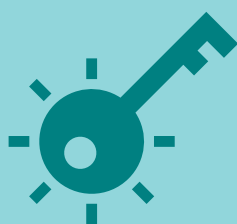


# Transversal Skills Toolkit



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# Introduction

The Transversal Skills Toolkit is a specialised resource designed by Léargas to assist educators, programme coordinators, and mentors in preparing participants for the unique opportunities and potential challenges of undertaking an Erasmus+ mobility. As participants embark on new professional, academic, and cultural landscapes, the development of key Transversal Skills becomes essential. These skills which include *effective communication, adaptability, self-awareness, problem-solving and resilience*—are critical for personal and professional growth.



## Léargas – The National Agency for European Programmes in Ireland

Established in 1986, Léargas is the National Agency for Erasmus+ in Adult Education, School Education, Vocational Education and Training (VET), Youth and Sport. It is also the National Agency for European Solidarity Corps and manages other European initiatives such as eTwinning, EPALE, Youth Wiki, Eurodesk, VET Team and the PEACEPLUS ASPIRE. Over the past 35 years, Léargas has established a national and international reputation for effectively managing significant levels of funding to support European programmes that connect people in different communities and countries and bring an international dimension to the work of organisations across Ireland.

### VET Team

National VET Team is the panel of experts from across Further Education and Training (FET) sector that advises Léargas on VET practice, policy, mobility, recognition and accreditation of skills. Members of the VET Team are educators, practitioners, Erasmus+ project coordinators, quality assurance experts and national authority representatives who have an understanding, experience and interest in mobility in VET. The core focus of VET Team is to promote and enhance progress toward the application of EU VET tools and principles in projects funded by the Erasmus+ programme and to support Erasmus+ beneficiaries. This toolkit is produced under the supervision and support of the National VET Team and Léargas.

### Erasmus+

Erasmus+ is the European Union programme for education, training, youth and sport. It pro-

vides funding and support for organisations to operate projects consistent with its objectives and which encourage European exchange, cooperation and learning. Mobility is a key component of the Erasmus+ programme and increasing the mobility of learners of all ages in Europe is a stated aim of the Erasmus+ programme. Key Action 1 (KA1) is a strand of Erasmus+ that supports the mobility of learners and staff by providing opportunities to undertake a learning and/or professional experience in another country.

Erasmus+ offers participants an unparalleled opportunity to broaden their horizons and engage with diverse perspectives. However, navigating this new environment requires more than academic preparation; it demands a set of transversal skills that enable participants to effectively interact, collaborate, and thrive in multicultural settings. The acquisition of Transversal skills has been widely reported by mobility participants as among the most valued skills obtained from the mobility period deriving from their participation in Erasmus+. This toolkit is designed to equip educators to cultivate these key competencies through a clear and structured approach.

## Transversal Skills and the Erasmus+ Mobility Process

Transversal Skills have been defined by UNESCO (2019) as: “Skills that are typically considered as not specifically related to a particular job, task, academic discipline, or area of knowledge and that can be used in a wide variety of situations and work settings; for example, organisational skills. They refer to an individual’s ability to communicate, problem-solve, build and maintain relationships and adapt in times of uncertainty”.

The process of Erasmus+ mobility from pre-departure preparation through execution of the activity to post mobility follow-up fosters the development of transversal skills.

From the outset, the participants must express interest in engaging in a mobility opportunity. This requires a degree of **self-confidence** in order to demonstrate their European values, the emotional resources and capability to undertake a new intercultural experience. There are key phases of the mobility process which promote transversal skills for example, **building a team (relationships)** amongst participants preparing to go on mobility; it requires the individual to make **independent preparations to travel**; build a programme for the technical aspect of the mobility and to build relationships with people at the host partner institution.

The experience of the mobility itself presents a range of new experiences such as **navigating a new environment (adaptability)**, in a new language and acclimatising to a different food; for some, navigating transport (**independence**) in another country can present a challenge to be overcome.

Accommodation on the intercultural experience may require the participant to **live with new people (self-awareness, self-promotion)** and require them to **take on responsibility at work**. Understanding instructions in another language or negotiating conditions in a different culture (intercultural competence) constitute new experiences for the participant.

Domestic arrangements such as living with others, getting to know new people and **managing the day-to-day of living independently** in another country all call on, and create the conditions for the development of transversal skills. Such skills include **self-awareness, self-confidence, intercultural awareness, openness to change,**

**acceptance of difference, active listening and self-reliance** to mention a few. A mobility period can also cause the participant to look differently at their own identity and perceptions about themselves as they are reflected against another cultural environment.

Organisations that are experienced in managing mobility activities are adept at preparing the participants for this experience. However, even with informed preparation, participants can still experience challenges in situ, but in overcoming these challenges, personal growth occurs.

Three recommendations from the Transversal Skills report related to the importance of Erasmus+ mobility as an accelerant to the acquisition of Transversal Skills. The recommendations specifically stated:

- VET organisations to work on embedding international mobility opportunities into the strategic fabric of the organisation to provide as many of their participants as possible with the transformative experience via mobility projects.
- A strong focus on the prioritisation of Transversal Skills in future projects is recommended. Participants report the acquisition of Transversal Skills as the most valuable and positive benefit deriving from the Erasmus + mobility experience.
- It is not about skills gap; it is about articulation gap – participants acquire transversal skills and may have better levels of transversal skills than they realise. The issue is that they are unaccustomed to articulating and demonstrating these skills. Increased focus on transversal skills throughout the mobility will help to close that articulation gap.

## Process based Learning(PBL)

Process-based learning focuses on the **how** of learning rather than the **what**. This approach emphasises developing participant understanding of the processes involved in learning, problem-solving, and critical thinking, rather than focusing exclusively on the end result. Process-based learning encourages educators to become a facilitator of learning and discovery, acting as a support or guide for participants while they discuss and explore an issue. The educator helps foster independent learning through various active learning strategies and encourages active participation within the classroom as opposed to passive learning.

In the context of vocational education and training, many of the skills strengthened through process-based learning benefit the individuals far beyond the classroom; critical thinking, problem solving and reflective practice, are lifelong skills that are desirable in the job market as well.

### Some of the benefits of process-based learning include:

- Encourages active learning to promote critical thinking thus equipping individuals for the real world.
- Enhances creativity as participants explore and test various methods to address a problem and find a solution
- Improves collaboration and communication as many process-based learning activities involve group work; participants often work in teams and are given the opportunity to practice effectively communicating their work and ideas and giving / receiving feedback in a constructive way
- Strengthens reflective practice as participants are required to reflect and evaluate their own learning processes throughout each activity as they find what works

best and enhances their self-awareness in the process

Overall, process-based learning helps participants become independent, reflective thinkers who are better equipped for complex, dynamic situations. This style of learning is particularly well-suited for VET because it emphasizes the mastery of real-world skills, methods like carpentry, plumbing, culinary arts, or automotive repair, which require understanding the process rather than just theoretical knowledge.

## How educators can use process-based learning (PBL)

Teaching process-based learning requires a different approach to traditional teaching methods focused on delivering content for specific outcomes. PBL requires skills to help guide participants through the how and why of learning; these skills ensure that participants actively engage in their learning journey. Some of the skills required to teach process-based learning are:

- **Facilitation and Coaching Skills:** The educator takes on the role of facilitator
- **Metacognitive Awareness:** Educators must be aware of their own thought processes and how they approach problem-solving in order to teach participants to do the same. This metacognitive awareness helps in modelling effective learning strategies for participants.
- **Assessment Skills Focused on Process:** Educators need to develop different assessment methods that focus on the process rather than traditional assessment styles which focus on the final product. This involves assessing participants' decision-making, critical thinking, collaboration, and ability to reflect on their learning journey. Assessments should be continuous and ongoing for process-based learning.

- **Empathy and Emotional Intelligence:** Process-based learning can be challenging. Educators need to foster a positive, supportive classroom environment where participants feel encouraged to take risks, make mistakes, and grow.
- **Cross-Disciplinary Knowledge:** Many processes span across various subjects or fields. Educators who can integrate knowledge from different areas, such as combining problem-solving techniques from maths, science, or art, can provide a richer, more comprehensive learning experience for the learner.

## Evaluation with Europass

Process based learning and the articulation of skills acquired by participants during the mobility process is further facilitated by [Europass](#). Europass is a free, personal tool for learning and working in Europe. It helps participants manage their learning, recognise and record their vocational and transversal skills by offering a set of online information and tools such as Europass Mobility and Europass CV.

**Europass Mobility** helps to capture and communicate those valuable new skills and experiences gained during a traineeship, volunteering or a work placement abroad in a widely recognised way. It is a document which describes the skills participants develop during a particular mobility experience. Europass Mobility can include information on the roles and responsibilities, job-related skills, language skills, digital skills, organisation and managerial skills, communication skills gained on an organised mobility experience in another country and can be used as a validation of learning gained on a mobility experience.

Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) is the National Europass Centre for Ireland. For more information on Europass mobility please see [Europass Mobility](#) and QQI's information on the [National Europass Centre](#).

**Europass CV** is one of the best-known CV formats in Europe. It is frequently used by participants to record the experience and skills acquired from a European mobility as part of the CV for job applications. Europass CV allows the learner to communicate their skills and qualifications in Europe and also allows them to store acquired certificates on their Europass account. Participants first need to create their [Europass Profile](#) and can then create, store and share CVs in 31 languages.

For more information, please see here [Europass CV](#).

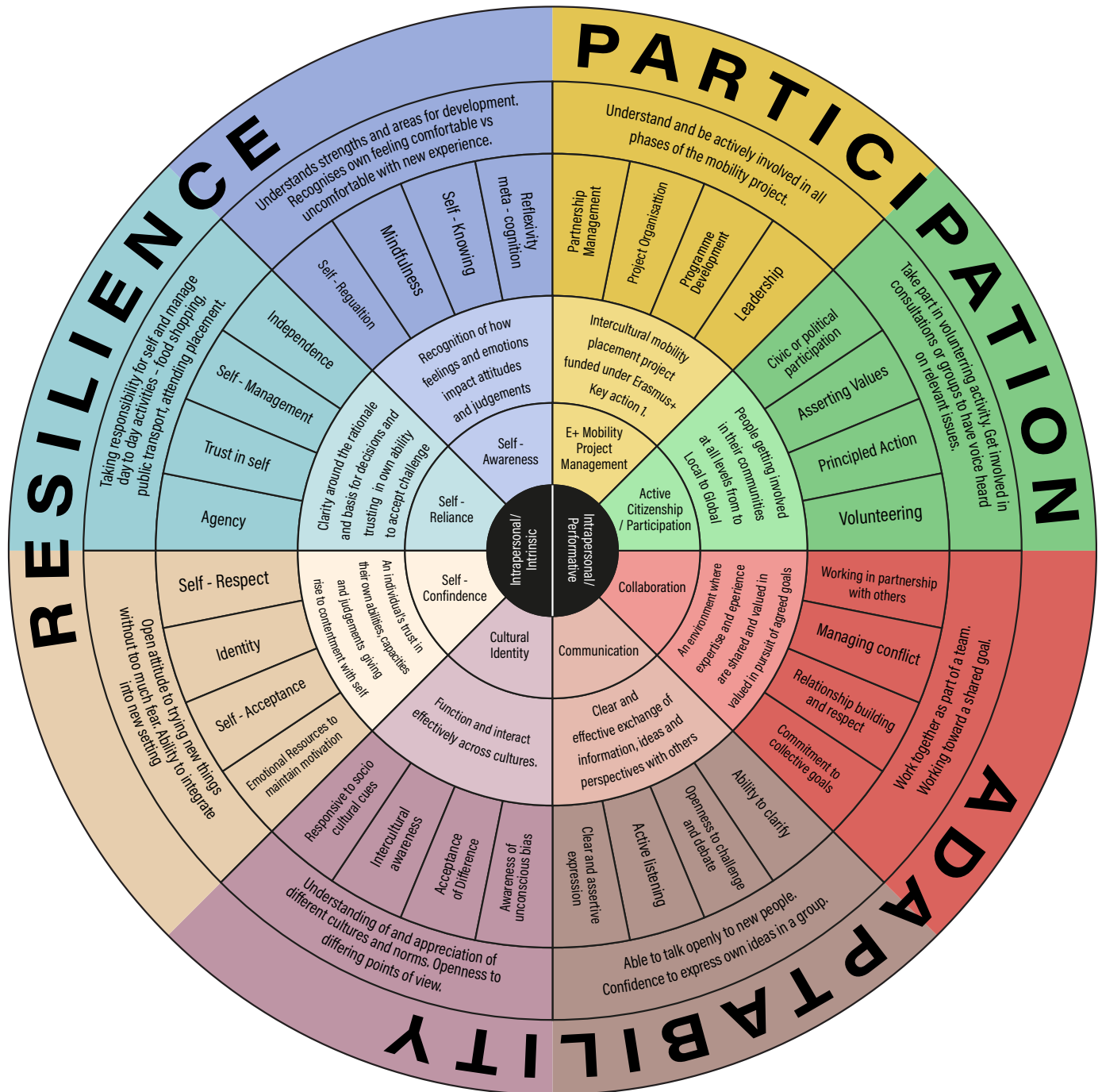
Europass provides information and instructional videos to support participants to assess their digital and language skills. The links are provided below:

<https://europass.europa.eu/en/europass-tools/test-your-digital-skills>

<https://europass.europa.eu/en/how-self-assess-your-language-skills>



# Competency Framework For Transversal Skills



## Overview of The Toolkit

Effective Transversal Skills provide high levels of personal agency for mobility participants and educators alike. A common language and shared understanding are needed across the domains of education, training and employment to support the development of these skills. The Léargas [Transversal Skills Report](#), published in 2023 provided research to show that international mobility opportunities supported by Erasmus+ provided an accelerated route to the acquisition of these skills. The Competency Framework which was developed as part of that report provided definitions and descriptions of Transversal Skills as a support to this end. This toolkit is a follow-on, practical manual to the Transversal Skills report and is particularly aimed at new or less experienced entrants to the Erasmus+ programme.

## Welcome to The Toolkit

Inside, educators will find a variety of resources, including practical activities, reflective exercises, and assessment tools. These resources are tailored to address the various phases of the Erasmus+ mobility experience: pre-departure, activity period (during mobility), and post-mobility/return. Each phase is crucial for building a foundation of transversal skills that will support participants in their journey, helping them to become more adaptable, empathetic, and globally minded [culturally informed] individuals.

The toolkit also emphasizes the importance of reflective practice, encouraging participants to continuously assess their growth and learning. By fostering a deeper understanding of their experiences and challenges, participants can develop greater self-awareness and emotional intelligence, which are invaluable in future development and personal growth.

We invite educators to use this toolkit as a guide to support participants in maximizing the benefits of their international mobility experience. By integrating these transversal skills into their preparation and reflection processes, educators can help their participants get the most out of the experience and be able to articulate and demonstrate the personal and skills development accruing to them from the mobility.

## The Framework identifies Eight Core Transversal Skills:

### 4 are intrapersonal/intrinsic:

*Self-awareness; Self-confidence; Self-reliance and Cultural Identity*

### 4 are interpersonal/performative:

*Communication; Collaboration; Erasmus+ Project Management; Active Participation.*

Each competency was defined, four related sub skills were identified and then some behaviours were identified to demonstrate the competency.

**Active Citizenship** – people getting involved in their communities at all levels from Local to Global

1. Civic or political participation
2. Asserting values
3. Principled action
4. Volunteering.

**Behaviours** - take part in volunteering activity. Get involved in consultations or groups to have voice heard on relevant issues.

**Collaboration** – an environment where expertise and experience are shared and valued in pursuit of agreed goals.

- Working in partnership with others
- Relationship building and Respect.
- Managing conflict
- Commitment to collective goals.

**Behaviours** - work together as part of a team, working toward a shared goal.

**Communication** – clear and effective exchange of information, ideas and perspectives with others.

- Active listening
- Clear and Assertive expression
- Ability to Clarify
- Openness to challenge and debate.

**Behaviours** – able to talk openly to new people. Confidence to express own ideas in a group.

**Cultural identity** - an individual's identity as a member of a group with shared characteristics, which often (but not always) include racial, ethnic, or geographical origins.

- Intercultural awareness
- Acceptance of difference
- Awareness of unconscious bias
- Responsive to socio cultural cues.

**Behaviours** - Understanding of and appreciation of different cultures and norms. Openness to differing points of view.

**Self-confidence** – an individual's trust in their own abilities, capacities and judgements giving rise to decisive action and

- Contentment with self.
- Self-acceptance
- Self-respect
- Identity

- Emotional resources to maintain motivation.

**Behaviours** – open attitude to trying new things without too much fear. Ability to integrate into new setting. Sense of adventure

**Self-Reliance** – clarity around the rationale and basis for decisions and trusting in own ability to accept challenge.

- Independence
- Trust in self
- Agency
- Self-management.

**Behaviours** – Taking responsibility for self and manage day to day activities – food shopping, public transport, attending mobility.

**Self-awareness** – recognition of how feelings and emotions impact attitudes and judgements

- Reflexivity
- Mindfulness
- Self-knowing
- Self-regulation.

**Behaviours** - understands strengths and areas for development. Recognises own feeling comfortable vs uncomfortable with new experience.

### Erasmus + mobility project management

– understanding the phases of an Erasmus+ mobility project and activating accordingly.

- Leadership
- Programme Development
- Partnership Management
- Project Organisation.

**Behaviours** – understand and be actively involved in all phases of the mobility project.

## Personal SOAR Activity

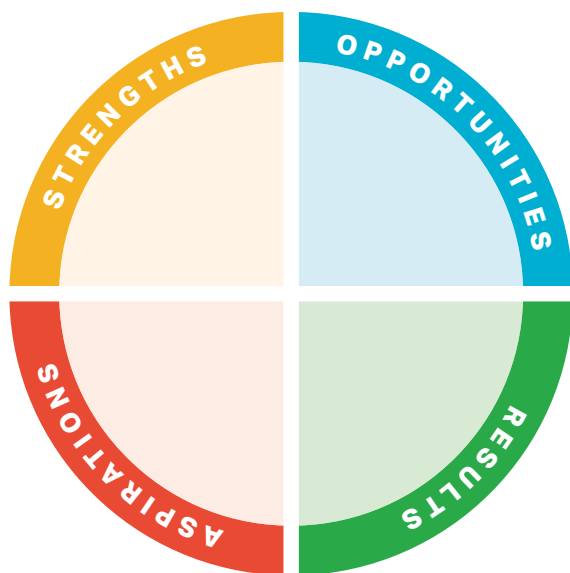
**Objective:** The personal SOAR activity is aimed at mobility participants during pre-departure phase of the mobility period to enhance self-awareness and reflective practice.

**Description & Purpose:** The personal SOAR activity enables participants to exercise self-awareness and enhance reflective practice. The exercise encourages participants to identify their individual Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations and Results for their own personal development. This can be done prior to an upcoming mobility to help identify the areas they can lean into for strength and confidence, to gain clarity around what the individual hopes to achieve over their mobility and to reflect on their results to date.

**Time:** The exercise should take between 30 and 45 minutes.

**Materials:** Paper and pens

### The SOAR Model



## Instructions

- Divide an A4 page into four equal squares using a pen.
- Label the top left box S which stands for Strengths.
- Label the top right box O which stands for Opportunities.
- Label the bottom left box A which stands for Aspirations.
- Label the bottom right box R which stands for Results.
- Each learner should reflect on themselves and their personal strengths, opportunities, aspirations and results - allow at least 20 minutes for this.
- Encourage each learner to note their answers and place them in the relevant section of the SOAR.
- Discuss/ share the results of their SOAR with the group or, alternatively, divide the group into pairs to discuss the outcomes of their SOAR activity.

### Notes for Facilitator

- It is helpful for educators to show an example of a personal SOAR to stimulate the participants thinking and to ensure the participants understand what kind of skills are often placed in each section of the SOAR.
- Potential questions to assist educators for guided discussion:
- Why do you feel these are your strengths/ opportunities?
- How do these strengths show up for you in your day to day?
- What steps could you take individually or as a group for a specific opportunity?
- What strengths/ aspirations do the group share?
- What strengths would be most useful to have while on mobility?

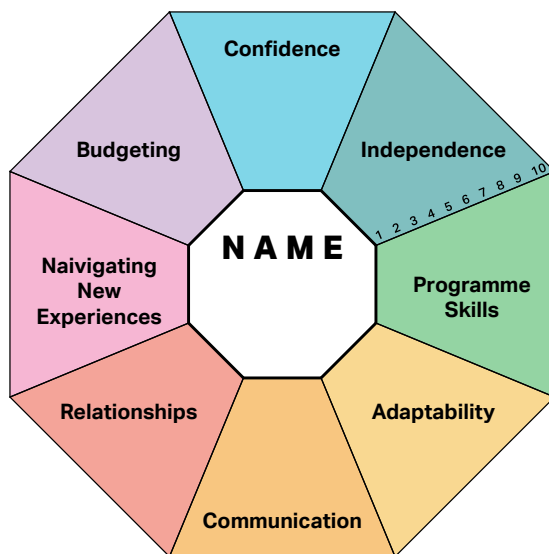
## Personal Development Web

**Objective:** This exercise is for mobility participants at pre-departure and post mobility phases to review their own development and determine the 'journey travelled'.

**Description & Purpose:** The purpose of this exercise is to encourage participants to reflect on their experience in general, understand the impact of the mobility period and identify areas of personal growth.

**Time:** This activity takes approximately 20 - 40 minutes.

**Materials:** Personal Development Web hand-out and pens for participants.



## Instructions

- Facilitators provide the Personal Development Web handout to each participant [provided in appendix].
- The web contains 8 key headings which relate to personal development arising from a mobility activity.
- The headings are Confidence, Skills (relating to their programme), Adaptability, Independence, Communication, Navigating new situations, Budgeting and Relationships.
- Participants must reflect and rate themselves from 1 to 10 on the web by drawing a line at the number they have rated [1 is very weak and 10 is very strong].
- Reflect on the individual scores obtained and discuss – emphasising that they will reassess themselves after the mobility to identify their development/progress [journey travelled].
- The instructor takes the web back after this activity and keeps it until the participant has returned from mobility at which time participants will repeat the exercise.

## Notes for Facilitator

- Allow at least 15 minutes for participants to evaluate themselves with regard to all statement and reflect on why they chose each score.
- Encourage a discussion with participants about the impact of their mobility – highlighting both expected and unexpected outcomes from the experience.

## Call My Bluff

**Objective:** This exercise is for mobility participants prior to departure on their mobility period to address any unconscious bias and enhance perception and self-awareness.

**Description & Purpose:** The purpose of this activity is to help participants to get to know each other and to reform existing perceptions of team members. It is also a great ice breaker to get everyone talking.

**Time:** This exercise takes approximately 15 -30 minutes.

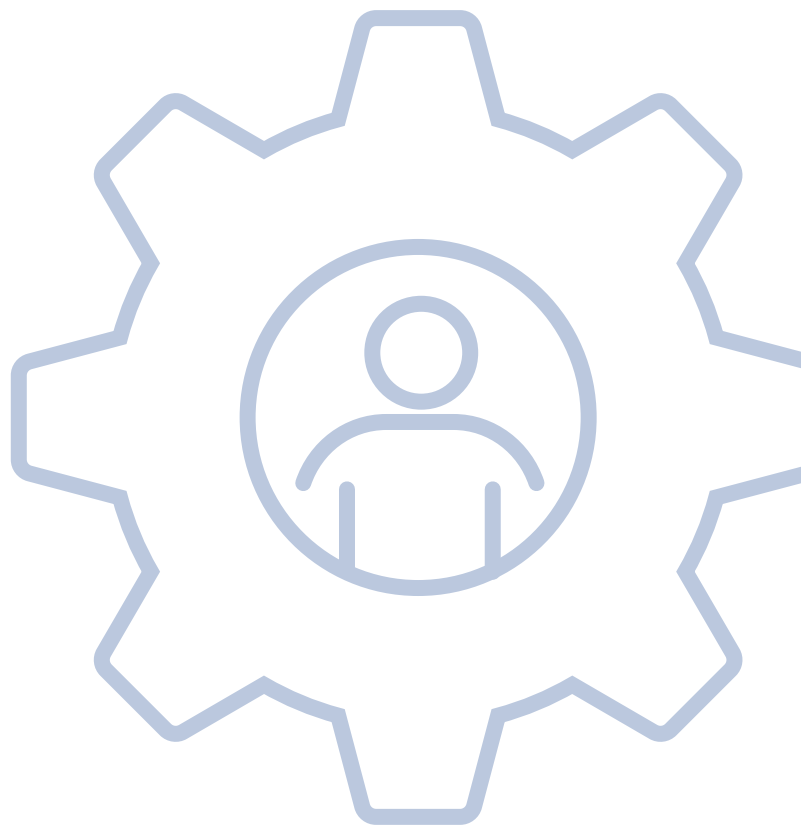
**Materials:** N/A

## Instructions

- Divide participants up into small groups (max 6 people per group) and get them to sit in a circle with their groups.
- The facilitator stands at the top of the room and instructs the participants to come up with three statements about themselves - two need to be true and one must be false.
- When everyone has come up with three statements, the facilitator instructs one member of each group to share their 3 statements within their group.
- All other members of the group must guess which of these statements is a lie/bluff.
- When all participants have guessed which statement is a lie, the speaker can reveal which statement is false.
- Repeat until each individual has shared their 3 statements.

## Notes for Facilitator

- Instruct participants to make their false statement realistic and believable - this makes it more difficult for the other participants to guess.
- The facilitator is free to use a theme as the basis for the three statements which relates to the upcoming mobility experience.







## The One-page miracle

**Objective:** This exercise is for mobility participants at the pre-departure preparatory stage of mobility activity to enable participants to explore what they want/expect going forward.

**Description & purpose:** The one-page miracle exercise enables participants to explore their desires and ambitions for their life across a variety of areas; health, career, finances, creativity, relationships, and personal development. This is a visualization exercise which enables individuals to explore their ideal life and allows them to look at the choices and action needed to align to this path going forward.

**Time:** This exercise takes approximately 60-90 mins.

**Materials:** Paper and pens.

## Instructions

- This exercise is a creative exercise to be done individually.
- At the top of the room the facilitator explains the visualisation exercise for six (or less, as appropriate and relevant) different areas of the individuals lives and why this is beneficial for helping individuals set goals toward what they want and aligning their actions to move toward this.
- The facilitator instructs the participants to think and visualise [when the mobility is completed] what they would like to see and how they would like to improve across each of these areas over the course of their mobility.

- Personal Development
- Career
- Creativity
- Relationships
- Health
- Finances
- The facilitator should give participants a minimum of 30 minutes of reflection time at the beginning of this exercise to enable them to explore their wishes for the future.
- The participants note on paper what they would like for each area and share with one other person.
- An optional group discussion at the end where individuals share one thing they have highlighted from the exercise and why.

## Notes for Facilitator

- The facilitator needs to provide paper and pens for each participant to complete the exercise.
- It is helpful to put on some relaxing music to make participants more comfortable and break up the silence in the room.
- The facilitator can show an example of a completed one-page miracle exercise to stimulate the thinking of the learner.



## Vision Board

### Sub Skills: Communication/ Reflection/ Goal Setting

**Objective:** This activity is a pre-departure preparatory activity ahead of the mobility period where the participant is asked to visualize what the best mobility period would look like for them.

**Description and purpose:** This activity enables participants to explore their ideas for their upcoming mobility activity using the method of appreciative enquiry, so participants imagine the best of what is to come during their mobilities, creating a positive mindset and setting goals to align to that positive vision.

**Time:** This exercise takes approximately 90 mins.

**Materials:** A large piece of A1 card for the background of the vision board. Paper, Pens, Markers, Magazines & photographs. Anything necessary for decorating their vision board



## Instructions

- Divide participants up into groups of 4.
- At each table provide A1 card, paper, pens, markers, various magazines and photographs and anything else for decorative purposes.
- Each participant takes 30 minutes to imagine their mobility and flick through the various magazines and photographs.
- Participants cut out images to reflect their hopes for their mobility focusing on the best possible outcomes.
- Stick the photographs onto the vision board and add any decoration desired; individuals can also add descriptions or text to explain the images if they wish.
- Display their vision boards with each members of their group.

## Notes for Facilitator

- This can also be done in a digital format on various devices such as phones, iPad or using an app like Padlet.
- It is often useful to start this activity with a short meditation/visualisation. This can be a recorded/guided meditation or narrated by the teacher/facilitator themselves.
- An alternative is that each group of 4 people do a collective vision board – if they are going on the same mobility or doing the same programme/course.

## Talent Bragger Activity

**Objective:** This exercise is for mobility participants prior to departure on their mobility to build their confidence levels.

**Description & purpose:** The purpose of this activity is to build up a positive sense of self and understand the positive light and esteem in which others hold them. The focus is on positive affirmation and building confidence.

**Time:** This exercise takes approximately 30 - 45 mins.

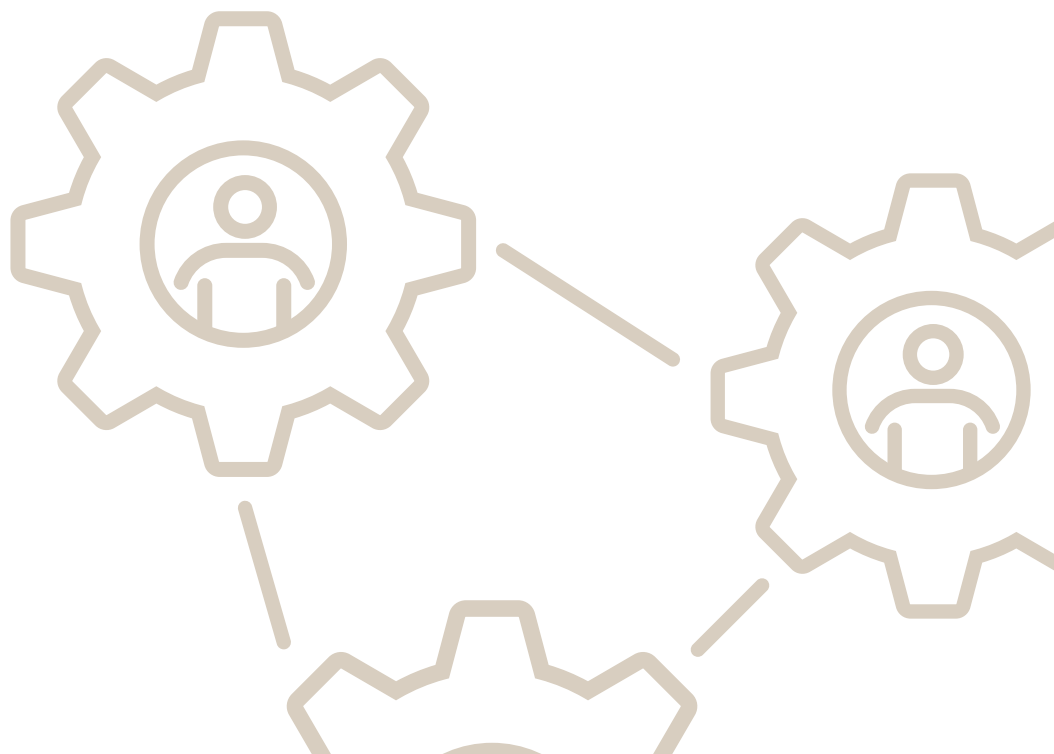
**Materials:** Paper and pens.

## Instructions

- Everybody takes 5 minutes to write down three talents/ skills they believe they have.
- The facilitator puts the participants into pairs.
- Both participants share their list within their pair.
- Each person in the pair has to add one quality they believe are a strength in the person - the aim is to extend the list.
- Each participant should discuss with their partner the reason they want to add these strengths/ talents to the list or times they have seen this quality demonstrated.
- Participants all weave around the room two more times - meeting two more individuals; they read out their respective lists and add one strength/ talent to each other's again and discuss why.

### Notes for Facilitator

- This activity is only suitable for groups of participants that already know each other.
- Everybody should end up with a minimum of 9 positive qualities/talents.



## Mindfulness

**Objective:** This exercise is for mobility participants before, during & after the mobility to build confidence and ground themselves in the present moment.

**Description & Purpose:** The purpose of this exercise is to ground the participants in the present, to manage apprehension about the mobility and to promote a positive growth mindset.

**Time:** This activity takes approximately 10 - 20 mins.

**Materials:** Mindfulness Cards

## Instructions

- The facilitator divides the participants up into groups of three or four and sit them around separate tables.
- The facilitator places 10 mindfulness cards on each groups table; these cards should be spread around the table and faced down.
- Each participant chooses one card.
- They read the card out one at a time to the group and share their answer.
- Repeat for each participant.

## Notes for Facilitator

- This activity is great at the beginning of a class as an ice breaker - it will provide the space for participants to talk easily in a relaxed way.
- A broad range of mindfulness cards can be purchased in most book shops or online or created from scratch to reflect the needs of participants involved in the activity.



## Ready for Anything – Breath Work - Box Breathing

**Objective:** This activity is a pre-departure preparatory activity for participants going on mobility to learn to quickly calm their nervous system when feeling anxious.

**Description & Purpose:** The purpose of Box Breathing is to ground the learner, to reduce stress and calm the nervous system in times of challenge. This helps participants curb their apprehension and anxiety as the departure for their mobility approaches.

**Time:** This exercise takes approximately 10 – 15 minutes.

**Materials:** N/A

### Instructions

- Ensure participants are comfortable in their seats and relaxed.
- Explain that box breathing helps send signals of calm to the nervous system [activates the parasympathetic nervous system].
- The facilitator instructs participants to begin the box breathing as follows:
  - **Inhale:** Breathe in slowly and deeply through your nose for a count of 4 seconds.
  - **Hold:** Hold your breath for another count of 4 seconds.
  - **Exhale:** Exhale slowly and completely through your mouth (blow gently) for 4 seconds.
  - **Hold again:** Hold your breath for 4 seconds after exhaling.
- Repeat: Continue this cycle for several minutes, maintaining the rhythm of 4-second counts.

### Notes for Facilitator

- This is a skill that has to be practiced regularly so that it will activate quickly when times are challenging; it is best to encourage participants to embed a short box breathing practice into their daily routine.
- Draw a box on the board when instructing this exercise and do the counting 1,2,3,4 to keep everyone together. As the group gets more practiced, the counting to 4 can be slowed down encouraging even better relaxation.
- Participants can also place one hand on the top of their stomach and another on their chest while doing the box breathing as a further grounding measure.
- To encourage participants to relax and reduce any self-consciousness, share with them that many high-performance athletes use this, and other, types of breathing activity as an integral part of their training e.g. The Irish Rugby Team.





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## Memory Wall

### Sub Skill: Reflective Practice

**Objective:** This activity focuses on the preparatory and return stage of the mobility and focuses on reflecting on and documenting the mobility period.

**Description & Purpose:** The memory wall is a creative activity designed to encourage reflection and provide a creative way to communicate the mobility period.

**Time:** 60 - 90 mins.

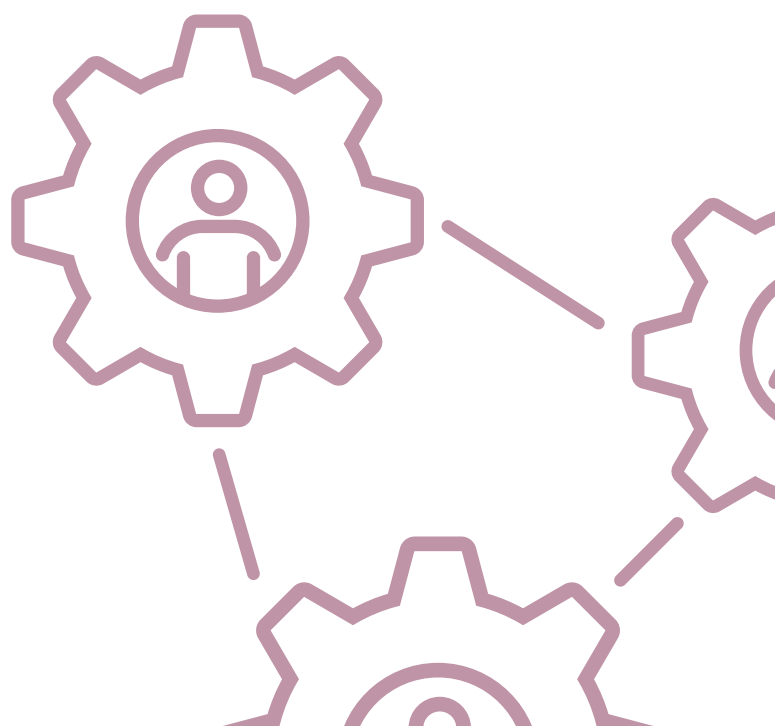
**Materials:** A1 paper or card, glue, scissors, pen, marker and anything else for design purposes e.g. stickers, post its, coloured paper, glitter etc.

### Instructions

- Before going, participants are instructed to be ready to take photographs on their phone and store them for use on the memory wall on their return.
- The photographs should capture interesting experiences both positive and challenging relating to their mobility and the host country. It can highlight important relationships or significant experiences and memories.
- Print out the photographs deemed relevant for the activity.
- Make a poster using key headings to categorize the experiences each learner wishes to share.
- Stick the photographs to the posters and hang the posters up around the room.
- Have the participants view all the other posters around the room and discuss.

### Notes for Facilitator

- This activity could be done digitally using Padlet or uploaded using a collage app.
- This activity could be themed, if you are choosing to focus on a specific horizontal priority such as inclusion, diversity, new culture or sustainability.
- Facilitators should encourage the participants to ask questions about other participants' experiences and about what they've chosen to put on their Board.
- A focus should be placed on identifying the benefits and learning from the whole mobility period.
- This could also form part of a dissemination exhibition to the rest of the college or out into the community.



## Where in the World?

**Objective:** This activity can be a pre-departure or an icebreaker activity. It provides the opportunity to explore the level of intercultural experience that already exists within the group and promotes inclusion.

**Description & Purpose:** The purpose of this activity is to create some group discussion about participant experiences of other cultures. It works very well with groups that have a diverse cultural profile. The discussion centres around an experience of another culture – at home or abroad. The conversation is directed by the facilitator through a series of questions.

**Time:** 30 mins

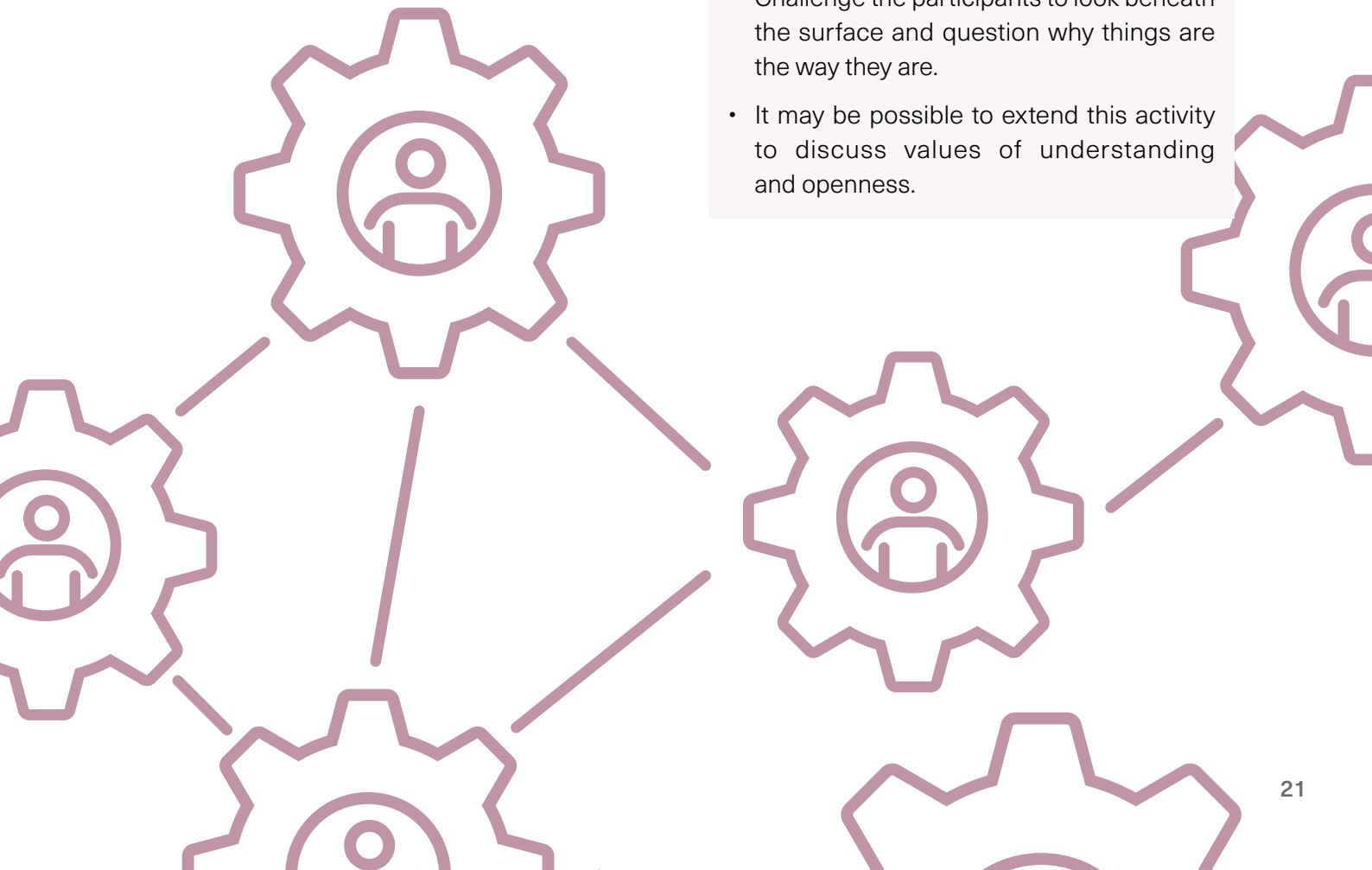
**Materials:** 4 x A4 sheets of paper (coloured if possible but not necessary). Each page has one word to represent the key points of a compass - North/South/East & West.

## Instructions

- Place the A4 sheets on the ground spread out to represent North, South, East & West.
- This represents a map of the world [or the map of the home country].
- Ask the participants to position themselves on the map according to where they are from.
- To progress this activity, ask the participants to go to the place on the map which represents the location of an intercultural experience or discovery for them.
- At this stage, ask the participants to share what they thought was important about their experience.

## Notes for Facilitator

- Finally introduce the Iceberg theory (resources can be found online) to help participants understand their various experiences.
- Challenge the participants to look beneath the surface and question why things are the way they are.
- It may be possible to extend this activity to discuss values of understanding and openness.



## Listening for Building Empathy

**Objective:** This exercise is for participants prior to departure on their mobility period to focus their attention on the power of active listening.

**Description & Purpose:** The purpose of this activity is to help participants enhance their listening skills so that they can better demonstrate empathy and compassion toward others.

**Time:** This Exercise takes approximately 20 minutes - 5 minutes to discuss, then rotate and finally, 10 minutes to debrief.

**Materials:** N/A

### Instructions

- The facilitator divides the group up into pairs.
  - One participant is the speaker, and one is the listener.
  - The speaker must Recount what they did last week and talk for 4 minutes – give the speaker 2 minutes to gather their thoughts first.
  - If the speaker finishes talking before the time is up, they must keep eye contact with the listener until the time has elapsed.
  - The listener must not speak for the three minutes and is only permitted to ask one question; they are not permitted to say anything else and must listen carefully.
  - Once finished - take a few minutes to debrief.
  - The speaker must discuss what it felt like to talk with someone who was listening so intently.
- The listener must recount what they noticed about how the person spoke about their week- for example - lots of detail/no detail; where did they begin and end; were they descriptive or factual; was the language positively oriented or negatively oriented?
  - The participants must note if there were a difference in what was said vs what was heard (i.e. did the listener fully understand what the speaker meant to say?)
  - Then rotate and repeat the activity - the speaker now becomes the listener.
  - The facilitator debriefs with the entire group at the end of the activity.

### Notes for Facilitator

- The facilitator will need to keep time and instruct participants when their time is up. The speaking time can be adjusted to 2 or 3 minutes, depending on the dynamic of the group.
- The facilitator will ask the participants perception of the 4 mins – long or short and what other experiences did they have while either talking or listening.
- The facilitator explains the practices that impede listening e.g., losing focus (zoning out), interrupting (even enthusiastically out of interest), bias (my mind is already made up) and being judgemental to bring awareness to active listening.



## Silent Debate

### Sub skills: Teambuilding & Participation

**Objective:** This is a pre departure/during mobility exercise to encourage communication and participation of the mobility participants.

**Description and Purpose:** The purpose of this exercise is to strengthen different modes of communication such as body language, sign language etc. and facilitate collaboration in a team. This is particularly useful for participants in an intercultural setting to equip them with skills and preparation to navigate a context where they may not speak the language well.

**Time:** This exercise takes approximately 45 - 60 minutes.

**Materials:** · Large sheets of paper (one per group), Markers or pens (different colours for each participant, if possible), Tape or sticky notes (optional), Timer or stopwatch.

### Instructions

- Arrange participants into small groups (4-6 people) and provide each group with a large sheet of paper and markers.
- Choose a topic or question that is open-ended, thought-provoking, and relevant to the group's focus.
- Introduce the concept of a Silent Debate and emphasize that the goal is to communicate only through written dialogue. Each participant will write their thoughts on the paper in response to the initial question. They may agree, disagree, or ask questions in writing as a response to others' points.
- Allow 10 minutes for the initial responses and interaction. During this time, participants should continue building on the ideas presented by others or raising new points.
- After 20 minutes, stop the writing activity and ask the group to review the full written debate in silence for a minute.
- Now open the floor for a spoken discussion about the process and content.
- Summarize the key takeaways from the Silent Debate, both in terms of the content discussed and the group's experience with the silent, written format.
- Encourage participants to reflect on how this method could be useful in other settings, such as team collaboration or conflict resolution.

### Notes for Facilitator

- The facilitator should pick a key issue relating to the participants intercultural experience.
- The facilitator should remind participants that every contribution matters, and that they should take their time in thinking through their responses.
- The facilitator can use the following prompts to guide the discussion about the process and content:
  - What were some of the key points that stood out in the written debate?
  - Did you find it easier or harder to express your thoughts in writing versus speaking?
  - How did this format impact how you considered and responded to others' ideas?
  - Were there any points that surprised you or that you hadn't considered before.

## Role Play Activity

**Objective:** This role play activity is aimed at participants preparing for departure on their mobility to enhance communication and collaboration skills.

**Description & Purpose:** The role play activity enables individuals to practice communication and problem-solving skills. The participants can find it difficult to work together on a project and must practice active listening, empathy and negotiation skills to try and reach a compromise that satisfies both parties. The exercise enhances teamwork and can be done prior to an upcoming mobility to help participants navigate difficult team environments.

**Time:** The exercise should take between 30 and 60 minutes.

**Materials:** N/A

## Instructions

- Divide participants into two groups and assign each group the letter A or B.
- Group A will take on the role of project manager and has recently been assigned a new project to work on. However, one member of the team (group B) is very difficult to work with and is constantly causing issues – they are unhappy to be starting the new project, opposing all ideas and causing a lot of conflict on the team. Person A must talk to this person and try to solve the problem.
- Group B will take on the role of the employee and has worked for 8 years at the company; they feel unappreciated. Everyone else on the team is less experienced than you and you are having to take on more work as a result. You are complaining because you are under too

much stress and feel your manager is incompetent. Your manager wants to speak with you.

- Identify a person from each group who will perform the role – the whole group will help them to prepare for the role play activity. Discuss the above situation in develop the role to try to reach a solution where both parties are happy with the outcome.
- Discuss/ share the results of your role play with the group.
- Highlight the skills each participant used in order to reach a solution.

## Notes for Facilitator

- It is helpful for facilitators to give examples of various transversal skills likely to be used in order to come to a compromise/ solution.
- This activity can also be done in a virtual setting over zoom and using breakout rooms.
- Potential questions to assist facilitators for guided discussion:
  - What skills did you find most useful in this role play? Why?
  - Which skills required did you feel came naturally to you/ were your strengths?
  - What did you find easy/ difficult about this activity
  - How long did it take you to come to a compromise?
  - Were you more passive or more active in the negotiating/ problem solving aspect of the role play?
- This activity could also be edited to provide a scenario relating to solving a problem or common issues which could arise during a mobility.





## Orientation

**Objective:** This exercise is for participants prior to and during the mobility to encourage open-mindedness and observation of their new surroundings.

**Description & Purpose:** The purpose of the orientation around the city/locale is to encourage intercultural awareness and team building. Participants are asked to capture pictures which reflect the diversity of their new cultural environment. They are asked to take pictures of things that identify their cultural location, to capture aspects of the host culture which are different from their own culture and anything else that resonates with them. These pictures can be organised into an exhibition which can be used as part of the dissemination activities when the learner has returned home.

**Time:** This preparatory activity takes approximately 60 – 90 mins.

**Materials:** Phone.

## Instructions

- Divide the participants into groups of three or four.
- Prepare the groups to go around the city for one hour - ensure each group has a camera and watch.
- Participants must work together to take 8 pictures of the city; these pictures should represent the culture of where they are or reflect something they find very culturally different from their own country.
- When the participants return, each group can share with the class their photos and discuss.

### Notes for Facilitator

- Agree a time the participants must return to class/accommodation.
- The Facilitator can give each group a different task or focus to capture in their pictures. Instruct the participants to make them fun/interesting/artsy – as they like.
- On return the pictures can be imported into an App to organise them as a poster.
- Each group can share their exhibition and explain to the others why particular pictures resonated with them or caught their attention.
- This can also be used as a digital story and can be used at dissemination stages of a project or in a final community exhibition.

## Building Bridges

**Objective:** This activity is for participants prior to departure on the mobility as it encourages teamwork and enhances understanding of intercultural dynamics.

**Description & Purpose:** The purpose of the building bridges activity is to promote collaboration, creativity, and communication while highlighting the importance of understanding and integrating diverse cultural perspectives.

**Time:** 60- 90 mins approx.

**Materials Needed:** Various building materials (e.g., straws, popsicle sticks, string, tape, paper, and scissors). A designated space to build (table or floor) & timer.

## Instructions

- **Divide into Groups:** Split participants into small, diverse groups, ideally mixing different cultural backgrounds.
- **Set the Challenge:** Each group must build a bridge that can hold a specified weight (like a small book or a bag of rice) using the provided materials. Set a time limit (e.g., 30-45 minutes) for construction.
- **Define the Criteria:** Establish criteria for judging the bridges, such as creativity, strength, and teamwork. You can also include elements like cultural symbolism in the design.
- **Building Phase:** Allow groups to brainstorm and collaborate on their designs. Encourage them to discuss their cultural influences and how they can incorporate these into their bridge design.
- **Presentation:** After building, each group presents their bridge, explaining their design choices, how they worked together, and any cultural elements they included.
- **Testing:** Test each bridge by placing the specified weight on it. Celebrate successes and discuss what worked well and what didn't.
- **Reflection:** Conclude with a group discussion on the experience. Encourage participants to share insights about teamwork, cultural differences, and how these experiences will help them in their mobility activity.

## Notes for Facilitator

### Debrief Questions:

- What challenges did you face as a team, and how did you overcome them?
- How did cultural differences influence your approach to the task?
- What did you learn about collaboration and communication working in this way?

### Points to note:

- This activity could also be set up between two groups where each group is asked to construct half a bridge independently of the other group and then join the bridges to meet in the middle.
- Each group is restricted 2 meetings to agree measurements and plan the way they will work together.
- Each group will select one member of the group to speak with a member of the other group. They must be seated back-to-back while exchanging information and making decision about how they will proceed. Sitting in this way also highlights the importance of clear verbal communication as no signs/signals/non-verbal communication is permitted
- After the appointed amount of time – bring the teams together and put the bridge together.

## Finish The Story

**Objective:** This activity is aimed at participants preparing for departure on their mobility to enhance teambuilding, creativity and participation.

**Description & Purpose:** The Finish the Story activity is an excellent teambuilding activity and particularly useful as an ice breaker. It encourages creativity and ensures quieter members of the group contribute in a team setting. This can be done prior to an upcoming mobility to help individuals gain confidence in communication and expressing their own ideas.

**Time:** The exercise should take between 20 and 30 minutes.

**Materials:** Timer (optional)

## Instructions

- Put participant in a circle (also called fishbowl style).
  - The facilitator starts the story with an open-ended, compelling first sentence.
  - Move clockwise around the circle so each participant has to add another sentence to build the story.
  - Add a sentence or two that logically follows the previous part but takes the story in unexpected directions.
  - Encourage quieter members to contribute and maintain inclusivity.
  - Optionally, enforce time limits for each turn depending on group dynamics and goals.
  - Provide positive feedback and reactions to foster a supportive atmosphere and encourage lively contributions.
- Conclude the story when everyone has contributed at least once or when there is a natural end.
  - After the activity, discuss favourite parts, surprises, and how participants felt when it was their turn to participate.
  - Engage in debrief discussions focusing on storytelling techniques and working collectively as a team.

## Notes for Facilitator

- It is helpful for facilitator to start off the story and set the scene – this should be made relevant to the challenges or opportunities which typically arise on a mobility period.
- The facilitator can add a closing statement to tie up any loose ends in the narrative, if desired.
- The facilitator can transcribe the collective story, if desired, as a lasting output.
- An alternative approach to this story is to use cards with a range of subjects and story techniques and get the group to work in pairs to build a story.
- Facilitators can develop their own cards with subjects that relate to a mobility along with other broader story topics.
- The technique can include instructions such as: tell the story using facts only; as if in a dream; as a poem; as a news article; pictures only etc.





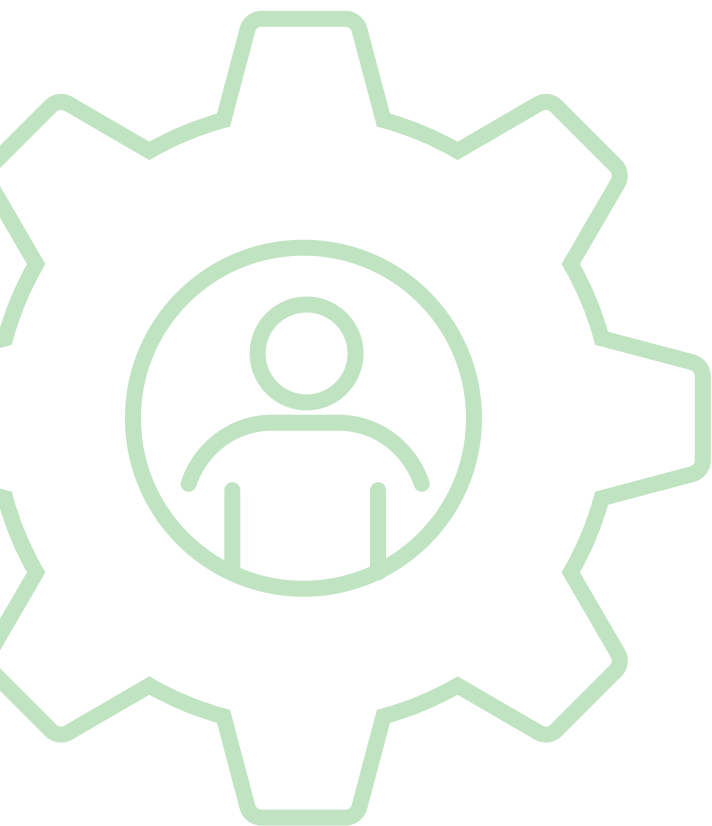
## Leadership: “What if” Leadership Scenarios

**Objective:** This exercise is for participants during and post their mobility period and aims to promote active citizenship and enhance understanding of the values of participation in society. It also assists with the development of assertive communication.

**Description & purpose:** The purpose of the What if Leadership activity is to promote critical thinking and problem solving while highlighting the need for transversal skills such as empathy and communication in the process.

**Time:** This activity takes approximately 40 – 60 minutes.

**Materials Needed:** A4 paper (one sheet per group), Pens.



## Instructions

- Divide the class into small groups (max 6)
- The facilitator poses a real-life leadership scenario for the participants, writing a **What if** question up relating to this on the board. For example: ‘What if someone in my group is not contributing to the group project?’ or ‘What if the needs of participants were not being addressed by our mobility hosts?’
- In groups, the participants brainstorm how they could approach this situation to bring about a favourable solution (20 mins).
- Each group outlines their approach by writing their key steps on the paper provided.
- Each group shares their response, and the facilitator holds a class discussion around their responses and solutions presented.
- During the discussion, participants are encouraged to reflect on how their responses and approach to leadership incorporate European values relating to Activity Citizenship.

## Notes for Facilitator

- The facilitator can pose one what if scenario to the entire class or if they would like to make the activity longer, the facilitator can pose different what if scenarios to each group. Each group can present their responses with a class discussion around their approach as leaders for same.
- If each group is doing a different what if scenario – use A1 sized paper and provide coloured markers to distinguish each group.
- All group members must be involved in presenting their approach and solution to the class.



## Digital storytelling to make an Impact

**Objective:** This exercise can be used by participants at any stage of the mobility to record their experiences, explore any topic and reflect on the benefit of the mobility experience. This activity also links to the Memory Wall activity.

**Description & Purpose:** To engage participants in the creative process of telling a story using digital tools, enhancing their narrative skills, collaboration, and ability to express ideas visually.

**Time:** 60-90 minutes

- **Introduction:** 10 minutes
- **Planning and brainstorming:** 15 minutes
- **Story creation:** 30-40 minutes
- **Presentation:** 5 minutes per group (depending on the number of groups)
- **Debrief and discussion:** 10-15 minutes

### Materials Needed:

- Devices with internet access (laptops, tablets, or smartphones).
- Digital storytelling tools or software (e.g., PowerPoint, Canva, Storybird, WeVideo, Adobe Spark, Google Slides, etc.)
- Access to images, audio, and video resources (either pre-gathered or sourced online).
- Optional: Microphones for voice recording, headphones.

### Instructions

- **Explain the Concept:** Begin by explaining that digital storytelling is a method of telling stories using multimedia elements such as images, sound, video, and text.

Emphasise that the goal is to blend creative writing with visual and audio components to craft an interesting and accessible narrative.

- **Show Examples:** Show a brief example of a digital story to inspire participants. The story could be a personal narrative, fictional story, or even an educational message.
- **Clarify the Assignment:**
- Each group will work together to create a short digital story (2-3 minutes).
- The story must include a clear beginning, middle, and end.
- It can be fictional, personal, or centred around a specific theme (e.g., “A Day in the Life on a mobility”, “Overcoming Challenges”, “Future of Technology”).
- Divide the team into groups.
- Appoint a group member to address any challenges to the agreed theme.
- Idea generation – what’s the story about? Create the story. Choose a digital platform (PowerPoint, Canva, Visual Apps).
- Each groups presents their story.

### Notes for Facilitator

- Debrief around challenges to developing the digital story, working as a group and using digital tools.
- Keep the balance between creativity and time management so participants don’t get carried away with the creative process.
- Ask for constructive feedback for each story – ways in which the story could be enhanced or developed further.
- Wrap up by emphasising how important and inclusive digital storytelling is as a tool to communicate especially in an intercultural context.

## Head, Heart, Hands

**Objective:** This activity focuses on helping participants identify the competences needed for (pre departure) or developed as a result of (post mobility evaluation) a mobility activity.

**Description & purpose:** This activity is based on the definition of a competence as the combination of Knowledge, Values and Skills (Head, Heart and Hands).

**Time:** 45 mins

- 10 minutes introduction.
- 20 minutes to discuss the individual competences.
- 15 minutes debrief – 5 minutes for each competency.

**Materials:** Posters/Flip Chart pages each with a graphic of either Head, Heart or Hands

## Instructions

- Divide the group into three. Give each group a poster with a picture of either a Head, a Heart or Hands.
- The facilitator asks participants to identify all the Knowledge (head), Values (heart) or Skills (hands) depending on which poster they have been given, that are needed to undertake and complete an intercultural project.
- Put the posters up on the wall and debrief.

### Notes for Facilitator

- Use the posters as the basis of discussion.
- Ask the participants to feedback the nature of the conversation they had while completing the task.
- Provide examples of a competency breakdown for some other area to provide guidance for the group.



## Project Management Skills Development Wheel

**Objective:** This is a pre-departure activity to help participants view the mobility experiences within a project structure.

**Description & Purpose:** The purpose of this exercise is to enable participants to identify and develop the skills which they deem are directly relevant to the successful completion of their mobility and in so doing, identify their own areas of strength and development in order to build capability and confidence.

**Time:** This activity takes approximately 30 - 60 minutes.

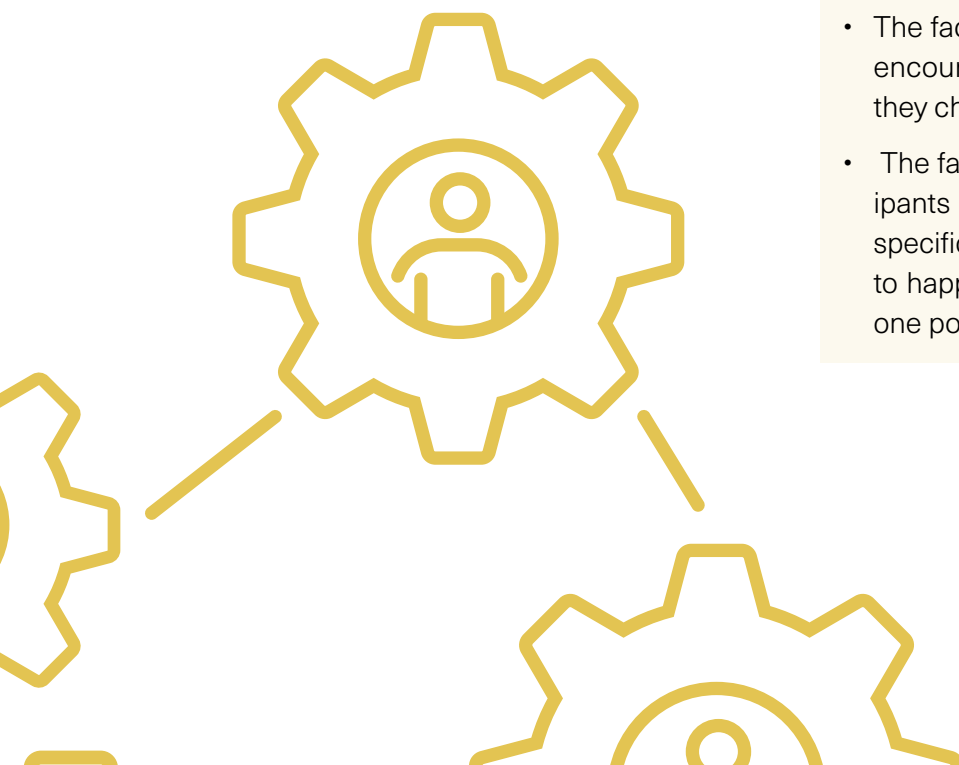
**Materials:** Personal Development Wheel and pens.

## Instructions

- Provide each learner with the blank wheel diagram (provided).
- The facilitator highlights that the blank wheel is divided into six segments; ask each learner to think about their upcoming mobility and list as many skills as they can that are most relevant for the successful completion of their mobility project.
- The facilitator asks the learner to rank those skills and identify the top six most relevant skills and note each one in a segment of the web.
- Some skills could include **self-organisation, discipline, building a programme, evaluation & navigating change**.
- The participants then need 20 minutes to reflect and self-assess on each skill.
- The participants rate themselves on each skill from 1 (poor) to 10 (excellent) and write it down in each segment of the web.
- The facilitator then asks the participants to identify how they could improve their score by one point on each skill.
- Open discussion at the end.

## Notes for Facilitator

- The facilitator allows open discussion and encourage participants to reflect on why they chose each score.
- The facilitator could also guide the participants to consider how they might raise a specific score by 1 point – what would need to happen for them to score this segment one point higher.



## Europass Competency Flower

**Objective:** This activity is relevant to all phases of the mobility as evaluation needs to be considered from the outset at pre-departure phase and at every stage of the mobility project.

**Description & Purpose:** The purpose of this exercise is to evaluate the mobility experience, identify the key competencies that have been acquired and create a 'competency flower' to record the learning from the experience.

**Time:** This activity takes approximately 30 minutes.

**Materials:** Coloured pages/card, scissors, tape, poster (A1 pages) and markers. A 'Flower' Template is provided.

### Instructions

- Discuss and agree the range of competencies/learning that could be acquired from participation in an intercultural mobility e.g. linguistic competency, digital competency, financial competency, social/Intercultural competency, technical competency (related to programme) and key transversal skills competency (adaptability, self-confidence, self-awareness etc).
- Provide a definition for each competency that can be used by the participants.
- Allow them to identify their learning from the mobility and discuss in pairs, the circumstances in which that learning took place.
- Everyone works on their own 'competency flower' poster - the petals are labelled as the competency and the descriptors and definition are in 'bubbles/shapes/squares' attached to the petals. Participants are free to explore their creative approach to the 'flower'.

- Put all the posters up on the walls and allow all participants to review and discuss.

### In addition:

- Introduce the Kolb action-research approach to learning (framework below).
- Introduce the Europass website and provide links to allow the participants to take the Digital questionnaire and the language competency assessment (links below).
- <https://europass.europa.eu/en/europass-tools/test-your-digital-skills>
- <https://europass.europa.eu/en/how-self-assess-your-language-skills>.
- Indicate to participants that they can have learning and skills validated via the Europass Mobility Supplement document which can provide an official record of the competencies/skills discussed in this activity.
- Indicate to the participants that they will take these assessments again on their return to demonstrate progression.

### Notes for Facilitator

- Explain to the group that Transversal Skills development is not an exact science and there are no exams to determine progression. Therefore, 'before and after' evaluation techniques provide a good measure of development.
- Tracking their experiences (and recording their reaction to them) is important for evaluation purposes.
- Explain that all their learning can be recorded on Europass and can be used as part of the Europass CV to help them articulate the benefit of the Transversal Skills acquired during the mobility.

## Postcards from the Edge!

### Sub skills: Reflective practice & Evaluation, Intercultural Awareness

**Objective:** This exercise is focused on evaluation of participant experience and personal development resulting from the mobility experience. The activity will be carried out at both pre-departure and post mobility phases.

**Description & Purpose:** The purpose of this exercise is to enable participants to review and evaluate the benefits accruing to them from the mobility experience. It focuses on how they feel before departing and again on their return from the mobility. It encourages them to recognise any shift in their perceptions, enhances flexible mindset and practice intercultural awareness - looking at their own bias and perceptions and how they have changed throughout the placement experience.

**Time:** 30 – 60 minutes [longer if designing their own postcard]

**Materials:** Pens, postcards of all Mobility Destinations within the group.

**If designing their own card – then card/pictures/glue/etc.**

### Instructions

- Provide each learner with a postcard of their placement destination /or ask them to design their own postcard(s).
- Ask each participant to write a postcard to themselves before they go on their placement focusing on how they feel about the mobility and what they hope to learn. Explain that they will repeat this

exercise when they return from their placement experience.

- Prior to their departure participants should discuss their feelings about their upcoming placement - their hopes and fears for the experience; what they are excited for and anything they feel is significant for them at this moment.
- Facilitators should hold all postcards until the participants return from their respective placements.
- Upon the learners return, facilitators should repeat this activity - get each participant to write another postcard reflecting on the experience - what went well, what didn't, what they learned and how they felt about the experience overall
- Facilitators should hand out the original postcards to the learners.
- Facilitators to return the pre-departure postcards to the participants so they can estimate the 'journey travelled' and identify the benefit from the mobility experience.
- In small groups (3 people) get participants to share the key content from their postcards and their reflections on the mobility experience as a whole.
- Debrief.

### Notes for Facilitator

- Facilitators could get the group to design their own postcard - using images from internet or own artwork if possible.
- Remind participant to focus on feelings(hopes fears & dreams) and learning.
- Postcards could form part of a dissemination exhibition.
- Debrief after the small group conversations-asking participants to identify the greatest impact from the mobility experience.

# Annex: Activity Handouts & Templates

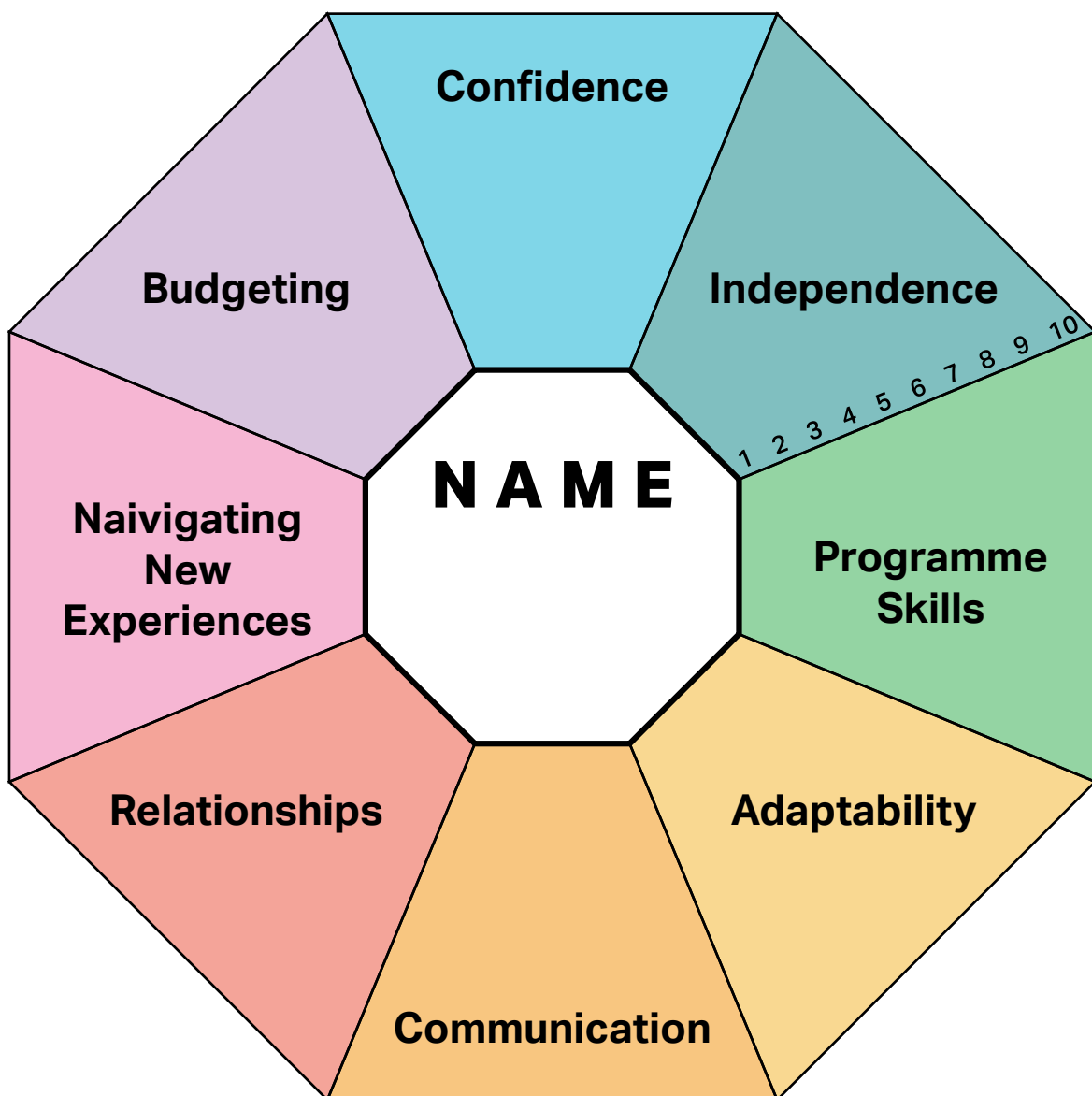


## Personal Development Web

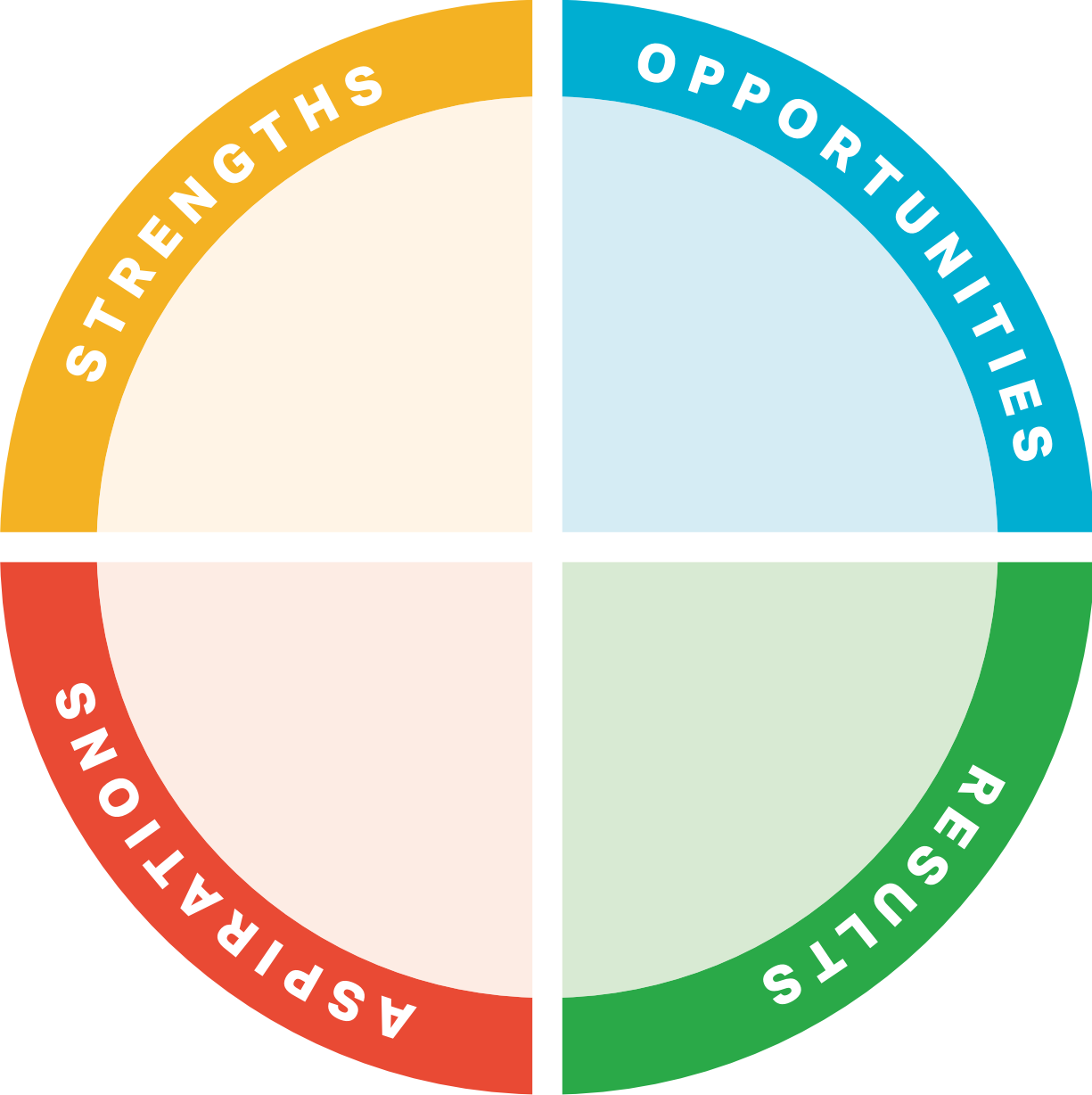
Score each area out of 10

Of the lower scores:

**Question:** What is needed to move the score upward by 1 point.

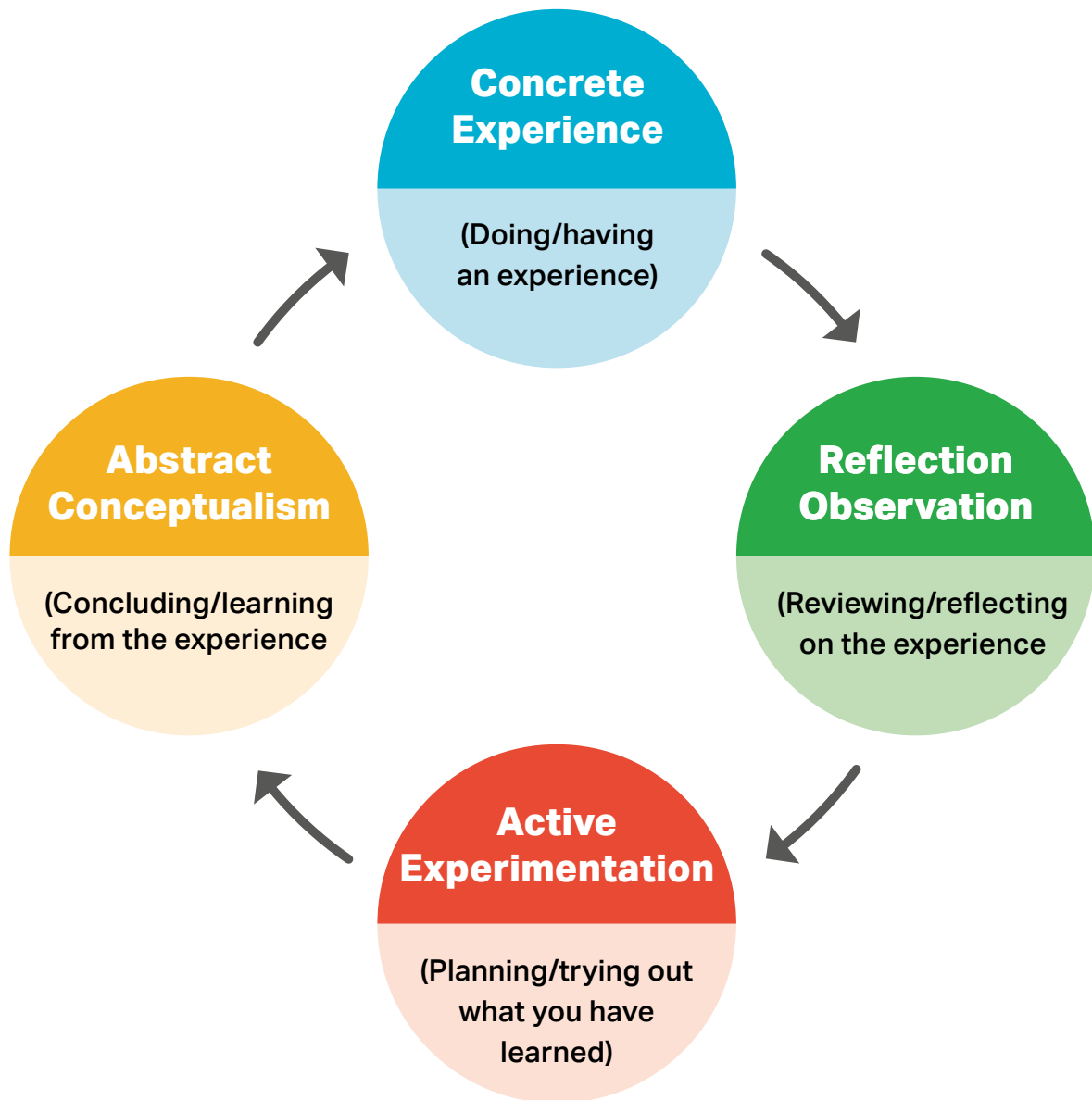


# SOAR Model

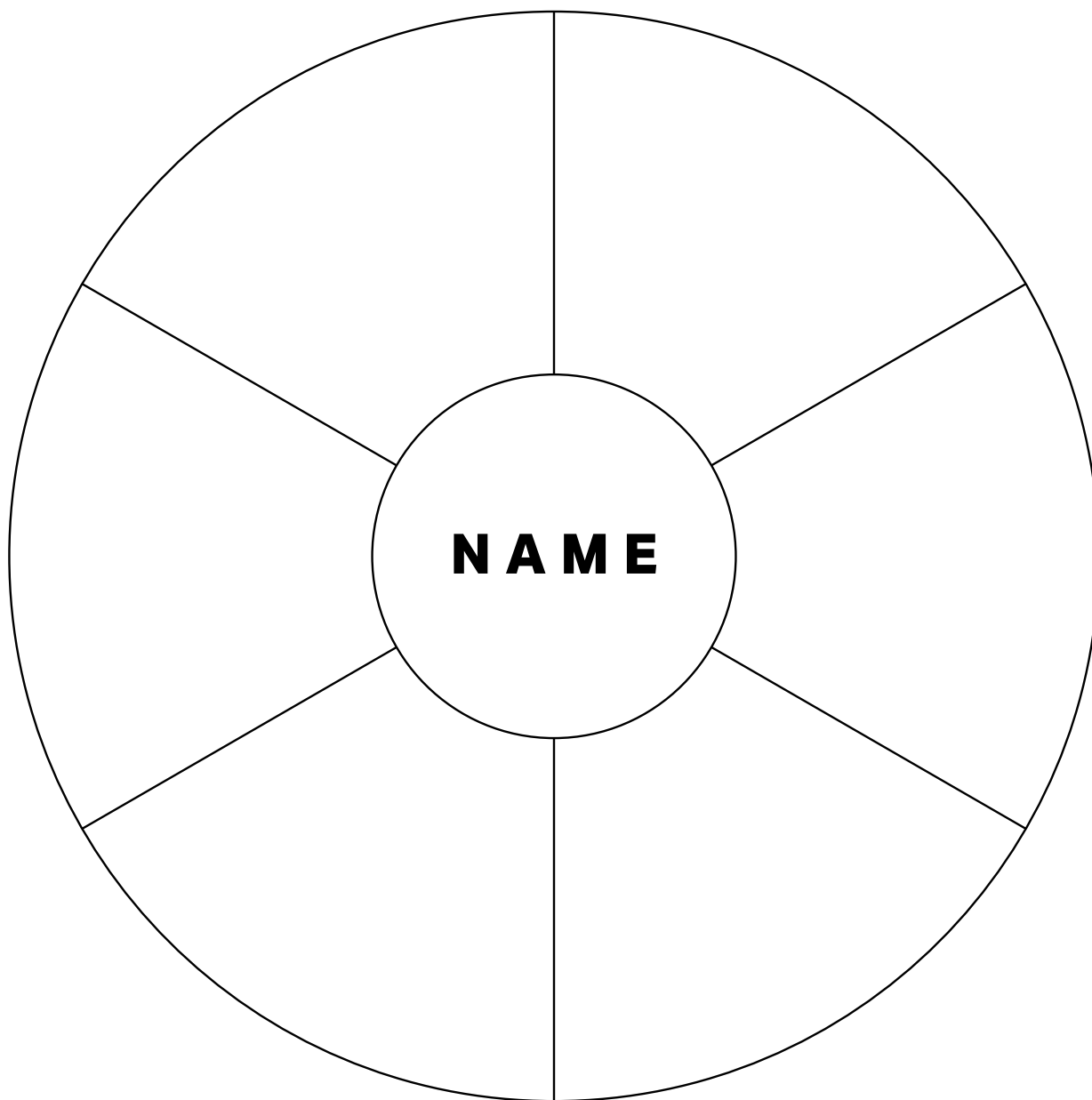




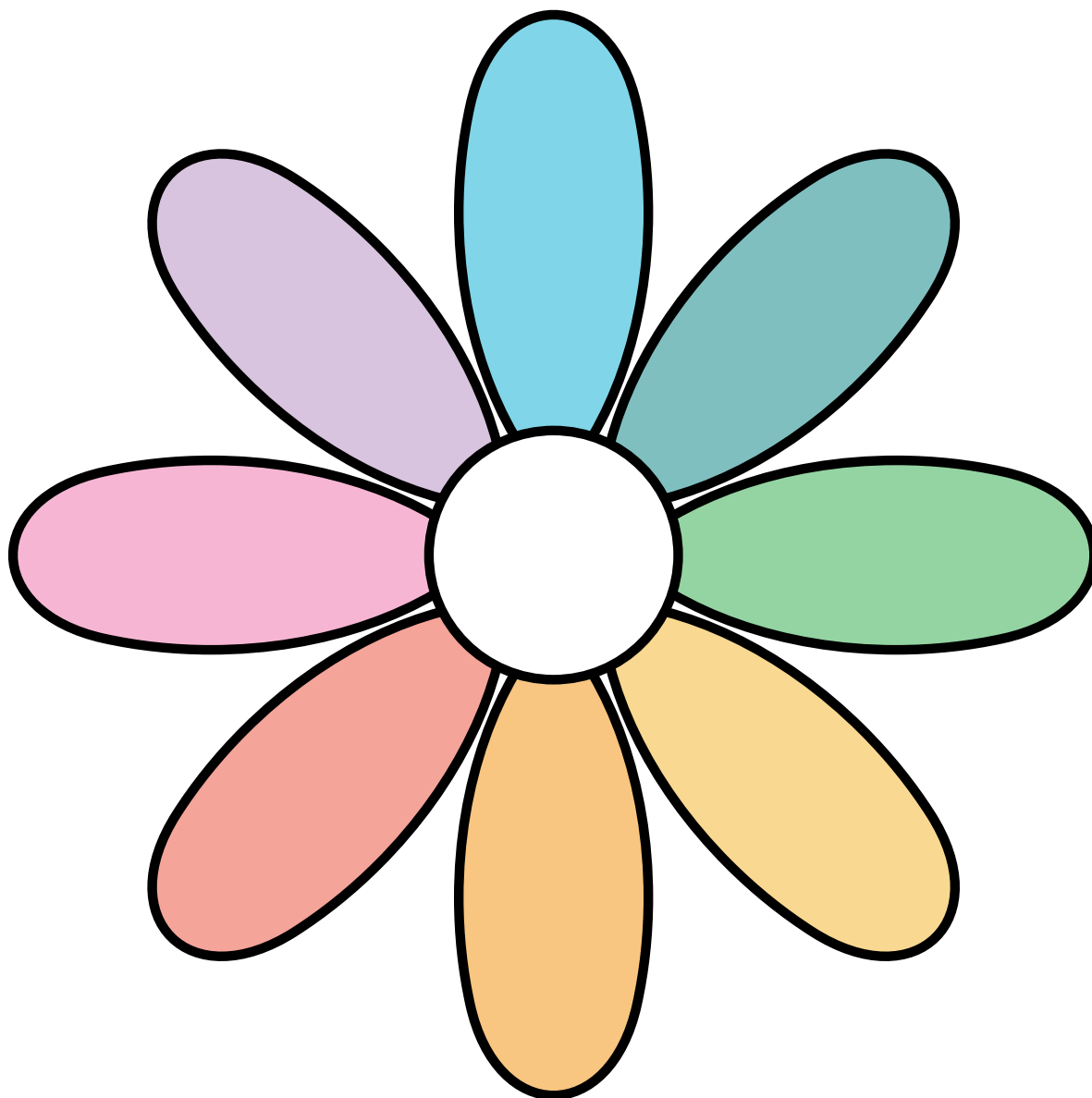
## Kolb Learning Cycle



## Project Management Wheel



## Europass Evaluation Flower Template



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