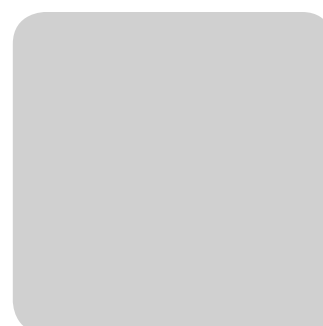


# Careers Advice PLUS



## Go for it!

### Session plan for working with groups



European Union  
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Leading learning and skills

# Go for it!

## Session plan for working with groups

### Learning outcomes:

By the end of the session participants will:

- Understand some of the factors that stop people moving forward
- Recognise that people achieve their best when they are in positive states
- Understand that people only learn and grow by exploring and experiencing alternatives and that the experience of change is rarely as bad as the thought of change
- Understand that people can have an influence on their own future

### Preparation and materials required:

- Video/DVD Player
- Clips of people talking about how they go for it. A mix of clips of mostly ordinary people achieving meaning in their own lives by following the four steps of **Believe in Yourself, Know Yourself, Have a Plan** and **Go for it!**
- Sheets of A4 paper

## Content and timings:

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### Timings:

### Content

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20 mins

#### Introduction

- Introductions, health and safety information, housekeeping.

Start by explaining that most learning happens really quickly. Take a phobia. Most phobias are learned really quickly, in seconds. Most people who are scared of spiders had an older brother or sister who threw a spider at them when they were young. They experienced fear and lack of control and in that moment the fear of spiders was burned in to the wiring of their brain. It can stay for life time. Adults can shake and sweat at the word spider thirty years after their learning experience!

Most people who are scared of singing, drawing, or maths learned this at school in a similar way. Tell a story something like this one told by David Hodgson: "I had a fear of singing for 20 years. In Year 7 I sat with the rest of the class in a music lesson. The teacher sat at the front tucked in by her piano and announced she was going to play a note on the piano and in turn we would stand up and sing the note. As people did this in turn I became more and more anxious. By the time she called my name and played a note I could hardly stand up for shaking, never mind produce a note. I made some noise and she turned to me wagging her finger at me and said 'Hodgson that was pathetic, you can't sing'. To her credit she taught me something quickly. Unfortunately, it was not a positive learning experience".

If we learn whilst feeling bad we learn to avoid the subject, object or goal. If we learn whilst feeling good we tend to drawn toward the subject, object or goal.

We don't go for it when we procrastinate, fear change or don't know how to.

We'll deal with all three in this session.

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10 mins

#### A 'Go for it!' State

- Ask people to work in small groups and to think of and describe the moods they were in when they did something at their very best. Invite people to talk about these with others in the small group. Explain that the best states can be described as positive, go for it, in the zone - whether it's for sporting or personal success. We achieve our best when we're in positive states. We may not always get the result we want but we'll have done our best and we can do no more than our best.
  - Another version of this is invite participants to discuss the prevailing state/moods of people they admire. Determination, focus, dedication and positive are often mentioned. The more we're in these states ourselves the more we'll achieve.
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**10 mins**

**Time Bandits**

- Ask the group “What are your time bandits?” or “What excuses do you regularly use to stop you from going for things?”.

They might be limiting beliefs about ourselves or the opportunities available.

We might blame other people.

We might distract ourselves with TV, the internet or other things.

Duncan Bannatyne is a great example of someone who didn't achieve whilst at school but made it through following the four steps used in our sessions. He outlines the common excuses in his book **If I Can You Can**. They include (lack of): time, skills, money, taking a risk, support from partner. Only the last example is an issue that is outside of your own head. The best solution for this is to use the knowledge and insights of your partner to help you better prepare your case for change. They can help you develop a stronger plan.

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**10 mins**

**Shoe Swap**

- Ask group to put their shoes on the wrong feet and walk around a bit in them.

The learning points are:

- We all have habits
- We like to stick with what we know
- We can only learn and grow by exploring and experiencing alternatives
- The experience of change is rarely as bad as the thought of change

We all like to have control in our lives and we can only have control if we have choice. Choice exists if we have options. To create more options we must try new things. Only by trying new something new can we learn new knowledge, skills, attitudes and beliefs.

The shoe swap also shows us that some of our habits are useful for us (such as putting our shoes on the right feet). They become second nature to give us more time to think about other stuff. Isn't it useful that we don't have to consciously control our breathing, heart rate, temperature, hair and nail growth.

Blinking is a great example of useful automatic behaviour. We only think about blinking when our attention is drawn to the subject. Now you'll be aware of your blinking, especially if I challenge you not to blink!

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**10 mins**

**Sit Down**

This is another activity which illustrates our reluctance to change.

- Ask the group to stand up and go and sit down in another seat, a sort of musical chairs but with enough chairs for everyone. When they sit down they'll feel uncomfortable at first but start to relax as they grow familiar with their environment. This process replicates many in real life: starting a new school year, a new job, meeting new people.
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**30 mins**

**How To Have A Goal In Mind**

- Ask the group “What motivates you to... work?” (or just about anything) and the process and even the content can be quite predictable. The four most common responses are:
    - To avoid losing benefits;
    - To avoid boredom (this can also be a reason not to work)
    - To meet friends/socialise
    - To do interesting/fulfilling work
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The first two are examples of ‘away from’ motivation. This is when we are motivated by the thought of avoiding something bad. Companies selling insurance use this form of motivation to persuade us to buy, to avoid the hassle, distress and pain of floods and accidents. When we think of the example we feel bad and so act to avoid feeling bad.

These last two examples are ‘toward’ motivation. This is when we are motivated by the thought of having, gaining or achieving something good. We feel good about having something good immediately, such as chocolate, or long term, such as a great job if we do well at school.

We access these feelings in all three major representational systems (visual, auditory and kinaesthetic).

People doing well at school tend to have two experiences of ‘toward’ motivation and one ‘away from’ motivation. This builds strong propulsion and energy. Feeling good about the short term benefit of school, socialising. Feeling good about their long term, great career if they work hard. Plus avoiding a telling off. You can notice similar patterns in many strongly motivated individuals including athletes and business achievers. Please note we may be strongly motivated in some areas of our lives and not in others, for example some young people are strongly motivated in a chosen sport but not about school in general. I’ve noticed people not doing well at school have mostly ‘away from’ motivation when thinking about school. They attend to avoid being punished by parents or others. Thus, they only feel not bad whilst at school, but they don’t feel good. If they do attend for the socialising this is not related to the curriculum. Some schools are tackling this through an alternative curriculum that is linked to positive, ‘toward’ motivation feelings. Others take students to visit universities or employers to make real and relevant their day to day study.

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**30 mins**

**Time Line**

- Ask each person to draw a line across a sheet of A4 diagonally and write born and die at each end. They fill in the important events on their line up until now and then fill in their future branching off from now in 2 ways, one below the line if they continue as they are now and then above the line if they really go for it using all the new information they have about self belief, their strengths and ability to plan, the attitude of success. They can highlight obstacles to overcome and how they feel about each. You could ask people to work in pairs. Obviously some people will be guarded and others very open so this has to be handled sensitively.

Emphasise that we all have the biggest influence on our own future. Yes, other people and events will have an impact but not as much as we have.

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