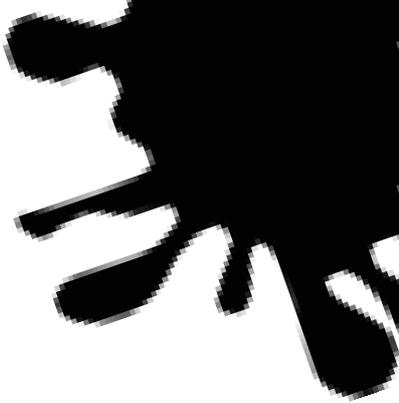




YOU CAN DO IT!

7 TIPS ON HOW TO PERFORM A SUCCESSFUL PROJECT

CRITICIZE - SUGGEST - ACT
YOUTH EXCHANGE, SLOVENIA



Agenda

1. HOW TO START BEFORE YOU START

2. WHAT DO WE NEED AND WHY?

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

4. COMMUNICATE!

5. THE DAY IS HERE – WHAT NOW?

6. YOU 'RE NOT FINISHED JUST YET!

7. YOU DID IT!

1. HOW TO START BEFORE YOU START



There is no real youth project without young people being involved from the very beginning. If they are involved they feel the ownership of the project and they will be devoted to it. First, you need to ask yourself ,what kind of a group you want. Once you've got these guidelines outlined, you start to look there, where your people are located. It is good to have young people with different interests, that's how you get more creative and out of the box ideas.

The leader has a big role in every stage of forming a project. In this stage he needs to try really hard to connect the group. He needs to become an authority that everyone looks up to. He needs to be reliable and show an example to the members of the group. In the first stage he needs to analyse what are the members of the team capable of. Are they good in the art department or for example in the IT department.

Once the group has goals and ideas they are a TEAM. We need to nurture the team spirit with team buildings. Always keep in mind every member of the team is important. If he will feel comfortable with the group you might get amazing harmonized ideas. There will be less threats for the group to separate suddenly.

Here, you can find some awesome team building games:

<https://wheniwork.com/blog/team-building-games/>

<http://www.nyy.org.uk/youth/activityresources/team-building-games>

2. WHAT DO WE NEED AND WHY?

Your team is ready! What now?

First, you need to find a problem in your local environment. Before you start the development of the activity you need to define challenges, pros and cons. To make it easier to define, we recommend usage of different tools. Two tools that are easy and effective:

a) S.W.O.T. is an acronym for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats and is a structured planning method that evaluates those four elements.

Strengths: characteristics of the business or project that give it an advantage over others

- Weaknesses: characteristics of the business that place the business or project at a disadvantage relative to others

- Opportunities: elements in the environment that the business or project could exploit to its advantage

- Threats: elements in the environment that could cause trouble for the business or project

b) The road from the problem to solutions = Problem tree

A problem tree helps you make an overview of all the known causes and effects to an identified problem. Understanding the context helps reveal the complexity of the problem, which is essential in planning a successful change-oriented project. The steps of making a problem tree are:

- Settle on the core problem
- Identify the causes and effects
- Develop a solution tree
- Select the preferred intervention



3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This is a very important component. If we do not take time in making aims and objectives, the results might not be as efficient as they could be.

AIM - It's general. Here we talk about what we want to achieve. It's a sentence that summarizes the answer to the most important needs that we have. Normally, it's an unreachable ideal. It could be very similar to the mission of the organization or team.

OBJECTIVE - It is the individual step to achieve the purpose. An objective has to be S.M.A.R.T.:

S = specific

M = measurable

A = achievable

R = relevant

T = time bounded



When writing objectives the question is not: "What do we do?", But: "What will be the final result of our actions?"

This way of thinking also includes efficiency. In this way, we not only ensure that the project will be carried out, but it will bring good results.

The jump from planning to execution can be very difficult. Do not make the activity before you define aims and objectives. If we follow the objectives and each team member performs his duties the whole process should be smooth.

When you choose the activity, we must ensure that it will ensure the realization of all the goals. At the same time we have to leave room for new ideas, but still keep the main objectives. Do not forget to target groups which you want to reach. The activity has to be in line with interests of the target group.



4. COMMUNICATE!

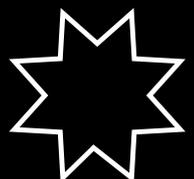
One of the key elements of a successful project is good communication, both internal and external.

Although many people tend to forget this, internal communication, that is between the group members, is of key importance. If you communicate with the group, you may for example notice a start of the argument and help solve it before it even emerges. Here are a few advices on how to improve your group communication:

Talk more. You can start each meeting with a 'What is new' circle, where each member has a few minutes to talk about what happened in their life and how they feel. This is a good start of the meeting and can as well increase members' trust and team spirit.

During the meeting, give everyone a chance to talk and express their opinion. They will feel included and may also give some good ideas. Provide a way for the circulation of information. Everyone must now what's happening in different project areas, not just the one in charge. One way is to write a follow up of every meeting and send it to the group so the information doesn't get lost. Also, you may include this in the Circle, mentioned in the first point - you can talk about what is new in the project.

If you are working with another group of people, be sure to communicate with them regularly and don't forget to message them any news as well.



If you are preparing a public event, you have to take care of the project's promotion aswell. Before you do anything, prepare a communication plan - who is your target audience, what you want to say and which channels are most appropriate for your audience. For example, if they are young people, focus on digital platforms. Nowadays, social media is the one channel that can access almost everybody. If you use it right, it can come of as really effective. Be sure to think out of the box - are there some channels you are forgetting (for example your local newspaper). Next, think about how you are going to commmunicate your message. Be innovative and creative - no one likes boring messages. Try to come up with a new way of promoting your project that will be fun and intresting for your target audience. Be rational - think if your method will really be effective (you know you throw away most flyers you get and don't even read them). When you chose all stated above, you just need to make a detailed plan of action for which ever channel/method you choose and work it.



5. THE DAY IS HERE – WHAT NOW?



Don't panic! Just stick to the plan you made. It always helps when you write down a detailed to do list and all the assignments a day before and have it with you. That way, you don't have to worry about forgetting anything.

It's important you are well-rested and relaxed on the day. Especially if you are the leader of the group as your bad energy may transfer to the group and the audience aswell. Smile and try not to worry too much.

Be sure to include everyone in the project implementation - they all helped with making it happen so it's important they also feel included at this point. Assign a task to each member and while doing that, be aware of what are their capabilities - they will feel more confident doing things they are good at and that way, there is less possibility that something will go wrong.

If something goes wrong, don't panic. Try to think of the easiest and most efficient way to fix it. It helps, if you have thought of a plan b (for example, if the weather gets worse). Don't interrupt the activity because of it - try to put in back in track as fast as you can and meanwhile, let other people do their work as they usually would. There's is still major chance your activity will be successfull.

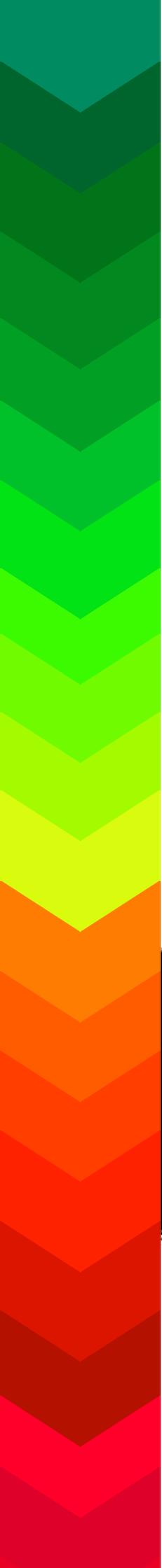
6. YOU'RE NOT FINISHED JUST YET!



When the activity is finished, many people think their work on the project is done. But evaluation is also a very important element of the process. While evaluating your project, you can learn what went wrong, why and how you could fix it. You also learn how the members of the group felt in different phases and what could be done differently to maximize the effect.

Besides the implementation of the projects (the activity itself), be sure to also evaluate the process of making the projects, your leadership, the meetings, how the members felt in the group and the project results (they don't have to be physical - one of the results is also what you learned through the process). This way, you will know how to act and what to change in your next project.

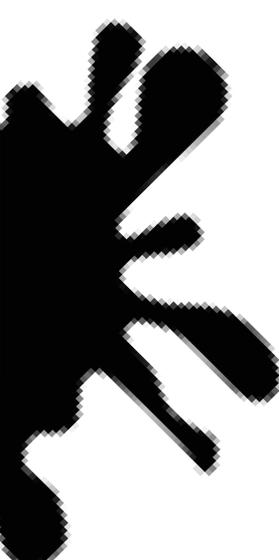
The evaluation doesn't have to be just talking or filling out a questionnaire. You can make it interesting as there are many different evaluation techniques.



Here are just a few ideas.:

Thermometer: in this activity, you determine one point on each opposing end of the room. One means 1, the other one 10. You name an element you want to evaluate (for example meetings) and the members place themselves according to how they think the meetings were (1 being really bad and 10 being really good). You can ask some of them to comment on their choice. You can also change the measurement scale. Each member has to say one thing they will remember from the project or one word that describes the experience for them.

Draw a target on a big paper. The members have to mark the place in the target for each element you name, where being closer to the center means better. To differentiate different elements, choose a specific colour or an icon for each element. This activity can be useful as it is anonymous.



7. YOU DID IT!

Now you really are finished with the project. To formally finish the project, invite the group for a last meeting - this time informal. You can choose an activity you all like (sports, seeing a movie, bowling), organise a picnic or a small party. It's your choice, but it would be a good idea to also ask the group what they want to do, as everybody has different preferences. The important thing is you all have fun and celebrate a successful project together.





NO EXCUSE

Mladinska zveza Brez izgovora

MOVIT



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