which one you will become.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A TEACHER AND A MENTOR?

A mentor is not a teacher in the classical sense. His/her task is to organize a learning situation, and to try to help in the learning process. A mentor's job is to observe and understand how participants are learning and then help them accordingly.

For a mentor, helping is not telling people what they should do or showing them a preset path. Helping is more about helping to discover. For that, a precise observation and taking advantage of possibilities is needed.

- **Observe.** Try to observe participant in action. Note their current skills, abilities, and behavior. It can give you the ability to offer informed, relevant, and timely advice. Observation can also help you find the answers to the questions: How can I help? What can I give to this person?
- **Avoid Premature Judgments.**
- **Listen carefully.** Listen for signals that your help or intervention is needed. Sometimes these signals are not always direct or obvious. It's not always easy for people to admit that they don't know how to deal with certain tasks, and sometimes they cannot talk openly about a problem they are experiencing. You should try to make sure that the task is not too complicated for them, while being gentle and careful about their feelings. This should be done without giving the impression that you don't believe in their abilities. Remember, you are learning about people when you listen to them; so also try to focus on what they want to say to you.

HOW DOES A MENTOR CREATE THE RIGHT TYPE OF ATMOSPHERE?

To be successful as a mentor, you need to create a climate that reflects a free and open exchange of ideas and offers a lot of space to gain experience. The atmosphere must be energizing enough to stimulate participants to work as well as they can.

Some ways to achieve this:

- Engaging in flexible communication with participants. Every person is an individual and therefore needs different things to feel comfortable. Treat everybody fairly, but not necessarily the same.
- Supporting effort. Show yourself more like a cheerleader than an evaluator. Point to both sides in your remarks. Don't focus on mistakes.
- Showing mistakes as learning opportunities. Mistakes can be valuable for teaching. The participants won't be scare to open up if this is done correctly. They will feel more safety in their search for answers.

LEARNING WITH A TEACHER:	LEARNING WITH A MENTOR:
Learning from one person	Learning by interacting with many people
Being passive	Learning in action
Reading texts	Engaging in discussions
Taking knowledge from the teacher	Learning by seeking and discovering
Strict timetable	Flexible and customized timetable
Learning by making notes	Learning through problem solving
Learning without pressure of results	Being under pressure to attain results

Chapter 2

How to understand the young people's needs

Author: Adél Hercsel

Listening: The key to success! 14

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What is this Maslow pyramid good for? 20

And… what is the student's responsibility towards a mentor? 21

In this chapter, we will discuss how we can become good mentors and what abilities and traits a mentor has to have in order to engage in good mentoring. We will first consider the psychological, emotional, intercultural, and many other related questions regarding emotional intelligence. As such, we will consider the emotional aspect of mentoring rather than its practical side; however, as we discuss how important the mentor's intuitive capabilities and exceptional empathy are, we will touch on such practical questions as how the mentor should behave during a group project to ensure that the joint effort is both productive and enjoyable for everyone.

LISTENING: THE KEY TO SUCCESS!

A mentor's duty is not only to teach and guide young people; a mentor must also be able to listen. The first and foremost duty, indeed, is listening; a mentor has to have the ability to be a good audience to their group and sometimes has to allow the roles to be switched and let voices other than theirs be heard. Listening is the simplest and surest way for a mentor to understand their people's needs. Naturally, listening by itself is not enough, as there is no purpose in it unless a mentor changes their behavior accordingly and doesn't ignore the problems that may become apparent. Listening, however, is a good start: if you want to be a good mentor, learn to listen!

HOW DOES A MENTOR LISTEN "WELL"?

A mentor has to ensure that there is ample

EXAMPLE QUESTIONS:

How are you feeling?

How do you like the project?

Do you feel you have found your role in the project?

What do you think of the tasks? How difficult, inspiring, exciting, interesting, worthwhile do they seem?

How satisfied are you with your own work? With the group's work? With my work?

Do you have any ideas on what to change? How could we improve our efficiency?

Is there something you disagree with so far?

What has been your worst experience so far?

What has been your best experience so far?

What are your expectations in regards to yourself and the project?

5 As a mentor, it is your duty to ask questions and check up on your group; you should always be looking for feedback. Ask the following questions in the beginning. If the project is longer, repeat them while the work is in progress. Make sure to have a concluding evaluating discussion at the end.

opportunity for everyone to be heard. The best method is to gauge the needs at the beginning of the project by simply asking, after the first introductory rounds, what the people's expectations regarding the project are, what their overall plans are, and how they envision group work. These questions will be enough to begin with. Of course, the question arises: what can we do with the answers we get? It can be expected that our people will be self-conscious and confused, as these questions will have been posed in the early "warming up" stage, and as such, the answers will be predictable–in a good way. We can even expect the group members to take someone's answer and repeat it for want of a better idea. If we do get "valuable" answers, a mentor should take note and consider these professed needs and expectations throughout the project, ensuring that they correspond as closely as possible to their own intentions. Of course, if the declared expectations of the group are decidedly unrealistic or in opposition to the project's desired concept, a mentor is obliged to clear the waters and explain matters up front. Therefore, these questions should be posed as early as possible in order to avoid eventual conflicts and misunderstandings. It can be quite a catastrophe to find out mid-project that everyone has different expectations and different intentions, that everyone missed the point, that group work has been made impossible, or that everyone is just hoping for it to end as soon as possible.

However, it's not enough to ask these questions at the beginning of the project. During the project, for example after the execution of a bigger task, it is advised to collect the group and have them share their thoughts on the work, and express such things as how everyone is relating to it, how everyone is feeling, how they envision the future of the project, whether everyone feels that they have a role they can fulfill. This always depends on the type, theme, and duration of the project. For instance, if we are leading a BPJ project that spans several days, it's worth our while to take a moment every evening to discuss the project with the group or separately with its members.

A concluding discussion at the end of the project can also be illuminating. We can engage in a lengthier discussion here, since we have the experience of the project behind us, and every piece of criticism of us as mentors is justified by the time the group has spent working with us. Hopefully, by this time, every participant has a well-formed opinion of the work that has been done, and thus has valuable conclusions to offer.

HOW DO WE ESTABLISH AN INTIMATE ATMOSPHERE?

"Some random person who we've never met before comes here acting all high and mighty, ordering us about..." That's what the group members may be thinking about their mentor, and rightly so. For it not to be this way, the mentor has to strive for a friendly and trusting atmosphere from the start. How exactly do we achieve that? This is a complex task, largely dependent on the situation, the project, the composition of the group, and the individuals involved. We can make the general statement that a mentor has to have a positive attitude towards the project and truly believe in it, in themselves, and in the group. A mentor has to make it understood that they're on the same side as the others, that they can be counted upon, that they love and appreciate the group, that they are open to everything, and that the group has no reason to be afraid of them or the project. The secret to this lies in rhetoric and direct verbal communication, meaning that the mentor should repeat multiple times that they are dependable and can be trusted with anything and that they're willing to help out with whatever the group needs. As a mentor, you should always ask whether every task is understood and whether you made everyone's roles clear. During the completion of the tasks, always offer your help and if you receive any kind of complaint, provide help to the best of

your ability.

However, don't make the mistake of doing all the work for your group: pedagogically speaking, this is unacceptable, as your students will not gain anything from getting used to having you solve every problem for them. Don't do unnecessary tasks and don't let your group exploit you. Don't become your students' slave.

5 CONSTANT MONITORING OF GROUP NEEDS AND EXPECTATIONS, AS WELL AS A FRIENDLY AND INTIMATE ATMOSPHERE; IF THESE TWO FACTORS ARE PRESENT, A MENTOR'S TASK OF MINDING THEIR GROUP'S NEEDS CAN BE FULFILLED MUCH EASIER.

HOW TO BECOME A GOOD OBSERVER?

It is very important for a mentor to be able to "read between the lines" and understand hidden meanings behind the group members' actual words. A mentor must watch nonverbal signals and gestures. In many instances,

NONVERBAL DICTIONARY

Based on observations and generalities in European cultures; these are mostly guidelines and largely dependent on context

Head:

- **Nodding**: agreement, encouragement
- **Shaking of the head**: disagreement, dislike
- **Tilting of head**: interest
- **Lowering of the head**: depression, submission, thoughtfulness
- **Jerking of the head**: vanity, sexual invitation
- **Supporting the head**: exhaustion, boredom

Hair:

- **Tossing or touching of hair**: vanity, preening, sexual invitation
- **Sweeping back of hair**: sexual invitation or nervousness
- **Twirling hair**: sexual invitation or nervousness
- **Chewing hair**: nervousness or concentration

Eyes:

- **Wide eyes**: surprise or shock
- **Minimal eye contact**: dishonesty or shyness
- **Avoiding eye contact**: boredom, dishonesty
- **Frequent blinking**: nervousness
- **Touching eyes**: doubtfulness, uncertainty, dishonesty
- **Staring**: dominance, daydreaming
- **Gazing out from under the eyelashes**: shyness, flirting

Mouth:

- **Open mouth**: surprise, shock
- **Hand in front of mouth**: dishonesty
- **Fingers in mouth**: uncertainty, nervousness
- **Moistening lips**: sexual interest, lust

Chin:

- **Stroking chin**: deep thought, amazement
- **Rubbing chin**: doubtfulness
- **Supporting chin**: deep thought
- **Chin thrust out**: aggression, defensiveness, determination
- **Chin drawn into neck**: taciturnity, lack of confidence

Arms and hands:

- **Interlocked arms**: defensiveness, uncertainty, determination
- **Hands clenched into fists**: aggression, hostility
- **Hands behind back**: relaxation, confidence, power
- **Hands behind head**: confidence, arrogance
- **Interlocked hands**: nervousness, uncertainty
- **Hands on hips**: anger, vanity, sexual challenge
- **Open palms**: openness, honesty

Legs:

- **Legs crossed at knees**: defensiveness, negative thoughts
- **Legs crossed while standing**: defensiveness, negative thoughts
- **Rubbing of legs**: nervousness, discomfort
- **Standing at attention**: subservience, great respect
- **Feet pointing at someone**: interest in particular person

a single expression, a single sigh or wrinkled brow can tell you more than the actual words uttered. You must consciously observe and interpret these signals. Open your eyes, watch your students, and while the tasks are being completed, you can decide on the meaning and consequence of each observed reaction.

In the beginning, it will be hard to focus on this; but if you consciously watch out for these signals, it will become routine and it will be natural for you to read between the lines. A mentor must be observant, because it may be that a particular group member is tired and less enthusiastic only because of a party last night and the ensuing hangover, but it might also be that they are having an emotional crisis or they don't like participating in the project but are not willing to voice their problems. Again, listening is a valuable skill; make sure you have separate discussions with your group members. A mentor must be prepared for all eventualities and must always consider every possibility.

A good observer has a head start against those who choose to ignore nonverbal signs. A good observer can become privy to valuable secrets. It is common for what we say and what we mean to have no relation. Just imagine how many "lies" you tell each day. If we are good observers, we become more open and direct, we will be better able to fully understand others' problems, motivations, and thoughts. We will gain a clearer perspective on the group dynamics and thus relate more easily to our group members. This makes our work much easier, more constructive, and faster. In other words, good observers who see and understand both cause and effect as well as all the important connections get along in life much better.

WHAT SHOULD A MENTOR OBSERVE?

Observe mimicry and the facial expressions. It's not without reason that we say that the eyes are the window to the soul. One can infer many things from a single, seemingly insignificant look. If we consciously cultivate the skill of reading expressions, we can infer people's basic personality and their current emotional state. The mouth is also an important tool for observing expression: the eyes and mouth are the focal points of meaningful mimicry.

And what if someone completes the project without any mimicry or gestures and we are unable to read their expressions?

In these situations, we can still read body language, such as their posture and the distance one keeps from the other. It is also worthwhile to watch the hand gestures that people make. Of course, nonverbal communication may differ between cultures, but we will discuss cultural differences and intercultural communications in a later section.

WHAT IS EMPATHY? HOW DO I BECOME EMPATHETIC?

Empathy is one's ability to understand another's point of view. Empathy is the capacity to share each other's emotions. Through empathy, one can feel and understand the emotions, motives, and goals of someone else that they don't directly express.

Empathy is a trait that you are born with, and in general, women tend to be more empathetic than men. No reason to worry though, because empathy can be developed; what is required is a lot of patience, attention, and openness to others. An empathetic mentor pays attention to their students, listens to them, and pays attention to their feelings. As a mentor, always try to put yourself in your students' shoes.

Imagine for instance how your students might feel in the beginning of the project, try to envision their state of mind in an intercultural environment where everything is new. Try to feel as they potentially do, like an outsider, lost and looking for a place in the group dynamics, nervous, afraid of the tasks, uncertain of their own capabilities and whether they can fulfill their role. The key is to try and distract yourself from your own emotional state, your motives, your ego, and think about how the other might be experiencing a certain situation. If you pay attention and consciously apply this advice, you will get closer to your students. If they see that you are empathetic towards them, they will be much more open and trusting, and

you will be considered a good mentor. This will facilitate the friendly and intimate atmosphere that a good mentor wishes to achieve.

WHAT DOES INTUITION MEAN? HOW DO I ACQUIRE STRONG INTUITIVE CAPABILITIES?

A working definition of intuition might be "thoughts and preferences that come to mind quickly and without much reflection".

Intuition, conscious observation, and empathy are closely related. Intuition is also a trait, an instinctive attribute that cannot really be learned–but like empathy, it can be developed further. Working on your intuition, however, is slightly more difficult. You have to know yourself well, which is good, because a good mentor should know himself or herself as best as they can before even considering mentoring. A good mentor should be confident in their decisions but constantly re-evaluating their role within the group and whether they're serving the group cause. A lack of constant re-evaluation will result in a mentor forcing their will upon the group members, which can only cause unnecessary conflict. If a mentor is aware of their own emotional state, their deeper motivations, and their reasons for reacting to specific stimuli in specific ways, they are on the road to improving their intuitive capabilities. Knowledge of oneself is an indication that one can deal with others too.

If you are uncertain of yourself, are having problems with self-evaluation, or are going through an emotional crisis, you are advised not to start mentoring, as these factors can influence the outcome of the project. After all, how can you be expected to solve the problems of others and understand other's needs when your own problems remain unsolved and your needs remain unfulfilled? If there is some semblance of order in your life and if you are emotionally healthy and intellectually sound, you can treat your group members much more

The following is an interesting, useful, and educational group building exercise that can be finished in fifteen minutes and highlights noteworthy points in group dynamics and personal relations within the group.

Let us assume that your group consists of an even number of people. Pair them up randomly, taking care to avoid pairs that are already used to each other. Have them sit down facing each other with a maximum of 30 cm of distance between them. Give each pair 50 cm of thread and have both members of each pair reel it on their finger. Tell them to play with the thread and do whatever they want and tell them nothing more, and from here on in you can leave them to it. Come back after about 10 minutes and observe what has happened.

It's natural that the pairs will have started pulling on the thread–the interesting part is how many of the threads are torn apart. If all of them tear it apart, we have some cause for worry, but the more threads that stay intact until the end, the happier we should be with the results.

This game might seem pointless and cheesy, but consider this: the pairs are two egos connected by the thread, which represents the team interest. Those pairs whose threads are torn don't realize that the thread staying intact could be more important than spooling all of it on your own finger. These pairs can't compromise with their partner, so we can assume that they will have difficulty letting the team interest take priority over their own motives. Those whose threads remained intact could put aside their own selfishness and have paid attention to what their partner was doing with the thread. This latter kind of person will have no problem with subservience if the team interest requires it.

After the exercise is completed, tell your group about the significance of torn and intact threads. This exercise is tried and tested. Most people will tear the thread apart at first, and the group members who are forced to face their apparent selfishness will reconsider their role in the group and will work for the team and the mutual goals much more consciously.

openly and relate to them more intuitively. If you consider your task really important and decide to handle the project positively and you truly want to pass your knowledge on to your students, your intuitive capabilities will come to the surface much easier. In summation, believe in the project's success and importance and you will more readily understand the students' needs.

HOW CAN I DEAL WITH PARTICIPANTS' INDIVIDUAL NEEDS?

Each and every participant has their own unique needs, identity, worldview, motivations, and expectations—to name only a few personal attributes. In a Backpack Journalism project, even if we disregard the fact that we will be dealing with an international team, we will still most likely be dealing with vast personal differences. Therefore, the bad news is that everyone is different, everyone likes to be treated in his or her own way, and since our goal is to become truly great mentors, we have to consider individual needs as well.

Dealing with the individual needs of every participant takes compromise, a lot of it. Unless the group is made up of friendly people who all get along perfectly and require no guidance in group dynamics, thus making us largely unnecessary as mentors—which is highly unlikely—we as mentors must constantly strive to settle personal conflicts and build a group that works well together.

A mentor, besides taking care of their group members and their specific personal needs, has to consider group unity first and foremost. As a mentor, your goal is to fulfill the group's interest. You have to feel and emphasize that "we are a team, we stand together, striving for a mutual goal." If, as a mentor, you let your group members have their personal motives take priority to the group's interest, your group is certain to fall apart. If it's all about everyone's ego and personal fulfillment, group work will be made impossible by the constant clash of wills. Make sure you don't end up realizing that the group's work consists only of everyone trying to prove they're the coolest, the smartest, the most skilled, or that they're the one who can best complete the task. During the project, your task is to ensure that your group members' potentials are being used in the best possible ways, and that instead of a clash of egos, the competitive air compels the lazier members to perform better and keeps the more diligent students working as well.

5 A MENTOR HAS TO EMPHASIZE THAT TEAM WORK COMES FIRST, NOT PERSONAL INTERESTS.

WHAT SHOULD I DO WITH AGE DIFFERENCES?

Let us assume that the group is mixed, that there are high school students, university students, and young adults who are already out of university and have a job and maybe even kids. Indeed, in these cases, it might be difficult to settle differences, as even a ten-year difference can prove to be a significant gap. Whatever happens, don't panic and be positive, handle the generation gap as an exciting challenge instead of a source of conflict. Don't restrain anyone, you should reconcile youthful energy with the maturity of the adults to the best of your ability. If the opportunity arises, you are encouraged to make pairs or smaller groups with members coming from different age groups. Let them learn from each other. Remain open and use the aforementioned observational, empathetic, and intuitive skills and there will be no trouble.

WHAT IF I HAVE TO TEACH PEOPLE MUCH OLDER THAN ME?

It's completely understandable in this situation for you to feel like panicking. You might be embarrassed or even question your own role. Put some trust in your knowledge; be respectful but don't let them lecture or patronize you. You are still the boss, whatever other factors might be in play.

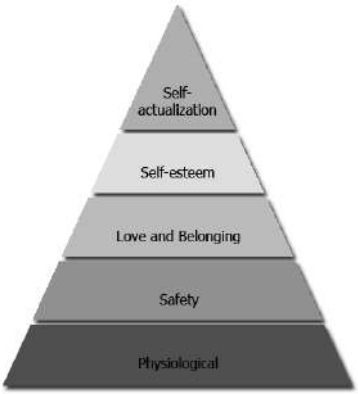
HOW DO I HANDLE CULTURAL DIFFERENCES WITHIN THE GROUP?

Don't panic. Handle cultural differences in the same way that you handle generation

gaps. In this fast-paced, globalized world, it's easier to find some sort of mutual cultural code to refer to. Just consider that the universal go-to second language for everyone is English. If for some reason there is a conflict, just pull the people involved aside and ask them what is going on. Whether you discuss the problem with them separately or together, if everyone involved can explain their reasons for their opinions or actions and the opposing sides can understand each other's perspective, the conflict will be resolved and peace will be restored. This might require skilled moderation, but the one thing you have to keep in mind is that all conflict stems from misunderstandings. If you help the opposing voices be understood, you will be able to handle these kinds of problems. These things need to be discussed honestly and explicitly, and without your help, such a discussion may never happen.

WHAT IS THIS MASLOW PYRAMID GOOD FOR?

Let us refer to some theoretical psychology to obtain a deeper understanding of needs. The famous 20th century psychologist Abraham Maslow comes to our rescue with the model that carries his name, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.



Let us first discuss what Maslow's pyramid actually is. It is the most famous model of human needs. (Some facts on the side: it was developed between 1943 and 1954 and published for a wider audience in 1954 in his book Motivation and Personality.) Maslow distinguishes five levels of human needs. At the bottom are the physiological needs that are necessary for biological functioning: they are the most basic human needs, such as air, water, appropriate temperature, and sex for reproduction. One level above this we find the needs regarding safety, such as shelter, removal from danger, financial safety, and private property. The third level includes belonging, meaningful love, affection, and the need to belong to a group such as family, friends, or work. The need to be mentored as well as the need to act as a mentor are derived from this level. The fourth level is esteem, meaning both self-esteem and the esteem one gets from others: respect, performance, excellence, and appreciation come into play on this level. The top level is called self-actualization, where achieving individual potential is one's ultimate need. This includes creative or other personal fulfillment.

Knowledge of the Maslow's pyramid can be quite helpful to you as a mentor. Maslow's pyramid will help you understand and better fulfill your group's needs. It can be useful for you to consider the pyramid's various levels before the project, starting with the basic first level of physiological needs and moving progressively upward. It's no coincidence, either, that the pyramid is a pyramid: you can't build it from the top down.

You as a mentor, you also need to think in levels. Consider what the various levels entail; it's useful for you to have a minimum and a maximum program for the project. Minimum program means the least that you hope to fulfill with your group during the project; the maximum program meaning the most you can dream of achieving with your team. Without this, your project plans could fall through entirely due to not having considered the realistic best- and worst-case scenarios. It's always good to have a plan A and B and maybe even a plan C. If something fails, always have something to fall back upon, something to handle the situation constructively with.

Let us go through the levels again, one by

one.

1. From a mentor's perspective, the **physiological level** means that you should establish an appropriate environment for the project, meaning you should provide enough space with sufficient lighting and some sort of ventilation. Providing the necessary tools for the project is also part of this level: for example, in the case of an interview, you might need a recorder of some kind, possibly a camera, and then lamps and make-up for the photo shoot, possibly a video camera and a microphone, and so on. Also, you should have your group work reasonable hours during the daytime; let them have breaks for lunch, cigarettes, coffee, etc. Basically, you should consider your team's physical needs and health and avoid pushing them past their physical boundaries.
2. Concerning the **level of safety**, you should establish an atmosphere where no one feels threatened and no one is isolated. Don't let anyone be shunned from the group; try to work on the group's cohesion. This level also means that you should strengthen your position as the leader of the team.
3. Regarding the third **level of belonging**, we mean the deeper connections between group members. This can be the occasional intellectual conversation, longer-term professional cooperation, mutual acts of selflessness, friendships, and a deeper overall feeling of belonging. This can be part of your maximum-outcome program, as this level is not crucial to the project's success; however, the quality of work will certainly improve if the group members enjoy each other's company and they have deeper relationships with each other.

Chapter 3

How to open space?

Author: Matej Cepin

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How do you recognize a mentor that opens space and one that closes it? 27

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Which concrete techniques can I use to open space for creativity? 29

How do I open space for learning? 30

One of the most crucial tasks of a Backpack Journalism mentor is to create open space for creativity, cooperation, and learning; and after reading this chapter, you will be able to do so. In more detail, we are going to see what open space means, how it differs from ‚closed space' and how to effectively open it. We are also going to introduce some methods that mentors can use in concrete situations.

4. The top two levels depend mostly on the group members themselves, but as a mentor, you can help with empathy, openness, helpfulness, and positive attitude to allow the students to feel that they are valued members of the group both professionally and personally. A truly professional mentor also gives their students the opportunity to exploit their creative energies and put their ideas to work, thereby fulfilling themselves insofar as the project allows.

AND… WHAT IS THE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TOWARDS A MENTOR?

So far we have only talked about the mentor and the skill requirements (empathy, intuition, good observational skills) they will need to fulfill, the environment they will have to establish, and the progress upwards on the Maslow pyramid they should facilitate. However, from the project's point of view, the human resources that a mentor has to work with are also of key importance. It may happen that the mentor will be unable to act. Take the following example: the mentor's group members are all completely passive, world-weary and depressed characters who refuse to work, refuse to talk about their problems, and just silently hate each other; and the mentor is utterly helpless. What can the mentor do if someone in the group stubbornly refuses to cooperate and keeps terrorizing the group? When the mentor's empathy, insight, and positive attitude seem useless and the mentor has tried everything to reach the unwilling student, it is no longer the mentor's fault. Prepare yourself for situations like this: if you feel that you have tried everything and still feel as though you've failed, don't blame yourself, it happens. Don't lose your enthusiasm, you'll have a better group next time; there is no need to force anything. This is just another interesting life experience to learn from; channel all your disappointment into positive energy. Take it in strides and be proud for at least having tried.

Always keep in mind that group work depends on both sides; you as the group leader have to put in more effort, but if you see that your students don't seem to be party to mutual effort, it's your obligation to tell them what you expect of them and why you can't work with them as is. If this doesn't influence them, you have no reason to put more effort in than absolutely necessary. At this point, your only duty is to complete the minimum program and finish the project according to your conscience and your higher-ups' demands. You have no reason to fight for people who refuse to work and learn from you. Don't be too hard on yourself, you tried!

WHY OPEN SPACE?

Not a lot of people feel comfortable in a tiny closed room. When renting a flat, people tend to avoid basements, and a hotel room with a view of the seaside is usually much more expensive than one without it. People feel better in an open space, they are more creative and think more positively.

Our social environment is exactly the same as our physical one, because our social environment can be either open or closed. You have probably already had an experience dealing with a person who wanted everything to be his/her way or you've probably attended a school class with a domineering teacher. Maybe you've also belonged to a group of friends

TYPE OF SPACE	IDEAS FOR OPENING IT
Physical space	A big enough room with satisfying technical equipment. More rooms for work in smaller groups. Choosing a safe environment. Encouraging participants to occupy various places in a town or city.
Social space	Observing participants and their strong or weak points. Encouraging individuals to express his/her strong points. Creating teams of people with good capacities to cooperate among themselves. Facilitating team building. Providing enough time for the participants to get to know each other. Organizing workshops where participants gain knowledge about teamwork and cooperation. Empowering teams and praising them.
Intimate space of individual	Taking intercultural differences into consideration. Providing enough free time. Gradual team building (step by step). Allowing individuals to choose for themselves.
Learning space	Enabling learning inside the team (participants learn from each other). Quality workshops: • Attractive performance of mentors • Including participants' experiences • Interactive methods • Responding to participants' needs Observing teams while working and counseling. Asking well-phrased and provocative questions.
Space of creativity	Using creative techniques (brainstorming, associations, mind-maps, etc.) Allowing participants to also express ‚stupid' ideas. Presenting cases of best practice from previous camps or projects. Encouraging participants to choose challenging topics.
Virtual space	Enabling various types of media for participants to express. Providing good enough technology (hardware, software).

where you felt cramped.

It is important for a Backpack Journalism mentor to care for open social space. This is the only way for a Backpack Journalism camp to succeed. Open space enables participants to:

- Create a good atmosphere. Open space enables individuals to withdraw to privacy if needed, to choose friends, or to do things his/her own way.
- Become creative. Open space expands horizons and helps to generate new ideas.
- Learn more efficiently. It is scientifically proven that different people learn in different ways. Some prefer to learn by listening, others by trying things, and others by observing. Open space enables everyone to use his/her own learning methods.
- Work in teams more effectively. In open space, every individual can use his/her own knowledge and skills. In such an atmosphere, the methods for completing specific tasks are not prescribed in advance.
- Create better products. For all the previously mentioned reasons, the quality of the final product increases. Products are shaped by criteria that people establish and fulfill by themselves. People also feel more ownership towards their products.

Because open space creates better final products, it is important for a mentor to gain skills that will allow him/her to create open space. Mentors who, for whatever reason (not enough knowledge, desire for power, personal characteristics, etc.), act contrary to this principle can sometimes even act aggressively towards camp participants. In such a case, a potentially pleasant and challenging activity such as a Backpack Journalism camp can turn into a nightmare.

DOES 'OPEN SPACE' MEAN 'HAVING NO RULES'?

No! Having no rules does not mean open space. Having no rules only creates chaos!

Opening space means having rules, but not extremely strict and restrictive ones. It means having rules that encourage work and fun, rules that enable participants to do their best.

Creating chaos is often counterproductive. In chaos, people never know what will happen next. It makes people isolated and eventually forces everybody to care only for his/her own survival. One cannot get quality results from such an environment.

When observing nature from a hill or an airplane, one can realize that open spaces are not only liberating—they are also very much put into order. The beauties of nature was not formed through chaos, but through the exact laws of physics, which is exactly what gives them such extraordinary beauty!

If until now you thought that opening

	A MENTOR OPENING SPACE	A MENTOR CLOSING SPACE
Example	A Backpack Journalist who inspires. Acts as a mentor with joy. Is aware of the capabilities of Backpack Journalism.	Inappropriate relationship between work and free time. Doing only what is needed and nothing more.
Verbal communication	Sets open questions. With his/her answers, he/she encourages further thinking.	Sets closed questions. Usually sees only one way of solving things.
Non-verbal communication	Is not bored while working. Shows that he/she is a mentor primarily because of young people.	Cares that the participants know 'who is the boss here'. Is not confident in his/her work.

space is, for a mentor, easier than setting precise and strict rules, you were wrong. Normally, it is much more difficult! It is the responsibility of a mentor to set the rules together with the participants, which will make the best out of that specific group. The ‚divide and conquer' principle does not work. It is about searching, deciding, and taking responsibility for joint decisions.

HOW DOES A MENTOR OPEN SPACE?

To answer this question, we first have to define space. Space can be physical—the room where the participants work, for example. We can also have social space—such as space for cooperation among people. When taking individuals into consideration, one could speak about his/her intimate space; or when speaking about knowledge, one could speak about learning space. One could also mention space for creativity or virtual space—such as the Internet.

It is the task of a mentor to use different methods to open all of these various spaces.

How? There are some ideas outlined in the table left.

HOW DO YOU RECOGNIZE A MENTOR THAT OPENS SPACE AND ONE THAT CLOSES IT?

Communication is practically the only tool a mentor can use to open or close space. A famous saying says: "It is not possible not to communicate." A mentor communicates all the time, whether or not he/she wants to and whether or not it is done consciously.

A mentor communicates most intensively with his/her examples. If he/she gives bad signals, there is no amount of enthusiasm that will help him/her. The opposite is also true: if his/her example is positive, the participants will soon take it and act more creatively.

The table below shows situations and ways of opening or closing space.

HOW DO I FACILITATE CREATIVITY?

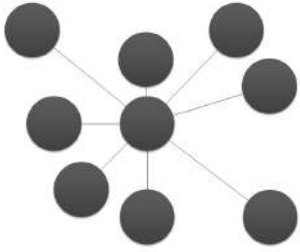
Creativity is of key importance in Backpack Journalism. Participants need it when:

- Choosing topics
- Searching for interesting interviewees

PHASE	SITUATION	RESULT
D = define the problem	Team chooses or gets an idea about what to report on.	Defining the topic, interesting questions, the problem, why is the problem interesting for the general public, ways of presenting it in the media and how we can do it.
O = open minds	The team brainstorms. Everybody is encouraged to participate. As many ideas as possible are put onto the table.	A big set of ideas about whom to interview, set of interesting questions for the interviews, list of connected problems, ideas for the title, etc.
I = identify the best solution	Group members choose some ideas they like and discuss why they did it.	A Short list of ideas for the contribution.
T = transform the idea into practice	Team members decide about the most important elements of the contribution and deliver the tasks.	An implementation plan is prepared and tasks delivered.

- Setting questions for interviewees
- Holding a photo or video camera in his/her hands and searching for a good scene
- Reducing his/her text to 1200 characters
- Solving a team conflict
- Dividing tasks among people in the team

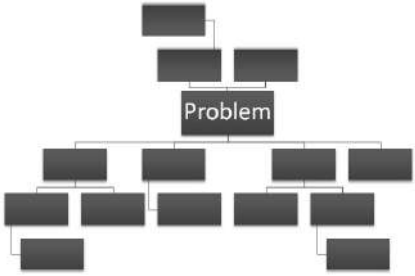
When facilitating creativity, one must understand its process. Often it seems that developing ideas is just the matter of the moment. It seems that an idea just comes and that's it. Well, in most cases, this is not true. The process of getting the right idea and applying it is very similar to the process of cooking. If you want the food to be really tasty and something spe-



cial, then buying and eating raw food is not the solution. You have to prepare it and sometimes also know some tricks.

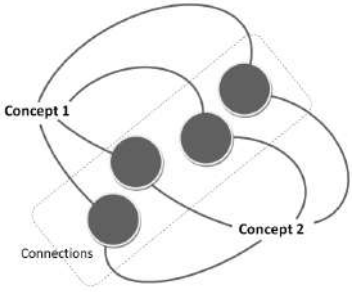
In this manual, we are going to present the "DO IT" process. It is exactly how it sounds: it helps you to put ideas into practice. It divides the process of idea generation into four steps:

- D = defining the problem
- O = opening minds
- I = identifying the best solution
- T = transforming the idea into practice



In the first phase (defining the problem), one needs to define the problem that he/she is solving. By defining it, we don't mean only defining the question we are going to cover in our Backpack Journalism research, but also defining the way we want to present it in the media, which means asking whether we have the ability to do it and what the possible limitations are.

The second phase (opening minds) is conducted to produce as many ideas about how to solve the problem as possible. Probably 90% of the ideas in this phase are going to be irrelevant, some of them may be totally stupid; but it is those stupid ideas that bring the biggest added value of this phase. Crazy ideas often serve the group by slightly changing their re-



lationship towards the problem. They steer the flow of thought into another direction. Such ideas also help us to 'think outside of the box', which is an assumption of creativity. Without ideas that seem strange at first glance and without thinking outside of the box, real cre-

Issues\People	Anca	Tom	David
Issue 1			
Issue 2			
Issue 3			

ativity is not possible.

The task of the third phase (identifying the best solution) is to separate the good ideas from the bad ones. From the crowd of thousands in this phase, the group has to pick the right ones. Picking happens through discussion, evaluation, further development, and having a sense for potentially good ideas. Even if at this phase we still don't know how the ideas could be implemented, if they seem potentially good, we should pick them.

In the final (fourth) phase (transforming the idea into practice), the chosen ideas have to be implemented.

Table below presents a concrete case of "DO IT" process that has been adapted to Backpack Journalism.

There are two elements that need to be balanced when facilitating creativity: open and closed space. It is not possible to be creative without opening space, but it is also not possible to put ideas into practice without closing it.

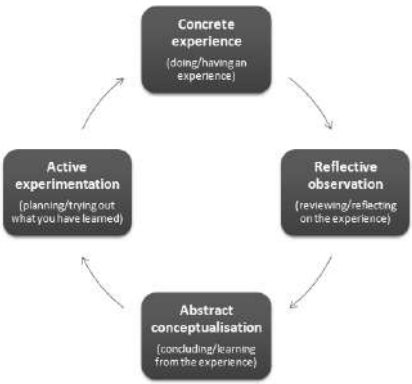
WHICH CONCRETE TECHNIQUES CAN I USE TO OPEN SPACE FOR CREATIVITY?

A brief list presented in this chapter includes brainstorming, creating a mind map, creating a problem tree, using forced connections, and using the Matrix method.

Brainstorming is the most basic creative technique. It can be implemented by an individual or in a group. It is about everybody listing ideas and putting them onto a bigger poster or blackboard. Naming ideas is important for a Backpack Journalist, as it allow him/herself to think creatively. Ideas should not be commented upon.

A mind map is a technique that is very similar to brainstorming. The biggest difference among them is the connectedness of the ideas. Since in brainstorming ideas are not connected among themselves, the idea of mind map is that every idea has its origin. If a specific idea inspires you to create a new one, you just draw it from there. A mind map starts with a problem put into the center of the poster, then the first few ideas are drawn out of the problem and then developed further into many levels.

A Problem tree is a technique that can, despite of its usefulness in project management, for which it was developed, be very useful in Backpack Journalism. At first glance, it is similar to the mind map technique. First, the problem is put into the center of the poster or a blackboard. A problem tree has its roots and its branches. Roots represent the causes of potential problems. The first level of roots represent causes for 'middle problem'. The second level consists of causes from the first level, etc. The same goes for the branches, but instead of causes, they present consequences. Level 1 branches represent consequences of the problem put into the middle. Level 2 branches



represent consequences of level 1 branches, etc. Such problem analysis can help us to 'open minds' and explore the problem.

The forced connections technique is where team members try to find a connection between two or more seemingly independent concepts or facts. Input words are invented or given and then brainstorming is used when

trying to determine how they are connected.

The matrix method is a technique that comes out of the forced connections technique. The skeleton of the technique is a net (matrix) with a desired number of rows and desired number of columns. Elements of one category are put into the upper row and elements of the other into the left-most column. Then, in every individual cell of matrix, a connection between the 1st and the 2nd element is created via brainstorming.

In Backpack Journalism, an example of using this method would be to match problems with persons we would like to interview. In the upper row, a team could put the people, and in the left-most column, problems could be put and the cells of the matrix could be used to brainstorm whether and how a specific person could help us to solve a specific problem.

HOW DO I OPEN SPACE FOR LEARNING?

‚To learn' is one of basic aims of Backpack Journalism in youth work. Through terrain work, exploring, contributing, teamwork, and intercultural relationships, young people learn how to work with, understand, and read the media. They acquire responsiveness to challenges in their environment or for various forms of intercultural differences.

When we speak of this, we don't speak of classic types of learning. In Backpack Journalism, young people learn experientially, through working in real situations.

It has been proved that through experiential work, one can learn much more than if they were in the classroom. Learning through work is more intensive, and the individual is more intensively included. Usually, the work is also connected with the direct activity. If someone is passive, learning normally doesn't exist.

In an ideal Backpack Journalism camp, workshops are not needed. In an ideal case, the participants are totally motivated to discover new things, to explore ways of using new technologies, to contribute to a better world. In that case, their motivation is an entrance to learn everything. However, there is no ideal world and no ideal Backpack Journalism camp. Participants sometimes need to be encouraged and creating an organized workshop is an ideal way of doing this. In addition, there will always be a lack of mentors who also don't have all the needed experiences to assist everybody in his/her desired way. Thus: include workshops in your camps, but always be aware that through learning by doing, people are more likely to

PHASE OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MENTORS
Concrete Experience	Encourage individuals to take new, various, and challenging tasks. Offer various work possibilities and various hardware and software. Work in intercultural teams. In the environment, search for topics and/or spaces that will be interesting and challenging by themselves.
Reflective Observation	Encourage short reflections after every bigger task. Encourage longer evaluations after finished projects. Expose a participant who has some specific knowledge and encourage him/her to demonstrate it to the others. Show two or more different contributions and comment about what is good about them.
Abstract Conceptualization	Sometimes go deeper into a specific thing or concept. Explain how things work, and why. Encourage teams to set their own quality standards. Define the five top properties of a good contribution and rate the contributions according to these set criteria.
Active Experimentation	After explaining something, give the participants a chance to try what you spoke about. Give short, interesting, and challenging tasks. Ask more complex and open questions: "How would you make / act ..."

Chapter 4

How to organise a camp?

Authors: Martina Ilišinović, Matej Cepin

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In this chapter, we will discuss how to organize a good Backpack Journalism camp–from the basics up to real-life situations. In this Chapter, for ease, we will use the acronym BPJ in the place of Backpack Journalism. First, we will try to define what a BPJ camp in fact is, and then we will continue with some questions about when and where to have the camp, the length of a camp, the topic of the camp, accommodation issues, and much more. We will stop for a second at aims and objectives and then continue to discover the secrets of planning a camp. At the end of the chapter, you will find some tips for the evaluation of the camp and also some examples of different evaluation methods.

learn more!

Of course, experiential learning can also vary in quality. A mentor can contribute significantly to its effectiveness. Let's look at the experiential learning elements as defined by the American scientist David A. Kolb. These elements can be seen on the picture of Kolb's Cycle of Experiential Learning.

Concrete experience. A concrete experience can be everything an individual experiences in terms of a Backpack Journalism project. The more he or she is included in the project, the more intensive and of greater quality this experience will be. If the experience brings something new, it becomes a learning opportunity. That is the reason why participants need to be encouraged by mentors to engage in new tasks. Working with a new video camera, using different software, taking tasks that were previously taken by others: all of these are experiences that can, in a certain moment, turn into a learning experience.

Reflective observation. Action is not everything! Many things can also be learned through observation. One can observe others working (which is especially useful when teaching from mistakes would cost too much) or one can observe him/herself. We call this reflection. When the work is done, one sits down and thinks about how it was, what was positive, and what was negative. One of the most important tasks of a Backpack Journalism mentor is to stimulate the participants towards reflection, observation, and evaluation. Probably the best way to do this is in a team. Ask the participants how the task was accomplished, what could have been done better, and what everybody has learned by doing it.

Abstract Conceptualization. These two somewhat scientific sounding words are actually synonymous with concepts or theory. It was said that praxis (1st phase) is the best teacher, but on the other hand, it is also true that if no useful theory is derived from it, in other words: if individual is not able to conduct recommendations for his/her future actions out of it, this praxis will probably not yield anything value. That implies that the third task of a Backpack Journalism mentor is to theoretically explain things, to explain why something is the way it is, or why something works the way it does. Of course, a crucial recommendation is: Don't speak about this theory if it does not represent a suitable response to the participants' needs expressed through their reflective observations (2nd phase)!

Active Experimentation is the last phase of experiential learning. The idea of this phase is to transfer theoretically gained knowledge back into praxis. When, for example, a mentor is explaining to a participant which filters he/she can use to create certain effects in photog-

raphy, he/she will make learning much more effective if he/she has the chance to try them out. Sometimes we say that participants should 'play' with their new knowledge. Playing is a crucial element of learning, because it generates new concrete experiences.

What follows are some mentors' recommendations for every individual phase of experiential learning.

WHAT IS A BACKPACK JOURNALISM CAMP?

A Backpack journalism camp is one of the best ways for a young person to become a backpack journalist. People that are interested in becoming backpack journalists gather together in one place for a few days, explore the concept, report about it via different media, and learn about it through lecture and activities.

For preparing the news, it is strongly recommended that they be divided into smaller groups of three or four. How you choose to divide them is completely your choice. Organizing a camp is a big responsibility and there is no unique recipe for creating the perfect one. A good BPJ camp is a mixture of education, production, practice, creativity, and fun. However, one should not forget the social aspect of the camp. This is a great opportunity for meeting new people and making new friends.

A BPJ camp is more than just transforming people into backpack journalists. The camp provides a great environment for improving social skills, offers plenty of space for personal growth, and it raises media literacy and awareness regarding societal problems.

WHAT IS SPECIAL ABOUT AN INTERNATIONAL BPJ CAMP?

When you have an international camp, you have to get in touch with various youth organizations from other countries. There is a lot more organization involved and a lot more things to decide on. Are the groups going to be culturally mixed, or will they be divided by their nationalities? If you have them divided by nationalities, it is easier for them to work together and to continue their work after the camp, but you risk losing all of the advantages of an international camp by doing this. Intercultural communication is a positive aspect of an international BPJ camp. Participants can learn a lot from each other and get to know each other's cultures. This is a good way to decrease discrimination among young people and to make them feel more globally connected.

WHAT IS THE BEST TIME AND PLACE FOR A BPJ CAMP?

There is always the question of when and where to have the camp. It is very important that you decide this together in your group, taking into account all of your other responsibilities, so that you don't run out of time. You have to know when the school vacations are, when the national holidays are, and you have to decide upon the most optimum time for both the mentors and the participants. Don't forget to think about the seasons and the weather too, so you don't choose the coldest/hottest or the rainiest months of the year. It is good to choose a time when a lot is going on in the community, but not much is going on in schools/colleges.

The length of the camp is dependent on what you are going to do. A minimum for a good camp with good products is five days. The most optimum length is around seven days. You must not overstretch the camp or else motivation might fall dramatically.

When choosing the location, you have to decide within the group what you are looking for—is it a village, a small town, or a big city? In villages, people are usually very nice and communication will be very easy. You can get a lot of interviews, but be careful or you'll end up with a bunch of nothing-special videos. Villages can be boring and it can happen that you find no interesting topics there. A small town can sometimes have similar pros and cons as a village, or it can be completely different. Sometimes, small towns are bustling with life, events, and societal problems. Often, people here can be very uptight and not prepared to talk to you. If you choose a big city, you can be almost certain that you will have no trouble finding a good topic for your camp. However, participants can easily get lost in the big city streets with too many people, and you must not forget that the crime rate is usually higher in bigger cities than in the rest of the country; and of course, the obstacle of unfriendly and non-talkative people is likely to occur. As such, you can see that every location has its pros and cons, and you have to solve this dilemma

Here are some possible aims for a BPJ camp:

- To actively promote the media literacy of young people (young people become active creators and critical media users).
- To promote active citizenship and the critical awareness of young people (young people create their own view on matters that affect them).
- To promote solidarity, intercultural dialogue, and mutual understanding between young people with their active journalism in the environment of other cultures and in their own environment.

And here are some possible objectives:

- For participants to learn at least two elements of good journalism.
- For every participant to learn the basics of working with equipment.
- To create a space for open dialogue and for sharing experiences, as well as to promote mutual understanding and respect between the participants.
- To draw the attention of the media to the issues raised during the camp.

Aims:

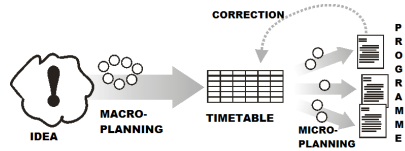
- To ensure that the participants are familiar with the elements of an excellent public performance.
- To ensure that the participants are good public performers.

Objectives:

- For participants to visibly improve their public performance at one exercise during the workshop.
- At the end of the workshop, participants will write down at least one way to overcome stage fright.
- At the end of the workshop, participants will write down at least two elements of a good public performance.

within your group and choose what is best for your camp.

One of the most important ingredients when choosing the place is the accommodation. It is important that you write a list of everything you need (technically) for your camp. This is because sometimes you will have a lot of trouble when searching for the ideal accommodation, but you must not lower your standards. You have to search for something that has everything on your list. It is necessary that you have enough rooms, Internet access, a room where you can have workshops and where you can spend the evenings, a kitchen, and a good location. Don't forget about having enough outlets for all of the necessary computers. Sleeping arrangements are also very important. If the participants do not know each other already, it could bother them if they have to sleep with too many roommates. You have many options here. You can have single rooms, double rooms, or you can decide to put them together according to their groups (people that



are going to be together in a group during the camp). It is recommended that no more than four sleep in one room. A lot of dilemmas can occur as a result of sleeping arrangements. Are they going to choose roommates by themselves? Are you going to put them together? How are you going to do so? Will they be separated by sex? All of this must not be forgotten when planning the camp.

The place and time also depends on your target group. Is the camp going to be national or international? If it is going to be international, you have to ensure that the time and place suites everyone. The location must be easily accessible for all of the participants from the other countries (also by public transport), and you cannot choose a place where a lot of

people do not speak English.

DOES THE CAMP REALLY NEED AIMS AND OBJECTIVES?

Absolutely! The aims and objectives are two of the most crucial aspects of organizing a camp. A BPJ camp can be just a meeting of young people used for having fun and working with media, or it can be much more. The aims and objectives help us provide direction to the camp and set priorities. What is more important to us: the intercultural experience or learning skills to work with media? The quality of the participant's products or having the participants cover many different topics? The aims and objectives help us think about these things and decide upon them accordingly.

The aims and objectives have to be written down so that you can gain a clear vision of what you want to do at the camp. Once you write down your camp' s aims and objectives, everything else will be much easier to organize, and you will know in what direction to go.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AIMS AND OBJECTIVES?

A lot of people have trouble separating them and some even claim that they are synonymous. Well, an aim is a general statement, which reflects the changes you hope to achieve as a long-term result of your activity/camp. An objective is a more specific, short-term statement about the activities you undertake to achieve your aim. For a camp, it is typical to have around three aims and up to seven objectives. The aims and objectives are interrelated. In simple terms–the aim is what you want to achieve and the objective describes how you are going to achieve that aim. You must remember that objectives have to fulfill the requirements of the aim.

An objective has to be concrete. How do you know if it is good? If it is S.M.A.R.T.:

- Specific (what do we want to achieve?)
- Measurable (can we measure it?)
- Acceptable (are participant getting anything out of it?)
- Realistic or Relevant (is it possible to achieve this objective?, is it relevant for us?)
- Timed (time bounded, until when is it going to be achieved?).

W = Workshop P = Production
TB = Team building FW = Field work

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
9.00 - 10.30	W	W	FW	W	W	W	Departures
11.00 - 13.00	W	TB	P	P	W	W	
15.00 - 16.30	TB	FW	P	Excursion	P	P	
17.00 - 18.30	W	FW	W	Excursion	P	P	
20.30 - 22.00	Fun evening	Free evening	Fun evening	Free evening	Special evening guest	Fun evening	

All of the camps have some common aims (written below), but you must decide if you need some additional aims. This depends on what kind of participants you have and where you are going to publish your work from the camp (is going to be in the local newspaper, the Internet?). When writing your aims and objectives, you must always have your participants and their personalities in mind, and decide what is best for their personal growth.

It is similar if you prepare a workshop, as workshops should also have aims and objectives. Let's take an example of a workshop designed for the improvement of public performance. What could be your aims and objectives?

WHAT SHOULD WE DO AT THE CAMP?

There are several ways to start preparing a program for the camp, although they all have one thing in common: you should do it together with your group. One of the first and most important things you have to decide is the topic of the BPJ camp. You can decide on one topic and then the participants can all explore that topic, or you can choose several topics and then the participants can choose the one they are interested in, or you can leave it up to them to find the topic by themselves.

You can then start with the planning process. There are usually two steps in planning, macro-planning and micro-planning. First, you start with macro-planning; for this is something that the whole group of mentors should do together. This is a basic sketch of your camp. Micro-planning is much more detailed. This is a special plan for every activity and workshop, and is written by a mentor (or mentors) that run that specific workshop or activity.

WHAT IS MACRO-PLANNING?

Macro-planning consists of your basics. First, you need to decide on the working methods. There are different working methods that you can use at your camp.

- One is the workshop (a brief interactive educational program in which the content is practical and specific to the needs of the group)
- The other is field work (participants go out to collect raw data)
- Then production (editing clips, writing articles, etc.)
- Team building (to improve relations in the team)
- Excursions and fun (everyone needs a break)

Methods have to be chosen carefully and must be balanced.

First, you must write down a basic timetable for your camp. Here is an example of dividing a day into four sessions:

TIME	ACTIVITY
7.30 - 9.00	Breakfast
9.00 - 10.30	First program set
10.30 - 11.00	Coffee break
11.00 - 13.00	Second program set
13.00 - 15.00	Lunch
15.00 - 16.30	Third program set
16.30 - 17.00	Coffee break
17.00 - 18.30	Fourth program set
18.30 - 20.30	Dinner
20.30 - 22.00	Evening

Then you take the hours meant for activities and multiply it with the number of days you have (do not forget to leave one day after lunch free if you are planning an excursion). Now you know how much time you have. You can then write down the content that you think is the most important for your participants to learn and you then divide it across the timetable.

There are many different ways to construct the timetable. You can always do a workshop in the morning and production in the evening, or vice versa. You can choose not to go on an excursion, or you can allow for field work all day. It all depends of what you think is the best for the participants and how much time they need to accomplish their tasks properly. You may also go with two parallel workshops at once, or a parallel production/workshop. This parallel workshop gives the participants more options to choose from. They can choose the themes they are not so good at and leave other ones out. Or, if they are behind with production, they can take more time to work on it. This can, however, create various downsides. Someone might be weak at both workshops you are running parallel, or you might end up with most of the participants in one workshop, leaving the other with just few people. As such, this aspect must be prepared for very thoroughly.

WHAT IS MICRO-PLANNING?

When you are done with the timetable, it is time for micro-planning. Micro-planning is a detailed plan for every activity at the camp. You should write down the aims and objectives of each activity, and then put the program into a table.

Some questions that could help you:

- What are we going to do?
- How long will it take?
- Who is responsible for it?
- What do we need?

It is often easier to put everything into a table. Here is an example:

Name of the activity:

Day no.: Time (from/to):

METHOD	MINUTES	LEADER

Some of the questions (both for the mentors and the participants) can be:

- Are we satisfied with the turn out (the number of participants who came)?
- Do we have good impression of the program (what do we feel about it)?
- Are we satisfied with the course of the program (logical sequence, shifting between individual elements, etc.)?
- Did the program need adjusting, changing?
- Did the program meet the needs of those present?
- Did the program meet the needs of the group?
- Were the methods used suitable?
- What went on with the group in the camp?
- How did individual people experience the camp?
- Was the location suitable?
- Do we have any recommendations for future camps?
- Have we accomplished the goals of the camp or achieved what we wanted to?

When you are done with all your micro-planning, you will probably notice what you have to change the macro-plan of the camp. Maybe you forgot to include something important, or maybe you need more time for one theme and less for another.

HOW DO WE DIVIDE TASKS?

It is necessary to divide tasks. It is best if you divide tasks so that everyone does the

thing that he/she is strongest in. Someone takes over more organization, someone takes more workshops, and someone acts as the connection to the participants. If someone is not good at leading workshops, maybe he/she is great at organization or something else; the key thing here is not to force anyone into something they do not feel comfortable doing. When organizing different activities, you must decide how many mentors will lead it. It is not recommended to have more than two mentors per workshop.

You must then decide how much responsibility are you going to put on the participants. You can decide that you will cook for yourselves and this can then be done by the participants. It is a great way for them to learn more responsibility and grow in their knowledge and also for team building, as they must work together in order to cook their meals. They can also do the dishes and prepare the evening "fun". You should not, however, put too much pressure and responsibility on them. Some

Technique 1: Thermometer

Number of participants

From 10 to 15 participants.

Duration

From 10 to 30 min.

Position of participants

Participants sit in a circle or in a half circle.

Description

Participants mark the degree of their satisfaction on a thermometer (look at the Attachment).

Purpose

- To become aware of one's momentary feelings.
- To become aware of the atmosphere in the group.
- To become aware of how satisfied a participant was with a certain part of the event, project, gathering, etc.
- To talk about the atmosphere in the group.
- To talk about satisfaction and discontent.

Instructions

The leader gives participants the drawing of a thermometer and asks questions about different aspects of qualifications, projects, teamwork, etc. Every participant marks his/her satisfaction with a particular category that the leader is asking about. Each category is marked with a different color. The leader then displays the thermometers so that everyone can see them. A conversation about the results follows. One thermometer per participant is required to carry out the evaluation (as mentioned above). One large thermometer per group may also be used. Participant then take turns in marking their evaluations.

Variations

- When assessing project work or the effects on a wider environment, we can use the thermometer to assess the realization of particular goals or effects.

Note

Every member of the group should participate in the conversation and the leader must pay attention to that.

This one can be used for the mentors' evaluation.

Technique 2: Four corners

Number of participants

Number of participants is not limited.

Duration

From 10 to 20 min.

Position of participants

Participants stand in the middle of the desired location.

Description

Participants evaluate their satisfaction or dissatisfaction by standing in corners that are marked with ++, +, - or --.

Purpose

- To assess and visualize different aspects of the program or project.

Instructions

Four corners in a room are marked with signs ++, +, - and --. The leader then asks evaluation questions. Every participant goes to a corner that symbolizes his/her response. Then participants explain their choice.

Variations

- If the leader asks questions that cannot be answered by the mentioned signs, the answers in the corners may be different (for example: "Which problem is the most urgent in your opinion?" And the given answers are: water pollution, CO2 gasses, irrational waste of energy, urbanization, etc.).

things have to be done by the mentors too, or they may not respect you. If they are cooking,

Chapter 5

How to run a workshop?

Author: Ewa Pietras

Where and why does a Backpack Journalism mentor run workshops? 44

When is it good to organize a workshop and when it is better not to? 44

What is most important when planning a workshop? 44

How do I set my aims and objectives for the workshop? 45

How do I plan a workshop? 45

How do people learn? 47

How do I define the working methods and the equipment needed? 47

How do I communicate with people? 47

How do I give and receive feedback? 48

Workshops seem to be a fundamental method to use with young people when training them in the field of Backpack Journalism. Reading this chapter, you will be able to become acquainted with the basic elements of workshops. Among others, we will speak about defining your target group, planning content, facilitating communication, and honing both feedback skills and training methods.

But before proceeding to these elements, let us answer one even more fundamental question: when is it good to organize a workshop and when is better not to?

you should prepare the evening activities. You could, however, simply choose to take accommodation with full board. If that is the case, the participants should at least prepare some of the evening component.

Cooking and such aside, you must also decide how much the mentors will help the participants. You must set some guidelines for how much of their responsibilities you are willing take (how much can you do instead of them at a workshop, for example). This can be adjusted later, but still these things should to be clear in advance.

WHAT ABOUT COMMUNICATION WITH PARTICIPANTS?

It is best if only one person takes over communication with the participants, so that they know whom to turn to. Please take care to start talking to them well in advance. The best way for doing this is through e-mail. Everyone usually has one and you can easily e-mail them all of the instructions. You should keep in touch with them on a regular basis and let them know what they need to bring along. If you are not a fan of e-mail, there are always letters and cell phones (although cell phones are not recommended for a camp, as it is hard to send all the instructions).

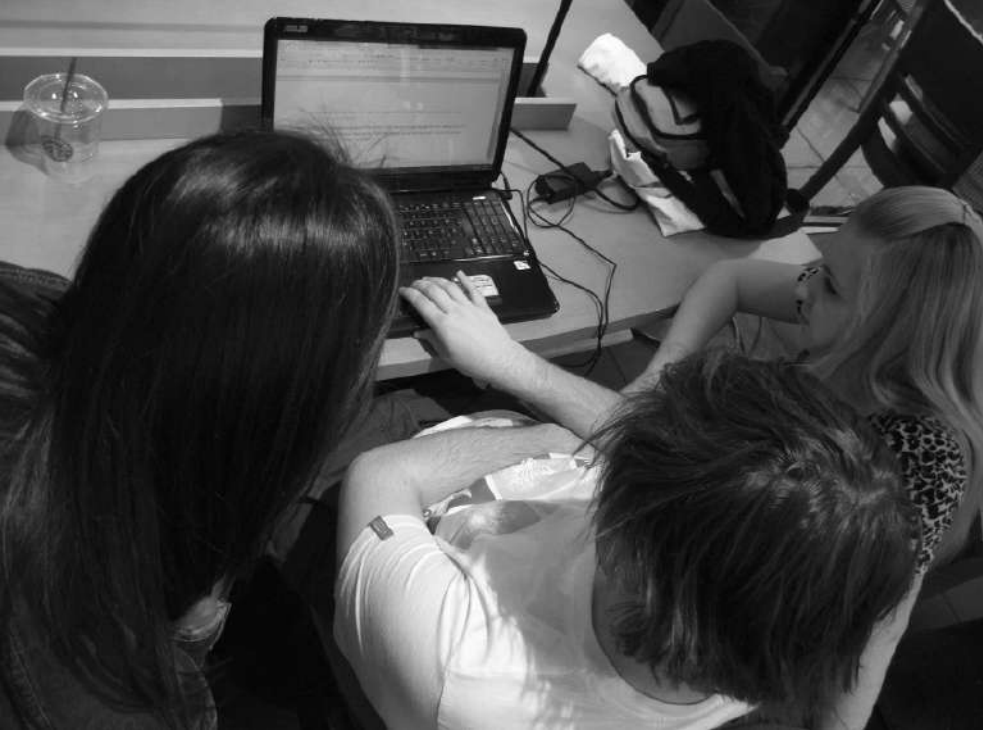
There are some things about communication with participants that you cannot divide. Together you should decide how much information you are going to tell them. Are you going to tell them who the other participants are and give them their contacts? Are you going to tell them who they are in a group with? Are you going to let them know the topic (if you have one), or will you let them know that they have to prepare the topic by themselves?

WHAT IS EVALUATION?

The words "evaluation", "check", "assessment" and "reflection" seem very similar in definition. They all involve looking back or examining the executed work or the activity. We usually talk about evaluation in terms of the three phases of project work, where evaluation represents the third phase, following the phase of planning and execution of the project. It is a tool for recognizing what has been happening, for giving value to our work, and also for strengthening the presence of the values accomplished with our work. Evaluation gives us several things. It gives us feedback on our work, it makes decisions in the future easier and better (as we have more information), and it can improve the future quality of work.

SO HOW DO I EVALUATE IT?

Firstly, it is best if both you (the mentors) and the participants evaluate the camp. That way you get as much information as possible. Evaluation should take place at the end of each day–the mentors without the participants,



with them, or both. As an alternative, you can prepare evaluations in between (for example on the third of the seven days). You can also use the final evaluation, which is usually the longest and is conducted together with the participants and then separately in the team of mentors. You can also evaluate the entire camp project itself, and this is best if it is done two weeks or more after the conclusion of the camp.

It is effective to divide the questions proportionally between different evaluations. Some are appropriate for everyday evaluations, whereas others are best "saved" for the final one.

WHAT ARE OTHER METHODS OF EVALUATION?

The most commonly used evaluation method is the questionnaire. There are many different kinds of questionnaire—from very simple to very demanding 'a-lot-to-write' questionnaires. You can also use many other methods like interviews, assessment games, analyses, and so on. Questioners can be made using questions mentioned in the previous chapter.

Below you can find two examples of different evaluation methods.

» More specifics are available about evaluation in T-Kit textbook of Youth in Action: http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/publications/T-kits/10/Tkit_10_EN

WHAT ARE SMALL THINGS I SHOULD NOT FORGET?

Just some tips of what not to forget:

- Plan the camp well in advance.
- Divide tasks—do not try to do everything by yourself!
- Begin the search for a location at the beginning of planning and if possible visit the place in person.
- Keep the participants informed at all times.

PREPARING A WORKSHOP OR A TRAINING COURSE

them.

WHERE AND WHY DOES A BACKPACK JOURNALISM MENTOR RUN WORKSHOPS?

When we educate young people to become Backpack Journalists, workshops are one of the key elements in the learning process. A Backpack Journalism camp, for example, can consist of obligatory and optional workshops. Even when we are working with a group of young journalists in our home town, it often makes sense to organize one.

WHEN IS IT GOOD TO ORGANIZE A WORKSHOP AND WHEN IT IS BETTER NOT TO?

Simple! Organize a workshop when organizing a workshop makes more sense than any other of the available approaches.

You should organize a workshop if:

- The group members have similar needs.
- You have to teach them new skills and it is easier to do that with a more structural approach.
- You do not have a lot of time, and you evaluate that the fastest way for them to learn the necessary skills is through a workshop and not on their own.

WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT WHEN PLANNING A WORKSHOP?

The most important aspect of a workshop is to address the needs of the participants. A good workshop should be the answer to problems that the participants are having. If they feel as though a workshop is being held in response to their needs, they will be much more motivated to attend it!

But what do they want to learn? In what kind of workshop will their knowledge help them? What kind of behavior do they want to change?

Some of these answers you can get when you're recruiting members for the workshop. You can ask them about their expectation, which can provide you with a lot of precious information, such as who is good at what in the group, what level the group is at, or which parts of the material are the most interesting for them, etc.

> For example, when teaching photography, you have to show how to use the equipment to take a good picture, but knowing how to use it doesn't make anyone a good photographer. The next step is using the things you've learned. So in this case, you have to find a way for people to learn from their own experiences. Taking pictures, comparing them, brainstorming about which are good or bad, and about which parameters decide that. The participants should find the best way of recognizing their own mistakes. And you should try to encourage them to do it again correctly. Mix methods! There is no need to stick for the one of them during the entire workshop.

After you have this information, you can do further preparations. Preparations are not finished until the workshop begins. You will also obtain some extra information when you meet the group. By speaking face to face, you can get to know even more about the participants.

Good preparation will give you good results. You must get to know everything you can about the group that you will be working with. Try to define people's expectations, possibilities, and attitudes for seeking knowledge. Also take into consideration which method would be the best for the given group situation.

If you realize that the needs of some groups are different than you predicted, you can still adapt to them during your workshop. But being well prepared will always give you a lot of self-confidence, which can help in communication and establishing good relationships.

HOW DO I SET MY AIMS AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE WORKSHOP?

Setting your aims and objectives is the most important thing that you can do in the workshop planning.

An **Aim** is the point you want to reach with the group. It will determine the attitude, the way of thinking, and the main change you want to achieve. It's not always measurable in the present. It is a permanent change that you want to achieve, but it may only be measurable

in the future.

An **objective** is connected to the competencies that people need to obtain to reach the aim. Objectives are about attitudes, skills, and behaviors. Objectives are measurable. You should be able to measure them immediately by evaluating them.

You cannot set your objectives without first having aims. Objectives are a sort of a path to reach your aims.

Mentors often make this common mistake. They start planning workshops by asking themselves questions about their methods or about what information they would like to provide to the participants. But before deciding that, one should first ask him/herself, "what exactly do I want to achieve?"

HOW DO I PLAN A WORKSHOP?

To plan and run a successful workshop, you need to remember the following:

- Diagnose the group: their problems, possibilities, and needs.
- Set your aims: what do you want to give to every single person participating in the workshop? (focus on knowledge, skills and attitudes).
- Find the best methods for doing it.
- And, at the end, evaluate your work.

Phase I: Identification

(decisions to be made in the following order)

1. Identify the need for the course
2. Who will plan the course?
3. Define the purpose or aim of the course

Further decisions: date, length, time, notification

Phase II: Preliminary planning

(As soon as possible after Phase I)

1. Objectives of the course
2. Format
3. Style of the delivery-methodology
4. Outline program
5. Subjects for each session
6. Who will run the course? One person? A pair? Outside speaker(s)?
7. Other (external) inputs?

Advance booking: rooms, equipment, outside speakers, refreshments, other

Phase III: Detailed planning

(About one month before the workshop starts)

1. Who will do the detailed planning?
2. Session by session planning
3. Prepare detailed tutor notes (content, methodology, who does what, timing of different sessions, decisions on handouts, equipment needed, style of evaluation, size of the groups, etc.)
4. Preparation by the tutor(s)
5. Preparing handouts, photocopying course list, etc.
6. Briefing the guest speakers
7. Sending a copy of the program, course list
8. Preparing evaluation sheets

Phase IV: the course day checks

1. Room, equipment, materials, refreshments
2. Information and directions for members of the course
3. Style:
   - be there before the first course member
   - be prepared to listen of any immediate problems
4. Starting the course:
   - start on time
   - keep as close as possible to the time you've published, but allow for some flexibility for the participants

Phase V: follow up

1. Analyze the evaluation sheets
2. Draw up a summary
3. Discuss the summary with all involved in preparation of the course and make notes of areas to be revised if the course is to be prepared again.

HOW DO PEOPLE LEARN?

When planning a learning process, be aware of the 4 Hs: Head, Hands, Heart, and Health. This means that learning should be intellectual, instrumental, emotional, and holistic. The knowledge is deeper when you can check it, feel it, and experience it.

D.A. Kolb wrote about what conditions are most valuable in terms of learning. Kolb's cycle (explained in more detail in the How to Open Space Chapter) starts with concrete action, then progresses to reflection, then continues

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Chapter 6

How to support a team of Backpack Journalists

Author: Petr Kantor

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A mentor can lead you to interconnect your head and heart. He/she does not advise; instead, he/she asks questions and the participants look for the answers themselves. A mentor reveals people's abilities so that they can be happier and more successful. This is a very difficult task and people sometimes have to look for the answers deep within their own personalities.

to generalization and conceptualization of the experience, and finishes using the new knowledge in a new action. Without reflection and using it in a new action, experiences are basically useless. That should provide a constant change in the reaction.

The perfect participant can draw from all four stages of learning. In practice, however, not everyone can benefit from all of them. Some participants are more familiar with one and others with the other–often not encompassing all of the possibilities. A mentor should include opportunities for all learning styles into the program of the workshop: some action, some discussions, some reflection, some concepts, some learning through mistakes, etc.

HOW DO I DEFINE THE WORKING METHODS AND THE EQUIPMENT NEEDED?

Having set the objectives, you can start to think about what shape the workshop could take. Which methods should you use? It all depends on the group, your personal style, and on what all of the involved parties want to achieve.

It's very important to find a good method of expression. You have many choices, whether it be lectures, discussions, brainstorming or group work, to name a few. All you have to remember is that people are learning more and faster when they experience the subject. They should also think about experiences they have had and use that experience in the right way. That is the basis of Kolb's definition of learning–learning is the process of transforming an experience into knowledge.

The methods need to be adjusted to:

- The group, their possibilities, and their

- Give young people the opportunity to meet their role models in their field.
- Ask questions: e.g. „Paul, you say you want to be the team leader. I appreciate the way you treat people, which is a skill all good managers should have. What other skills, in your opinion, are important?"
- A good mentor can choose different ways of conducting interviews. The verbal expressions "you must" and "you should not", should not occur.
- How long will the current situation last?

5 Ask about the motivation to communicate (while talking to each other, would you like to share some information, or talk just for fun? Or are you speaking like this in order to adapt yourself to a particular role in your life?)

needs

- Your subject
- The equipment you can afford
- The time available
- The place you are in
- The cultural environment, etc.

HOW DO I COMMUNICATE WITH PEOPLE?

Communication is the key for establishing good relations with the people. Listening and talking make up a large part in our life. It can be said that most people have a problem with correct transmission. The number one rule is to not be afraid of communication itself.

1. The best way for getting people's sympathy and making the conversation better is being an active listener. Active listening is a process that demands paying attention to other person. There are some circumstances where listening makes the process easier. Always show attention to the person you're talking to. Try to always make eye contact. If it's distracting for you, try to focus on their mouth. Try to focus on of the content of their speech. Try to avoid making sounds like 'ach' or 'uhhh'. Try to avoid crossing the distance chosen by person you are talking to. Try to avoid interrupting, be patient, and ask about the details.
2. Paraphrasing is a technique used for correctly understanding other people. It's repeating the speech of someone. In this way, we make sure that we have caught the main point of the speech. It can save us time. In practice, we should try to repeat the sense using your own words, starting from expressions like "I would like to make sure that you said that correctly…" or, "I'm a little confused. Let me tell you what I understood..." or, "If I understand correctly, your main point was…"
3. It is very important for us to know how to properly ask questions. The questions should be open in nature, giving the interlocutor more opportunities to answer. Open questions allow for more opportunities for further dialogue.

- A mentor does not impose. Working with someone who does not want to work is a waste of time for both parties. A mentor works with people who really want to work.
- Be systematic–bring order to your mentoring, i.e. hold regular meetings.
- Ask questions: „The approach you have chosen does not lead to any results. It is time to consider other approaches. What can you present as a different approach?"
- Or: „ Peter, this issue can be viewed from another perspective. Can I tell you how it appears to me?"
- You can also ask the following question: „What do you think about doing this instead of that?" Or, „What would happen if you failed to respond to change and continued at the current pace."

There are also some examples of bad communication that you should also remember and avoid. Bad communication can cause disturbances in the group.

- Go through all eight elements with the team and ask how the individual elements are presented.
- Focus primarily on the target and interaction.

1. Asking closed questions or starting with the word „why" reduces communication within the group, sometimes making it impossible. It can suggest that you are avoiding real contact on purpose. The group may take this as incompetency.
2. Using the words „I'm not..." makes you seem like an untruthful person. As we all know, in most cases, the reality of this statement is totally opposite of what it

seems. „I'm not angry with you" almost always means, „I'm still angry with you."

3. Constantly repeating things often bores people or makes them angry. Think about other ways to make people remember the information. This is because repeating things runs the risk of losing meaningful contact with them.

- Ask all the members individually what the goal of their team is.
- Will the goals of the individual members be different or the same?
- Define what the common goal is.
- Remind the team that they each contribute to achieving the goal. Find out whether they are aware of the way they contribute to it.

4. Playing word-games with participants should be avoided. Avoid frequently using the words „yes, but", „I would like to do that, but there's no time", or „If only". Opening with „yes", and closing with a strong „no" means that you do not agree with the second part. This shows that we agree with the first part, but we're avoiding confrontation. This illusion is easy to catch and often portrays us in a bad light.

- Notice who talks with whom in the team. Is there anyone being overlooked? Are there any subgroups that do not communicate among themselves?
- Consider whether team members are willing to share information.
  - Support those interactions that are weaker.
- Ask why some members do not communicate. Is it due to lack of time, reluctance, or chance?
- Be aware of any rumors that might be circulating amongst the team members.
- Speak with all members of the team and be sure to allocate your time fairly.

5. Feedback is a process where information about the results of an action are spoken to the persons who participated in the action. It's comprised of the information about how we react to another people's behaviors. Feedback is used for eliminating undesirable behaviors and strengthening the desirable ones.

HOW DO I GIVE AND RECEIVE FEEDBACK?

It is very important to give feedback in the right way. Feedback is a basic tool used for creating changes in behaviors and attitudes. A mentor can provide the members of a group with information about behaviors that need to be corrected and about which ones should be strengthen. This provides a chance to adopt new abilities and eliminate undesirable ones.

It's important to remember that not all people are tough enough to take criticism. Sometimes it's better to talk with a participant one on one. It is possible that a participant could feel uncomfortable with taking criticism in front of a whole group. Feedback from the whole group is more powerful and has a bigger influence on people.

There are some rules that need to be understood in order to give and receive the most effective feedback.

When you are giving the feedback:

Describe precisely the concrete behaviors you wish to provide feedback on. Focus on facts. You shouldn't seem like you are judging them. If it seems like you are, the other person can take it as an insult and react defensively without listening. Do not wait too long with your reaction. Feedback should not be given

- Does the team know who the leader is?
- What processes strengthen and undermine the authority of the leader?
- Does the team have a clearly defined representative?

long after something has happened. If it's given too late, one of you may not remember the details. Speak about facts, say what you think/feel about someone's behavior. Describing your own feelings as much as describing facts. This is needed for others to be able to judge our reaction. Don't only be critical in that situation; there is always a solution, and you can talk about it. Your partner can also provide his/her own suggestions about the situation. You should be open for that, and stress that this is only about your personal opinion. You must remember to be careful about criticizing things that the person can't change. Our reaction should always point to the possibility of behavioral change. Even if you have a lot of bad feelings about someone, you should always try to mediate them by not telling them everything at once, because drowning the person in criticism will only hurt them and will not facilitate change. Ask about their reaction to your words if the person doesn't react on their own. Try to confirm that you have made yourself as clear as you could. Feedback should not be based on personal like or dislike for a person. Your personal feelings about a person should be kept to yourself.

- Create a space for the discussion of common rules of the team.
- Together with the team, search for a standard; what is proven and what is worth repeating?

- Can the team define what the team's interest is and can it understand the individual interests of its members?
- Is respect and trust, which is given to members to solve their individual tasks, declared?

- If a team accepted a solution, was it accepted by everyone? Does everyone agree with this decision?
- When something goes wrong within the team, is it an individual who is to blame, or is the team looking for a solution?
- Do the individual members feel responsible for the outcome?

When you are receiving feedback:

There are also many situations when you will be receiving feedbacks from others. You should remember some rules that will allow you to learn as much from it as you can. Listening is the most important rule. Do not interrupt them too quickly. Do not start in the beginning by defending yourself. When we listen carefully, we show the other person that we are taking their feedback seriously and that we are prepared for situations of criticism. Try to make it clear that you have understood correctly what you were told. If it is too unclear for you, try to ask about all the details. If something was a surprise to you, try to ask other people about their feelings about it. Do they also see it like this? Remember, the decision to change something about yourself always belongs to you.

- Are new team members familiar with the history of the team?
- Is there any ritual in the team? If not, let us look for one that the team can acquire.

WHAT IS THE BASIS OF TEAM MENTORING?

Communication is thought to be the most important. It may seem to us that we communicate quite a lot, through such things as phone calls, Skype, and virtual chats. We have so many tools for communication that we often forget about what the main purpose of communication actually is. The main purpose of communication can be seen in three dimensions:

- Saying something
- Sharing something
- Learning something new

These three things should be included in team communication; which is necessary if we want to get in touch with other people and cooperate with them. Therefore, it is important for a mentor's work to promote good communication, because it contributes heavily to building good relationships. We can recognize the elements that are important for building good relationships and that can be used to positively change communication within the team.

- Ask questions—asking questions is one of the most basic mentoring tools.
- Present options: look at the situation from a different perspective.
- Show the impact of the solution—speculate about the impact of each solution.
- Avoid making decisions.
- Do not tamper with others.
- Find out if there is something the team members are worried about. What are the so-called 'taboo topics'? Those should be carefully discussed.
- Seek unbiased partnerships. Remember that mutual trust is the main thing here. A mentor has no other interest than to benefit the team.
- Do not help too much. Be sure that the products are the team's results, not yours.

HOW SHOULD THE TEAM BE MENTORED?

Not only is feedback important, the way that it is transmitted between people is important as well. A mentor's personal attention is part of establishing young people's self-esteem and confidence. The older and more experienced mentors should find the time to talk to the younger participants. They should ask them questions, listen to them, and show a genuine interest in them.

- Introduce a simple classification from one to ten for evaluating each progress.
- Publish individual challenges and talk about every step for their implementation.

WHAT ARE THE SELF-ESTEEM-BUILDING QUESTIONS LIKE?

Questions cannot be prepared by a mentor in advance; they must respond to the situation. In principle, they are the ones that make you appear as though you care. So it is not fair to ask, "why I am wrong?" . The word „why" suggests hidden guilt or weakness.

- Repeat what you have heard: „If I understand it correctly, you said…"
- "Let me say what I have heard 'between the lines', and then tell me whether I have understood it correctly or not."

5 Ask questions: e.g. „What kind of job can you do. What are you most interested in? What skills do you want to learn, and who is your role model in your field? What could I do better/differently?"

WHY DOES A MENTOR WORK ON QUESTIONS SO MUCH?

This is because a mentor must believe in the

- Find out what was well done in the team and if the person who has done this has changed their thinking and approach.

human ability to find answers. A mentor does not give advice, he/she does not command, and he/she searches for true human potential.

- Tell them your own life stories.
- Find teams that deal with similar situations and connect them.
- Allow the young people to meet older and more experienced people.

HOW CAN A MENTOR HELP A PERSON OR A TEAM GET OUT OF TROUBLE?

A mentor should not get people or a team out of trouble, but he/she should help them to find solutions and to awaken forces within themselves in order to achieve their potential.

HOW CAN WE HELP A TEAM?

Team mentoring is the promotion of communication, which leads to the discovery and improvement of a team's potential. The task of our work within the team is to provide more effective teamwork, whether it be as a whole or to its individual members. This improves both the atmosphere and the motivation of the young people. Systematic and regular teamwork increases the visibility of the activities of the individual members of the editorial staff by understanding their key roles. It also increases the use of a team and avoids the potential departure of key people from the editorial board. This all happens thanks to teamwork where everyone works towards a common goal.

WHAT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED DURING TEAM MENTORING?

BALINT GROUP

This is a specific technique that combines traditional supervisory work focused on the problem with the multi-level option of social support. This technique was elaborated upon for general use by Michael Balint, a doctor and psychoanalyst of Hungarian origin, who died in London 1970. The technique is useful for understanding and improving team achievement.

A Balint group is an experimental, small-group educational activity in which practicing GPs meet regularly to discuss difficult or intriguing cases. This is the origin of this method. Its present form can be defined as a marketplace of ideas and is guided by certain rules. This form of work offers ideal solutions. Its advantage lies in offering multiple perspectives on the relationship and the release from the captivity of established interpretative schemes and prejudices. It provides its participants with a certain degree of understanding and social support. The given form of group work accepts diversity, experiences, irrationality, and a sense of doubt or failure. It is a long process, which „ripens" over time, and the effect is not quick and disposable. Inspiration, understanding, and the 'aha-effect' may appear in the participating group after a delay of several days.

Basic rules for leading the Balint group:

Describe the situation you are dealing with.

Others ask about the details of the situation with a view to best understanding the circumstances and relationships in a given situation.

Everyone in the circle expresses their opinion on how to deal with a given situation.

Evaluate how the team has contributed towards resolving the given problems.

Recommendation:

Working with a group can proceed spontaneously or in a fixed order.

By using this method, you can solve situations that occurred in the past and already have their solutions in the present. You can also use this method if you are currently dealing with any situation and the end is still not clear.

As a mentor, you can participate. Your opinion will become one of many.

RECONSTRUCTION OF THE SITUATION

The participants in a situation that has happened usually have a narrow and vague insight into the entire scenario. It is therefore useful when the entire situation is accurately reconstructed. At least some of the team members should participate, including the mentor. We can use the method of analysis with a sociogram–a diagrammatic representation of the lines of communication among groups of people, showing the frequency of communications and the directions in which they flow. Important persons who are part of this situation are visualized by using cards or drawn figures. Team members are then placed into the interrelationships.

Recommendation:

Remember that any situation that happened in the past is reconstructed and cannot be accurately repeated. Therefore, during reconstruction, always respect different perceptions of the same situation.

Listen to what is said to you and note the fault situations.

ROLE PLAYING

The mentor may try to allocate different roles amongst the team members. Or they can imagine specific people and start an imaginary dialogue with them. This way, we can intellectually test various options of perception and behavior in a certain situation, and also broaden perspectives and together try to conduct an interview.

Recommendation:

Think about the situation again and try to formulate other procedures for the current situation.

Select the examples that seem to be useful for the needs of the team.

Identify the nearest steps and tasks for the team.

FEEDBACK TECHNIQUE

A mentor is able to monitor the activity of an individual or a team. That is why he/she can be one of the feedback resources. He/she should try to provide developmental feedback. This provides space for the clarification of positions for negotiation. It is a standard technique that reflects individual behavior and the behavior of the whole team. We present the processes in four steps, which may enhance individuals' assessment of the team.

Recommendation:

Make sure that your counterpart can and wants to accept feedback from you.

Describe the content of the feedback and consider the following questions: „What behavior have I noticed?"; "What is my interpretation?"; "What feelings does it evoke?", and "How am I going to behave after this?"

Then, the recipient of the feedback explains his views and motives, without apologizing.

Try to find both similar and different views and finally tell your own ideas about the necessary changes.

Pay attention to eight elements of team: aim, interaction, roles, rules, authority, individuality, fellow-feeling and hindsight. A good mentor can use these elements to help the team clarify its direction, facilitate the overcoming of obstacles, and develop the team skills of the young people.

ARE THE OBJECTIVES MET AND SHARED?

Goal-monitoring is very important for teamwork. The team should always have a common goal and each team member should profit from the team's performance. For the mentor, it is important to answer the question of whether the members of the team know how to work together and what their overall goal is. If the mentor finds out that the team can describe its common goal, then the other question appears, which might read, „Is the motivation to achieve common goals presented?" If there is someone who achieved the goal first, the mentor should watch the reactions of the other team members. There might be joy, but there also may be rivalry between them.

IS THERE A MUTUAL AND EQUAL INTERACTION?

An experienced team mentor watches whether the key information is provided and shared. This helps to create a cooperative environment. The professional relationship between the individuals in the team should always be improving, and at the same time, accurate, concise, and relevant information should be provided.

WHAT ARE THE NINE TEAM ROLES?

Everyone in the team should be aware of the roles that must be filled. If for some reason a role is not being filled, we can see a natural willingness to substitute the role. This also supports the role of changing positions and role training, which is crucial for the team. People can see who the appropriate team member is and who is not.

The team roles are nine behaviors that a team needs. They were discovered by Meredith Belbin when he set out to research why some teams succeed and others fail. He found that a balanced team with all of the roles being filled achieves much better results than one with only some of them being filled. So whichever of the team' s roles you fill, you can be useful, as long as you do it well. Most individuals have more than one applicable capability. Identifying your best roles is an important step in working out how to behave.

» Access the following link to create your team's profile: http://www.school-portal.co.uk/GroupHomepage.asp?GroupID=623395

Realize the role that you are missing. Can you replace/strengthen it? Can you understand why this role is missing?

IS THERE ROTATION OF AUTHORITY?

The presence of authority in the team clarifies the membership of people in the team. It specifies processes in the team and helps to implement the results. In a well-functioning team, there is a willingness and openness to change authority. We can see that the authority is willing to seek solutions together with the whole team.

WHAT ABOUT RULES?

Rules provide a framework for the long-term functioning of the team. Co-written rules contribute to the clarification of appropriate standards and pro-team behavior. We can see how the rules are set and whether there are enough opportunities for discussion. A well-functioning team aims towards common communication rituals and meanings.

IS THERE A SPACE FOR INDIVIDUALITY?

Teamwork may seem to be the opposite of individuality. The ability to suppress individual interests in favor of the group belongs among the team's competencies. Conversely, a well-functioning team is able to respect the individuality of each member. And more importantly, the team enhances individuality for

Chapter 7

How to survive with other mentors?

Author: Cosmin Ionita

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What happens if a conflict gets out of hand? 63

What are the solutions to avoid conflicts between mentees? 63

How to solve conflicts? 63

In Backpack Journalism activities, mentors usually work in teams. Every team is its own story and so is every individual. Everybody is different. In every team of mentors, there are bound to be conflicts. How do we solve them? This is the topic of last chapter in this handbook!

specific tasks. The team should therefore balance between understanding both the interests of the team and of the individuals.

FELLOW FEELING: IS THERE THE OCCURRENCE OF "WE"?

Should there be some similarity amongst the team members, i.e. a sense of belonging? A good indicator of this is the frequent use of the word „we".

IS THERE HINDSIGHT?

This element is found in the teams that work together for longer periods of time. We can see to what extent the members recall and strengthen the historical, key, and funny moments from the existence of the team. It often happens that some of the milestones become a subject of regular meetings.

AS A MENTOR, AM I ON THE TEAM OR NOT?

The essential role of a mentor is to support the development of the group through various methods and create an opportunity to participate in various activities. A good mentor should help individuals and the group to find their own way to achieve their goals. A mentor should guarantee the team's independence within the project activities. A mentor should be a map, not a driver! A mentor is a person who does not directly participate in the activity/project, but still supports the group (or person) in implementing its goals. He/she works with people and performs specific tasks according to the needs of the individuals or the group. A mentor is rarely involved in the project implementation, and does not participate in specific tasks in the project.

SHOULD I SPEAK OR BE QUIET?

A mentor is quiet when it comes to decisions. The task of a mentor is not to take responsibility for a team' s decision. A mentor also does not speak in situations where the team discusses and seeks its own solution. Finally, he/she is silent when maintaining confidentiality to others. A mentor speaks mainly about what does not want to be heard. Teams often do not want to talk about matters that they are convinced they cannot speak about. If you show the courage to speak with the team about such matters without blaming or judging anyone, the team can find a new impetus for their development.

SHOULD I CHALLENGE THEM?

A mentor, together with the team members, develops plans for improvement and growth, which include specific targets and deadlines. A mentor keeps positive pressure on the members in order to set specific team and individual goals beyond their current limits. Then the mentor, together with the entire team, periodically assesses the progress.

HOW DO I HELP OTHERS TO LISTEN BETTER?

A mentor must learn to listen without judgment and assessment. He/she must listen to what the other person says or does not say, i.e. nonverbal expressions. He/she must be able to recognize the contradictions between words and non-verbal expressions. Listening is important for the understanding of needs and interests of the other person in relation to the activities and objectives of the team. When the mentor is able to listen well, the team members feel that their ideas are accepted and that they

are respected and understood. This reinforces the atmosphere of mutual trust, which allows for the rapid growth of the team and the successful solution of problems.

DO I GIVE APPROVAL?

Mentoring is a two-way street. If we realize this, we will be able to say, „I find it very inspiring what you are doing now. That's interesting. I would not have had such a good idea." In this way, you connect with the young people in the process of transmission. Recognition is a way to spot something that has happened. It could be something that represents a man and his growth within a team. Young people need sincere recognition. They can appreciate it and respond positively to it.

WHAT SHOULD I SHARE?

When mentoring, we do not only share the information, but also opportunities, experiences, and contacts.

WHAT METHODS AND TOOLS MAY I USE?

We have mentioned several times that the main tool of mentors is questions, which awaken and strengthen the ability of self-reflection. Questions are not the only tool that is used in mentoring methodology. There are other applicable tools, such as the Balint group, feedback technique, reconstruction of the situation, and role-playing.

WHAT ABOUT HAVING FUN TOGETHER WITH PARTICIPANTS?

In the early stages of the relationship, it is important to build a mutual sense of trust. A friendship must be built before your mentees will be open to hearing your advice and learning from your life experiences. To help facilitate this friendship, do things together that will allow you to get to know each other better. Discover your mentees' hobbies, interests and what they enjoy doing. You may want try to do some informal leisure activities to break the ice and build up the relationship. The event itself is not as important as the time spent together. It is important to make sure that the time spent together is quality time; stay away from activities that hinder conversation. Conversation is the key to building a relationship and ultimately it gives you the ability to guide them in the right direction.

» Best Way - Youth Mentoring Activities - http://www.ehow.com/way_5287029_youth-mentoring-activities.html#ixzz0wO4qBGMH

A number of ideas for things to do with mentees have been gathered from a variety of mentoring programs. Wherever possible, encourage the mentees to make suggestions about things to do. This is in line with the developmental aspect of youth mentoring. However, mentors might need a few ideas to suggest and the following list might be helpful:

- Visit a tertiary institution
- Visit an art gallery
- Go to the weekend markets
- Watch and discuss the T.V. news
- Attend a cultural festival together
- Talk about taxes
- Visit your workplace
- Get involved in a community environmental project

5 When having fun, be a role model! Use healthy ways of having fun.

A mentor is the role model of the mentee. He/she is not just a teacher or a tutor, he/she represents much more than that, having the competencies of:

- A coach: motivates higher performance
- A counselor: listens and offers advice
- A teacher: shares knowledge and skills
- A role model: leads by example
- A champion: develops careers

An effective mentor should:

- Be a wise and trusted counselor
- Avoid over-directing - support without recuing
- Look for the real problem
- Encourage feedback
- Keep a cool lookout
- Be frank and direct

- Talk at a good time
- Avoid perfection
- Nurture self-sufficiency
- Listen patiently and with empathy
- Build a relationship

WHAT ARE THE RULES FOR MENTORING?

Rules can be viewed on two levels. Firstly, the rules are made by the team. They are about defining the subject of mentoring, defining the framework for mentoring, defining who will participate, defining the number of members, and other agreed-upon rules, etc. Secondly, it is about you - a mentor. Here you should follow a few principles:

- It is not possible to solve many different problems at once, so, therefore, there is a scheduled procedure for each.
- A mentor does not solve anything—he/she just participates and contributes with the goal to set the process into motion.
- A mentor does not take responsibility for decisions—a mentor is an inspiration.

And how do we find out what should be solved? During the first meeting, the team always agrees on a goal. We work with questions and answers. Mentoring is a good thing because it builds on what is inside a person and a team. Work on your potential and you will

backpack journalism

HOW TO SURVIVE AS A MENTOR?

This is not a handbook for Backpack Journalists. It is a handbook for Backpack Journalism mentors. Who is a mentor? A mentor is an experienced person working with young people in the area of Backpack Journalism. He helps young people while gaining journalistic competencies. He encourages media literacy, critical thinking, and active citizenship. He assists young people when creating media content and helps them with their team relationships.

WHAT'S INSIDE?

What does it mean to be a mentor?
Explore topics such as what a mentor should know, who exactly a mentor is, and what special mentor tasks are when working with young people in the field of Backpack Journalism.

How to understand the young people's needs?
We will discuss how we can become good mentors and what abilities and traits a mentor has to have in order to engage in good mentoring.

How to open space?
One of the most crucial tasks of a Backpack Journalism mentor is to create open space for creativity, cooperation, and learning; and after reading this chapter, you will be able to do so. We are going to see what open space means, how it differs from 'closed space' and how to effectively open it. We are also going to introduce some methods that mentors can use in concrete situations.

How to organize a camp?
Discover how to organize a good Backpack Journalism camp—from the basics up to real-life situations; when and where to have the camp, the length of a camp, the topic of the camp, accommodation issues, and much more.

How to run a workshop?
Workshops seem to be a fundamental method to use with young people when training them in the field of Backpack Journalism. Reading this chapter, you will be able to become acquainted with the basic elements of workshops. We will speak about defining your target group, planning content, facilitating communication, and honing both feedback skills and training methods.

How to support a team of Backpack Journalists?
A mentor can lead you to interconnect your head and heart. She does not advise; instead, she asks questions and the participants look for the answers themselves. A mentor reveals people's abilities so that they can be happier and more successful. This is a very difficult task and people sometimes have to look for the answers deep within their own personalities.

How to survive with other mentors?
In Backpack Journalism activities, mentors usually work in teams. Every team is its own story and so is every individual. Everybody is different. In every team of mentors, there are bound to be conflicts. How do we solve them?

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