

Training guide

A GUIDE TO DEVELOP YOUR SOFT SKILLS DURING YOUR APPRENTICESHIP!

Erasmus+ project Dessa
| BIG PILOT | 1 FEBRUARI 2021

TRAINING GUIDE - A GUIDE TO DEVELOP YOUR SOFT SKILLS DURING YOUR APPRENTICESHIP!

Project	DESSA 2019-1-NL01-KA202-060482
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Date	1 February 2021



Table of content

Introduction.....	3
The role of the mentor	4
More about soft Skills.....	5
The assignments.....	8
Creating learning goals.....	8
Assignment 1 Ice breaker games.....	9
Assignment 2 Interview your colleagues.....	11
Assignment 3 Present yourself!.....	12
Assignment 4 Give a workshop!	13
Assignment 5 Negotiation on the work floor	14
Assignment 6 Student’s improvement	15
Assignment 7 Show your digital skills.....	16
Assignment 8 Become a Creator	17
Assignment 9 Become a Leader!	18
Assignment 10 Time to play a game.....	19
Assignment 11 Unforeseen changes	20
Assignment 12 Let’s motivate together!	21
Assignment 13 Game “Holding together”	22
Assignment 14 Game “Two sides of the same coin”	23
Assignment 15 Reorganize your daily routine.....	24
Assignment 16 Pizza or Burger?	25
Assignment 17 Teamwork exercise	26
Assignment 17 Template	27
Assignment 18 Self-confidence booster	28
Assignment 19 Mastering and developing soft skills.....	29
Assignment 20 Conflict resolution.....	30
Assignment 21 Project of self-development	31
Finishing apprenticeship assignments.....	32
Bibliography.....	33



Introduction

“85% of one’s success at the workplace is attributed to soft skills and only 15% to technical skills”

- Harvard Study

It’s probably not the first time you’ve heard people talking about soft skills and it will most certainly not be the last time. Read a newspaper or magazine and they’ll talk about soft skills, but what do people or companies mean by soft skills?

There is a difference between hard skills and soft skills. Hard skills are the skills you learn from your education. You can test these skills; they are job specific. Soft skills give colour to the hard skills. For example, you have learned at school how to organize an event. You might know about how to book a venue or how to make a guestlist, but without the soft skills communication, leadership, proactiveness and teamwork there will not be an event. These soft skills are critical in a real working environment.

Soft skills are a combination of people skills, social skills, communication skills, character and personality traits. These skills enable you to navigate your environment, work well with others, perform well and achieve your goals faster. This guide will provide you with more information about soft skills and the ways to develop these important skills during your internship.

Maybe this is your first internship and these first days within a new company are always exciting. You are in a new environment; don’t know the people and are not yet familiar with the way of working. But with a little help, you will have a great time. Every learning process is different. Before you start it is not clear what this experience will bring. But afterwards you can look back and see how many things you have learned.

It is time for you to see what kind of soft skills lie in you!

In this training guide you will find twenty-one assignments which give you the opportunity to develop your soft skills, gain valuable experience in a real working field environment and ultimately grow as a professional. From this guide you get to pick at least five assignments that you can work on during your apprenticeship, also find a natural mentor to help you reflect with after the assignments and learn from. These assignments are specially designed to support you in reaching your goals and personal and professional development. To help you with your learning process and doing the assignments in this guide we will ask you to think of an experienced role model in your working environment, this is called a mentor.



The role of the mentor

We all have people in our lives who help us figure things out and help us with our goals. People who you can confide in, learn from and maybe even look up to. Did you already find someone within your company to whom you can ask your questions? Someone who helps you to find your way, someone who asks you how everything is going?

This person can be called a mentor and mentors come in many different shapes and forms. It could be someone you are formally matched with by a mentoring program or for example your school, but a lot of the times we find our mentor organically. It could be your supervisor, the colleague sitting next to you or someone who provides support, guidance and friendship. The person who makes time to support you and makes you feel good about yourself. This person can be your natural mentor, chosen by yourself. Different people teach you different skills and provide different knowledge and support, but did you know it is possible to have more than one mentor?

Anyhow, for the development of your soft skills it will be necessary to have a mentor. A person you can talk to, learn from, feel comfortable with and who wants to be a part of your learning process. It's your choice who you would like to be your mentor. Who can you think of? The easiest way to find a mentor is to ask this person if he or she wants to be your mentor. It may look like a big step, but you will realize that this person will be honored to do so.

In case you can't think of a person who could play this part during your internship, you could always ask your supervisor to help you to find someone or make an overview for yourself with the people in your work environment and think of skills they could help you with.

Before you start working on these assignments, it is important to have a conversation with your mentor. What will be your plan, how do you want to develop yourself and which assignments should you pick? Together with your mentor you can create a plan of action. What are your learning goals and which assignments could help you reach these goals?

After each assignment it's important to reflect on your personal development, it works well to do this together with your mentor. Asking yourself what went well and what things you could do different the next time helps you to be in charge of your own learning process. Talking with your mentor about this helps you with your process and gives you the support you need to take some risks. It also helps to make a small report after every reflection, just for yourself. To write down your process gives you an insight and a real valuable document of your own development to be proud of and share with your mentor, school or supervisors.



More about soft Skills

In recent years there has been a notable shift in the skills required by employees by privileging soft skills over hard skills. Soft skills are currently described as some of the most important core competences. These competences represent a dynamic combination of cognitive and meta-cognitive skills, interpersonal, intellectual, emotional and practical skills which can be applied across employment contexts.

Soft skills play an important role in resume writing, interviewing, and finding success in communicating with people at work and in other areas of your life. For example, as you look for jobs, you may find that many employers list specific soft skills on their job posts in the “required” or “desired” sections. A job posting for a Human Resources associate may list “attention to detail” as a desired trait, while a job for a Marketing Specialist could list “leadership” and “great communication skills”.

Soft skills are often transferable across careers and industries. As a result, you may realise that you possess many of the required traits even if you don’t match the exact profile in the job description. As you search for jobs, pay special attention to posts calling for candidates with soft skills or traits you possess. Even if the job title isn’t a great fit, you may find that the description makes sense for you. As you progress through the job search process, keep your resume updated to reflect soft skills most relevant to the jobs you’re applying for.

You may also find it helpful to consider how you might showcase your soft skills in an interview. While you can display some skills like good communication, you may consider weaving others into your answers to interview questions. For example, you might talk about your problem-solving skills when answering a question like, “Tell me about a time you overcame an obstacle.” If the employer prompts you to provide references, think of those that can speak to examples that verify your soft skills and other strengths.

There is a variety of soft skills and you can develop yourself on these skills in many different ways. In the word cloud below you can find an overview of soft skills you can think of. For the assignments in this training guide we focus on a few of these soft skills you can develop during your internship:

1. **Communication:** *Another soft skill you cannot do without. People with strong communication skills can build relationships. They can listen well and vary their communication to suit the circumstances. They avoid misunderstandings, and in general make any workplace work better. This skill is used to express ideas and views clearly, confidently and concisely in speech, writing and body language. (Cedefop, 2020)*
2. **Cooperation/Teamwork:** *Cooperation is the “voluntarily arrangement in which two or more entities engage in a mutually beneficial exchange instead of competing. Cooperation can happen where resources adequate for both parties exist or are created by their interaction. Whereas teamwork is defines as “the summary of skills required to work well as part of the team.” (Cedefop, 2020)*
3. **Self-motivation:** *“The ability to do what needs to be done, without influence from other people or situations.” People with self-motivation can find a reason and strength to complete a task, even when challenging, without giving up or needing another to encourage them. (Businessdictionary, 2021)*



It can also be described as the courage we find to overcome problems, and complete errands, avoid procrastinating and be productive in our work environment.

- 4. Creativity/Innovation:** *Being able to think outside the box. The ability to produce or use original and unusual ideas. It is the mental strength to see solutions and possibilities where few people can, and then act in ways that are innovative and ground-breaking. (Cambridge University Press, 2021)*

Creativity is the ability to think about a task or a problem in a new or different way, or the ability to use the imagination to generate new ideas. Creativity enables you to solve complex problems or find interesting ways to approach tasks. If you are creative, you look at things from a unique perspective. You can find patterns and make connections to find opportunities. There is some risk involved with being creative, but you can show you are self-motivated to try things that have not been done before.

- 5. Problem solving:** *Problem solving is the act of defining a problem; determining the cause of the problem; identifying, prioritizing, and selecting alternatives for a solution; and implementing a solution. (ASQ, 2021)*
- 6. Adaptability to change:** *The ability to change in order to suit different conditions. Adaptability to change means that you are able to function in a changing environment. (Cambridge University Press, 2021)*

It means one is able to quickly respond to changing trends, innovation, destabilization, industry shifts, and so forth. (Willkomm, 2019)

- 7. Willingness for personal development:** *Willingness is the quality of being happy to do something if it is needed. (Cambridge University Press, 2021)*

It is important to experience the joy of personal growth as well as contribute to the development of your organization. It is about being open for feedback and reflecting as well as formulating personal goals.

- 8. Time management:** *“Time management” is the the practice of using the time that you have available in a useful and effective way, especially in your work. Good time management enables you to work smarter – not harder – so that you get more done in less time, even when time is tight and pressures are high. (Cambridge University Press, 2021)*
- 9. Negotiation:** *Negotiation is a method by which people settle differences. Negotiation skills are qualities that allow two or more parties to reach a compromise. These are often soft skills and include abilities such as communication, persuasion, planning, strategizing and cooperating. (Indeed, 2020)*
- 10. Conflict resolution:** *When there is an conflict and you and your team can't figure out what to do next. It's very important to be able to look with a sober mind on these kind of conflicts. So that it will be easier to recognize the problem so it can be fixed. Conflict resolution can be defined as the informal or formal process that two or more parties use to find a peaceful solution to their dispute. (Shonk, 2020)*



- 11. Confidence:** Confidence is defined as “a feeling or consciousness of one's powers or of reliance on one's circumstances” and also as “the quality or state of being certain”. It is important to know yourself and be confident about your skills to be able to perform the way you know you can. (Merriam-Webster, 2021)
- 12. Leadership:** This skill is required to take the lead when necessary. They include the ability to manage and motivate others, and to delegate work. These are the set of soft skills that we least expect someone to develop by themselves. Employers understand that it is hard to develop skills without being able to practice them every day. There is likely to come a point, however, when you may need to step up to a leadership position for the first time. (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, 2020)



The assignments

In this guide, you will find five different assignments, created by students and teachers from different countries in Europe. Each assignment has been written with the focus on one or more soft skills. We have asked students to give us situations where they worked on their soft skills during apprenticeship. They came up with these situations from their own experience, because they realized how valuable these situations were for them and their personal development. They are all focused on the development of soft skills during your internship.

Before we start!

Do you already know what your learning goals are? By setting goals for yourself, you are providing yourself with a target to aim for and make use of the methods you learned to develop a certain skill. The SMART method can help you do this! Make use of the SMART method to create learning goals that are not only measurable but also clear to yourself as a person. SMART stands for:

- **Specific:** Well defined, clear, and unambiguous
- **Measurable:** With specific criteria that measure your progress towards the accomplishment of the goal
- **Achievable:** Attainable and not impossible to achieve
- **Realistic:** Within reach, realistic, and relevant to your life purpose
- **Timely:** With a clearly defined timeline, including a starting date and a target date. The purpose is to create urgency.

Think about what you want to achieve and where you want to develop yourself in, the coming period. Then try to write it down while keeping in mind the five points mentioned above. For example:

“During my internship, I will develop myself in presenting before groups. For this I want to learn how to use PowerPoint, give one presentation in front of a group of minimal five people, attend a presentation and feel comfortable in front of groups. I want to do this before the end of my internship period.”



Assignment 1 | Ice breaker games

For this assignment you organize a small introduction game with your colleagues. It's important to know your colleagues, especially for new teams! It helps eliminate snap judgements of colleagues and gives introverts an equal chance to share some facts about themselves. By doing so you promote an open work environment in which you have a mutual understanding. The following games serve as a tool to break the ice between you and your colleagues. We give you two examples of games to do so:

Example 1 | Game "Truth and Lies"

Time: 10 - 15 minutes

Number of Participants: Five or more people

Rules: Sit everyone in a circle facing each other. Have each person come up with three facts about themselves and one lie. The lie should be realistic instead of extravagant. Go around the circle and have each person state the three facts and a lie in a random order, without revealing which is the lie. After someone shares, the others must guess which is the lie.

Tools needed: none.

The soft skills you will use in this assignment are:

Presenting information, Communication, Feedback, Creativity

Example 2 | Game "Human Bingo"

Time: 30 minutes

Number of Participants: 15 or more people. For smaller group, could be changed the rules or less number of facts).

Tools Needed: Pen, printed "Human Bingo" card with facts (you can find this card on the next page)

Rules: For this ice breaker game each person get's a pen and printed "Human Bingo" paper lists and need to write other person's name near each fact. For that reason, people need to go around and communicate to each other, to ask facts, to start conversation. During this task is trying to activate persons to know more about each other and to communicate with as much as possible people in the room, that's why is asking to fill one person's name only twice and filling person can't write his name at all. After all people filled lists, should be reflection of each fact.

The soft skills you will use in this assignment are:

Presenting information, Communication.



HUMAN BINGO!

- Fill all spaces!
- 1 person's name can be used maximum TWICE.
- You cannot fill your name in YOUR paper list.

SOMEONE WITH GLASSES	SOMEONE BORN ON SAME MONTH AS YOU	SOMEONE WITH CURLY HAIR	SOMEONE WHO HAS AN 'S' IN THEIR NAME	SOMEONE WHO CAN PLAY THE PIANO	SOMEONE WHO LIKES "STAR WARS"
SOMEONE WHO HAS A PET (at home)	SOMEONE WHO CAN ROLLERSKATE	SOMEONE WITH GREEN EYES	SOMEONE WHO LIKES THE COLOUR PINK	SOMEONE WHO COULD BAKE AN APPLE PIE	SOMEONE WHO CAN WHISTLE (time to prove?)
SOMEONE WHO LIKES TO PLAY VOLLEYBALL	SOMEONE WHO IS A VOLUNTEER	SOMEONE, WHO COULD BE QUITE A GOOD ACTOR/ACTRESS (time to prove?)	SOMEONE WHO LIKES READING BOOKS	SOMEONE WHO WAS LATE TODAY	SOMEONE WHO LIKES TO TRAVEL
SOMEONE WHO LOOKS FRIENDLY	SOMEONE WHO IS A 'GAME OF THRONES' FAN	SOMEONE WHO DREAMED OF BECOMING AN ASTRANAUT AS A CHILD	SOMEONE OLDER THAN YOU	SOMEONE WHO LIKES TO PLAY CHESS	SOMEONE WHO LIKES TO PLAY BASKETBALL
SOMEONE WHO HAS A NICE HANDWRITING (time to prove?)	SOMEONE WHO IS FUNNY	SOMEONE SAME AGE AS YOU	SOMEONE WHO CAN DANCE LIKE A ROBOT (time to prove?)	TALLEST PERSON IN THE ROOM	SOMEONE WHO IS COLLECTING SOMETHING

After this ice breaker game, don't forget to reflect the assignment with your mentor. You can use the questions listed below:

- ❖ Did you enjoy the game? Did the other participants enjoy the game?
- ❖ What did you learn from this game?
- ❖ Are people more motivated to participate when they play games?
- ❖ Can you think of an ice breaker yourself?



Assignment 2 | Interview your colleagues

At the start of an internship you will get a lot of information within the first few weeks. Things like shaking hands, listening to people who are telling about themselves etc. Most of the people will only remember the names of the people they are working with in their first few months.

Your next assignment is to interview your colleagues. Make a list of 3 colleagues you want to know better (make your mentor can help you). These colleagues can be important for your work.

Prepare five questions to ask your colleagues. These can be questions about themselves, or about their work, education or maybe you can even ask them about their soft skills and how they developed it. That's totally up to you!

A few example questions to help you on your way are:

- What kind of tasks do you have in your job?
- What do you like most about your job?
- What are your aspirations for your job?
- What do you want to achieve by working here?
- Why did you pick this work field?
- If you were a kid, what did you picture yourself doing as a job?
- What would you like to change in your workplace?

This assignment has two learning goals, you will get to know your colleagues better and you get to know what they do, along the way you can also work on the developing about your soft skills.

Reflect this assignment with your mentor. You can use the questions listed below:

- ❖ Describe the things that went well. Also ask what exactly went well in this situation.
- ❖ Can you describe things that went not as well, and why did they not go as planned?
- ❖ Describe a positive aspect on how you worked on the presentation.
- ❖ What did you do to work your way towards your goal?
- ❖ Are there things you could do different the next time? And what are these things?
- ❖ Who or what did you helped to reach your goal?

The soft skills you will use in this assignment are:

Communication, Leadership, Feedback, Proactiveness



Assignment 3 | Present yourself!

You just started working as an intern. Everything is new, probably they do not know you either. Let's change it! You are in the lead now, it's time to let them know who you are.

Your assignment is to give a presentation to a minimum of three people from your working place, this includes your natural mentor. The rest of attendees for your presentation are completely up to you. The presentation will be about yourself and something you learned during your study. Do you remember something nice to talk about, something small?

The presentation has to be a maximum of 10 minutes. As a side note try to check if the message that you try to get across is clear to your audience! Ask your audience if they have any questions at the end of your presentation.

Finding it hard to start? First you start with creating a word cloud. Write everything on a paper you think is important or interesting to know about you. With this information you can create a presentation. Use PowerPoint or other technical tools to help presenting you as a person!

Tips and tops

After your presentation you have to ask your audience for tips and tops. Start with the tops. Tops are always positive things, things you did really well. Tips are educational and will help you the next time you do something similar, don't take the critic you get affect you as a person, see it as a lesson to learn!

Note: Let them write the tips and tops on a small paper (for example sticky notes), afterwards you can take them with you and collect them in your reflection report, and in most circumstances you can always ask for an explanation is something about the feedback is not clear to you.

Reflect this assignment with your mentor.

After the presentation have a conversation with your mentor. Your mentor saw your presentation and can give you feedback on it. Tell your mentor about your personal experience and what you have learned from doing it, for this you can use the questions listed below:

- ❖ Describe the things that went well. Also ask what exactly went well in this situation.
- ❖ Can you describe things that went not as well, and why did they not go as planned?
- ❖ Describe a positive aspect on how you worked on the presentation.
- ❖ What did you do to work your way towards your goal?
- ❖ Are there things you could do different the next time? And what are these things?
- ❖ Who or what did you helped to reach your goal?

The soft skills you will use in this assignment are:

Presenting information, Leadership, Communication, Feedback



Assignment 4 | Give a workshop!

Your assignment for today is to organize and lead a workshop. A workshop is a discussion or practical lesson on a particular subject in which you can share your knowledge or experience. The subject of your workshop is up to you. You may use something you have learned during your education, you may use a hobby, you can teach them a game etc. The learning part is less important, this is all about developing soft skills, but don't forget that there's always a lesson inside this!

There are two parts to hosting an important workshop, the theoretical part and the practical part. In the first part you will tell your audience what you are going to do, you will tell everything about your subject and why it's so important to you. During the practical part you will give them an assignment. Do they have to work together, do they have to answer questions, create something? The possibilities are endless in this part of the workshop! A few examples of tools that can help you by hosting a workshop are:

www.mentimeter.com: With this tool you can make word clouds, polls, etc.

www.padlet.com: Almost the same as mentimeter but with this tool you can create an entire mood board!

Prepare this workshop together with your mentor. Try to come with a plan for your workshop.

Important details:

- Set a date and invite your colleagues or other interns
- The workshop has to take about twenty minutes
- What is the subject of the workshop?
- What is your goal?
- What assignment do they have to do?
- Do you need some (technical) tools?
- How do you arrange the seats? Do they sit in groups? Do they sit in pairs? Etc.

Prepare a few questions for the feedback session at the end of your workshop, tell them beforehand so that they can keep those questions in their mind while following the workshop.

Giving a workshop is a great way to develop your soft skills, but in case it is not possible to organize a workshop in your workplace, don't worry! You can always pick one of the other assignments, just see what is possible for you.

Reflect this assignment with your mentor. You can use the questions listed below:

- ❖ Describe the things that went well. Also ask what exactly went well in this situation.
- ❖ Can you describe things that went not as well, and why did they not go as planned?
- ❖ Describe a positive aspect on how you worked on the presentation.
- ❖ What did you do to work your way towards your goal?
- ❖ Are there things you could do different the next time? And what are these things?
- ❖ Who or what did you help to reach your goal?

The soft skills you will use in this assignment are:

Presenting information, Communication, Leadership, Feedback



Assignment 5 | Negotiation on the work floor

You have been working for a little while in this company, take a moment to reflect! You already learned so much, but what exactly did you learn?

Today we are working on the next task! We are going to learn how to negotiate with your colleagues. Take a moment to think do you already have some experience with negotiation? Maybe in your private life? It can be as small as negotiating with your parents about going to that fun party and doing your homework another time! In the business life you need to negotiate to come not only closer to each other, but also to find certain midways in a situation.

Your assignment is to negotiate with your supervisor.

Try to find a situation where you made a double appointment, for example you must go to the doctor or you have to work on your school assignments during working time. How can you compensate for these situations, when will you fill these hours in another time?

A professional attitude gives more freedom. Be polite, respectful and smart about how you ask these questions.

Reflect this assignment with your mentor. You can use the questions listed below:

- ❖ Describe the things that went well. Also ask what exactly went well in this situation.
- ❖ Can you describe things that went not as well, and why did they not go as planned?
- ❖ Describe a positive aspect on how you worked on the presentation.
- ❖ What did you do to work your way towards your goal?
- ❖ Are there things you could do different the next time? And what are these things?
- ❖ Who or what did you help to reach your goal?

The soft skills you will use in this assignment are:

Communication, Negotiation



Assignment 6 | Student's improvement

Are you already motivated to work on your soft skills after reading these assignments? What do you think about developing your soft skills in this particular way and how are the conversations with your mentor? Take a moment to reflect on these topics, maybe you can write them down to have a clear vision of what you've learned or what you still want to learn.

We will work with this training guide through the whole of Europe, many European students will develop their soft skills during their internship. Is there a way you can help us improve our training guide? Maybe after your journey of developing these soft skills you know a few ways to develop them as well.

In this assignment we ask you to give a similar situation where you were working on the development of your soft skills.

- ❖ Can you describe the situation?
- ❖ How did you prepare for this situation?
- ❖ Did you get any help from a mentor?
- ❖ Which soft skills did you develop during this assignment?
- ❖ Did you speak with your mentor about this assignment afterwards?
- ❖ How did you think you can improve on this assignment the next time?

The soft skills you will use in this assignment are:

Communication, Leadership, Feedback, Creativity



Assignment 7 | Show your digital skills

You have probably spent some time now in the company and have already developed some of your soft skills. It's time then to show your colleagues what you have learned and also showcase your digital skills.

This task will help you reflect on the things you have learned until now but will also enhance your creativity. You are still a student and you probably are active in social media. After all, your generation is proficient with digital means of communication.

Your task therefore is to create a post in social media! Firstly, think of one of the previous assignments, which you think had the most effect on you. Which assignment should be communicated to your fellow students? Which soft skill did you develop during this assignment?

After you have answered the above questions, it's time to choose the social media you will use. You could make a short video and post it on TikTok, or you could make a post on Facebook. If you have taken photos during the previous assignments, you could also make a post on Instagram!

Think what should be presented in the post. What made an impression on you? Guide other students on how to implement the same activity in their internship. Finally, make the post public and share it with your friends and colleagues.

Important details:

- If you mention the company name or the name of other employees, you should have their permission first.
- The same applies for pictures, you should have a permission before posting pictures of other people.
- A post in social media will be visible to many people and for a long time, so be careful with what you post. Your future employers may see it!

Reflect this assignment with your mentor. You can use the questions listed below:

- ❖ Describe the things that went well. Also ask what exactly went well in this situation.
- ❖ Can you describe things that went not as well, and why did they not go as planned?
- ❖ Describe a positive aspect on how you worked on the presentation.
- ❖ What did you do to work your way towards your goal?
- ❖ Are there things you could do different the next time? And what are these things?
- ❖ Who or what did you help to reach your goal?

The soft skills you will use in this assignment are:

Self-awareness, Creativity, Presenting information, Communication



Assignment 8 | Become a Creator

Everyone has their unique potential, which can also be developed during the internship. Employees who are creative and able to meet new tasks are increasingly valued. The proposed task aims to help you discover your creative potentials and question them in action.

The goal is to prepare a plan on how you can improve creativity during apprenticeship. Filling in the following questionnaire will guide you on your way:

My plan to become more creative person

What can you do to become more creative person? Describe your ideas.

.....

Describe three tasks (actions) which you can realize to become more creative.

1.

2.

3.

Decide which is the most important for you. Indicate one.

.....

Indicate one activity which you can realize today to become more creative person. (during apprenticeship)

.....

.....

Present the task to your supervisor/mentor and decide how the task can be important for the enterprise and how you can realize the assignment.

Questions to discuss with your mentor and/or supervisor:

- ❖ What is your potential?
- ❖ How can you act creatively?
- ❖ How does it change the situation in the enterprise?

The soft skills you will use in this assignment are:

Creativity, Decision making, Presenting information, Self-awareness



Assignment 9 | Become a Leader!

You have been working on the company for some time now, and your boss has asked you to be the leader for a small project. You have a few people under your supervision and an upcoming gathering to meet them all and to start thinking about ideas for the project.

Your assignment is to prepare for different situations that your new co-workers may cause, such as: a person who has more experience and is uncomfortable working under your guidelines; a newcomer that does not know how things work yet, etc.

Make a list of three different possible circumstances that may come up in that gathering (try to be creative!) and how you would try to overcome them. You can ask your colleagues for personal examples that may help you and their collaboration to come up with ideas that will not end in an argument at the end of the meeting.

Prepare these three examples by expecting the worst scenario case imaginable and come up with good solutions that will astonish everyone!

This assignment has three learning objectives; you will get to know your colleagues and their work experiences, you will work in cooperation to come up with creative ideas and you will learn to be prepared for all adversity that may come. Along the way you can also work on the development of your soft skills.

Reflect this assignment with your mentor. You can use the questions listed below:

- ❖ Describe the things that went well. Also ask what exactly went well in this situation.
- ❖ Can you describe things that went not as well, and why did they not go as planned?
- ❖ Describe a positive aspect on how you worked on the presentation.
- ❖ What did you do to work your way towards your goal?
- ❖ Are there things you could do different the next time? And what are these things?
- ❖ Who or what did you helped to reach your goal?

The soft skills you will use in this assignment are:

Communication, Feedback, Leadership, Creativity



Assignment 10 | Time to play a game

So, now that you have started to get used to the working environment and had a chance to get to know your colleagues better, it is time to organize a game.

This task will help you learn about the importance of time and why it is important to manage it. But do all people experience time the same? Will people use time differently? In the world of work, you need to understand that time is limited, so you need to make the most out of it!

This assignment is easy. You need to gather with your fellow colleagues and organize a mini game.

Tell everyone to close their eyes and open them again after exactly 1 minute.

As you will notice, not everyone opened their eyes at the same time. But why is this happening?

Next step it to start a conversation with your colleagues. Ask them questions like: Why didn't everyone open their eyes at the same time? Why we perceive time differently? Have you noticed that sometimes tasks take forever to complete, while we complete others in no time?

For better results, you could record the answers in a piece of paper, so you can also discuss them with your mentor.

Reflect the assignment with your mentor. You can use the questions listed below:

- ❖ Did you enjoy the game? Did the other participants enjoy the game?
- ❖ What did you learn from this game?
- ❖ Are people more motivated to participate when they play games?
- ❖ Which other game could you organize on time management?

The soft skills you will use in this assignment are:

Time-management, Communication, Feedback



Pit

Assignment 11 | Unforeseen changes

For this assignment you are going to think and reflect on the way you would handle unforeseen changes. In order to do so, try to imagine this scenario:

“You have recently started to work for a new company. You’ve only been there for half a year now but you have learnt a lot from your colleagues and supervisors. You have a nice working environment and you all work as a team. However, the company needs to do a re-organization of the human resources. You know you won’t lose your job, but you are probably going to work in another department with different managers/supervisors and colleagues, so most of your team members will be new, and the kind of tasks you will be doing are probably about to change. You feel you were learning a lot and that you still had a lot to learn from that department, but the change is very likely to happen.”

If this scenario actually happened:

- What would your reaction be?
- What questions would you have?
- What would your internal dialogue be?
- Would you find yourself without energy or motivation?
- Think also of the positive aspects of this change.

Reflect this assignment with your mentor. You can use the questions listed below:

- ❖ Describe the things that went well. Also ask what exactly went well in this situation.
- ❖ Do you like changes? Or are you a person that when he/she feels comfortable prefers to keep it that way?
- ❖ Describe a positive aspect you found about this change.
- ❖ Were you positive or negative about this change?
- ❖ Describe your internal thoughts.
- ❖ Do you think you are a person who adapts easily to new situations?

The soft skills you will use in this assignment are:

Communication, Adaptability to change, Willingness for personal development, Confidence, Motivation



Assignment 12 | Let's motivate together!

In this assignment we think and reflect about the topic of motivation. Imagine the following scenario:

“You are working for a company where the majority of your colleagues are rather independent at the workplace. Your managers feel that lately, they haven't been as productive as before and would like the employees to start working in small teams (5 people) to improve the working methods and see if the productivity arises again. You and your team are having your first meeting to talk about these changes.

This is a new situation for everyone and some of the team members are not happy about this decision. They are used to doing their work without following direct instructions from another colleague or without having to delegate work in others or cooperate. However, you are willing to make this work.”

- You've work in teams before so you have some knowledge on how to make this work, and you have been given some advice in the past, would you take the lead?
- How would you motivate the rest of the team members?
- How would you make them understand the benefits of cooperating?
- What would the good/bad sides of taking the lead?

Reflect this assignment with your mentor. You can use the questions listed below:

- ❖ Describe the things that went well. Also ask what exactly went well in this situation.
- ❖ Describe the things that did not go that well. Why do you think this happened?
- ❖ Describe the benefits of working in teams.
- ❖ Can you think of different ways of motivating team members and motivating yourself?
- ❖ Do you feel you have motivation skills?

The soft skills you will use in this assignment are:

Communication, Adaptability to change, Motivation, Leadership, Confidence, Problem solving



KSPMC

Assignment 13 | Game “Holding together”

Time: 20-30 minutes.

Number of Participants: Five and more people (better more people).

Rules: This game can be played by one team, but it is more interesting if several teams play. Need to divide people into teams of 5-6 people. Then bind group members together with tape or band so they would be united in their movements. Their goal is to move, as quick as possible, from Point A to Point B. They can be given 2 minutes to strategize before they begin the game. Then let the teams run, and measure the time taken for the groups to reach point B. When all teams reach the finish point and there will be a clear finishing time, give them an opportunity to re-strategize their next attempt in order to beat their previous score. Repeat this process as many times as you’d like until the teams achieve their best times!

Tools needed: cling tape, film or rope.

After this game, please, reflect the assignment with your mentor. You can use the questions listed below:

- ❖ Did you enjoy the game? Did the other participants enjoy the game?
- ❖ What are the main lessons you have learned from this game?
- ❖ Do you consider your team was effective? Why do you think so?
- ❖ Do you consider yourself a good team player? Why do you think so?
- ❖ What was your contribution in to the teamwork?
- ❖ What was your role in the team? Maybe you were the leader of this team?
- ❖ Which of your characteristics make you a better team member? Why?
- ❖ Are there things you could do different the next time? And what are these things?

The soft skills you will use in this assignment are:

Teamwork, Communication, Leadership, Problem solving.



Assignment 14 | Game “Two sides of the same coin”

Time: 30 - 40 minutes.

Number of Participants: two or more persons.

Rules: The goal of this game is to look at the situation from two sides - negative and positive. Team of 2 or more come together and discuss a situation. For instance, if there are two members, Partner A shares negative experience that happened in their professional life with Partner B. It can be professional mistakes, failures, conflicts with colleagues, unsuccessful decision, and so on, but mandatorily a true incident while working for this company. Then Partner A discusses the same memory again, but this time focusing on the bright side with positive takeaways. Partner A can ask questions that clarify the situation, and Partner B tries to explain all the circumstances necessary to understand the situation. The Partner A's aim is to find positive sides in this situation and to discuss possible solutions. Afterward, they switch roles. This short yet effective activity helps team members see the different perspectives in things and people and challenges the preconceived notions.

After this game, please, reflect the assignment with your mentor. You can use the questions listed below:

- ❖ Did you enjoy the game? Did the other participants enjoy the game?
- ❖ What are the main lessons you have learned during this game?
- ❖ Are there things you could do different next time? Explain.

The soft skills you will use in this assignment are:

Communication, Teamwork, Problem solving, Confidence.



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Assignment 15 | Reorganize your daily routine

During your time in the company, you probably have realized that you have acquired a daily routine. Every day, there are some task that repeat themselves, like for example making a coffee, or organizing your desk or making photocopies for colleagues. Have you ever thought about how much time these tasks take you to do them? Let's find out!

To complete this assignment, you firstly need to map all the activities that you do every day, from small to bigger ones. Then, you need to time them. To do so, you need to time each one of these task for at least two days and then note down the average time. For example, the first day, it took you 5 minutes to make an espresso coffee while the second day you decided to drink a cappuccino, so it took you 7 minutes. Note down that the average time it takes you to prepare your coffee is 6 minutes.

Now that you have a list of tasks and the time it takes you to complete them, it's time to reflect whether you can do them more quickly! For the next day's try to reduce the time to complete each task by 1 minute. Think, what will help you reduce the time? Maybe combine some task together? Maybe, complete some more difficult tasks in the morning, where you are less tired?

Reflect on the assignment with your mentor. You can use the questions listed below:

- ❖ Did planning and keeping notes about your schedule help with your time management skills?
- ❖ What time of the day do you feel more able to complete a task and why?
- ❖ How did this assignment change your habits and your everyday routine for the better?
- ❖ What changes did you notice on your performance?

The soft skills you will use in this assignment are:

Time management, Proactiveness, Adaptability to change, Willingness for personal development, Self-motivation



Assignment 16 | Pizza or Burger?

You have now been working for the company for some time and you have gotten to know your colleagues. Don't you think its time to get to know them better?

Your task is to organise a lunch break and decide on the menu that you are going to order!

Firstly, you need to divide your colleagues into two teams and give each team one possible menu to order, either pizza or burgers (or any other choice you may come up with). Now ask each team to try to convince the other team, to order from their menu. During the negotiation procedure, each team should argument on why they should choose their menu and not the other.

Try to find a solution, so that everyone orders something they fancy from the menu chosen at the end, and no one is left hungry.

During the assignment, try to pay attention to all arguments used, so you realise what works and what not. If someone is left unhappy by the menu chosen, try to make him see the positive side and convince him/her to order something that will satisfy him/her.

- ❖ Reflect on the assignment with your mentor. You can use the questions listed below:
- ❖ How did you prepare for the assignment?
- ❖ Did you reach a compromise?
- ❖ Wat it easy to persuade someone?
- ❖ How much did the negotiations between each team affect you?
- ❖ How did you find a balance in the negotiation process?

The soft skills you will use in this assignment are:

Communication, feedback, negotiation, self-awareness



Friesland College

Assignment 17 | Teamwork exercise

This next assignment is about teambuilding and will help you to get a better view of where you stand in a group. Especially in a team where teamwork is fundamental. In this exercise you start off by standing in a group and letting somebody tell the following case:

“You guys have won a prize you’re going on a trip with this group. It’s a trip with an Airballoon. Together are all sitting in the basket of the balloon and flying high over the ocean, then something happens.... The balloon tears apart, there is no way of fixing it and the balloon is starting to descend. With this tear you can still go a long way but you need to lose weight. According to the map an uninhabited island is not far ahead. Half an hour should be maintainable. You guys are deciding as an group to throw as much stuff overboard as possible. So the opportunity to reach the island gets bigger. The luggage is pretty heavy and is not easy to throw over board. It’s also difficult to decide what goes first because you might need it on the uninhabited island. You are considering for yourself what should go over first. And what should stay till the last minute.”

This is your list of materials:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Copper compass | 6. Gun with bullets |
| 2. Can of food | 7. Fire arrow |
| 3. Two person rubber boat | 8. Water barrel |
| 4. Radio transmission equipment | 9. Binoculars |
| 5. Cooking appliance | 10. First aid kit |

After you tell the story, you ask the group to look at the list of materials and create a list for themselves of the most important item to the least important to keep. The number 1 on your list is the thing that goes first, your number 10 goes as last. All off the material weighs the same. What has to go? You can use the template on the next page to create your list.

After everybody filled in their own list, the group has to create a list together and come to a mutual understanding of which items are the most and least important to keep. You can use the template on the next page again to create your group’s list. The goal is to create a list together as a team.

Rules:

- Try to look at the case as logical as possible.
- Consider differences of opinion as useful information that you hadn’t thought of yet.
- You **can’t** vote

Reflect on the assignment with your mentor. You can use the questions listed below:

- ❖ What was your role in this assignment?
- ❖ What would you do different next time?
- ❖ Are you satisfied with the end result and why?

The soft skills you will use in this assignment are:

Teamwork, Communication, Leadership, Negotiation, Decision making.



Assignment 17 | Template

This is the template every person in the group has to fill in.

Just in case we have made the list on this sheet again so you don't have to look at the other sheet all the time. Remember the order of this list isn't the "right" order.

Every item is the same weight. The time you get to fill in this list should be 10-15 minutes. When everybody is done go to the next sheet.

This is your list of materials:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Copper compass | 6. Gun with bullets |
| 2. Can of food | 7. Fire arrow |
| 3. Two person rubber boat | 8. Water barrel |
| 4. Radio transmission equipment | 9. Binoculars |
| 5. Cooking appliance | 10. First aid kit |

Your list	The groups list
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.
6.	6.
7.	7.
8.	8.
9.	9.
10.	10.



Assignment 18 | Self-confidence booster

This assignment is about boosting your self-confidence. During this assignment the aim is to make a collage of what makes you happy. By completing this assignment you will get a better idea of what you already own and why you should be happy with that. You can make this collage online using your phone or laptop. But you can also choose to make it on paper. This can be done with magazines, scissors, glue, etc. All supplies are ready to be used.

If you choose to make the collage online, you can do this using Word or a collage making application. To make your collage personal, you can choose to add some pictures of: yourself, your friends, your pet, your favorite food, your favorite sports, etc.

When you have finished your collage you have to present this to the rest of the group. A lot of people are scared to give a presentation. To boost your confidence during your presentation, it's wise to be prepared. This way you know what to expect and you will have a better feeling about giving your presentation.

Reflect on the assignment with your mentor. You can use the questions listed below:

- ❖ What did you realize by making the collage?
- ❖ Has making and presenting the collage help boost your self-confidence?
- ❖ What would you do different next time?
- ❖ Are you satisfied with the end result and why?
- ❖ Did you get any feedback from the rest of the group after presenting? If so, what do you think of the feedback?

The soft skills you will use in this assignment are:

Presenting information, Feedback, Creativity.



Assignment 19 | Mastering and developing soft skills

This assignment is intended to find out which soft skills you already have and which soft skills you still want to work on. It is important to know which soft skills you possess in order to make optimal use of them. It is also important to know which soft skills you would like to have, but you have not become proficient in yet. This way you know what you can work on and you can decide how you want to work on it.

Assignment

The assignment is divided into 2 parts.

The first part is to make an overview of the soft skills of your choice. The second part is to work out and explain why you have chosen these soft skills.

Part 1:

First, you choose a picture of yourself that you are proud of, put this picture in the middle of a piece of paper. Then you will think about which soft skills you have already developed well. These soft skills you put close to the picture of yourself in the middle. When you have put all these soft skills in, you continue with the soft skills you want to learn, you put these soft skills further away from yourself. This way, when it is done, you have a nice overview of the soft skills and how far they are from you.

Part 2:

After working out the overview, you go deeper into the soft skills. You will work out 2 of the soft skills that you put close to you. You can do this by answering the next questions on paper:

- Why do I think that I already developed this soft skill?
- How did I get good at this soft skill?
- Do I make much use of this soft skill?

Then you do the same but with 3 soft skills that you still want to work on. This can be done with the help of questions like:

- Why would I still like to work on this soft skill?
- How do I want to work on this soft skill?
- Do I know someone who already has this soft skill?

Reflect on the assignment with your mentor. You can use the questions listed below:

- ❖ What did you realize by making this overview of soft skills?
- ❖ Did making this overview boost your confidence?
- ❖ Do you feel like you learned new things about yourself?
- ❖ Are you satisfied with the end result and why?

The soft skills you will use in this assignment are:

Confidence, Creativity, Self-awareness.



AHE

Assignment 20 | Conflict resolution

Conflicts are inevitable, especially when you surround yourself with people and spend most of your day with them, such as in an internship. Learning to deal with them in a healthy way is an important soft skill. We encourage you to carry out the following exercise in brainstorming. This exercise will effectively help you to pay attention to the causes of conflicts, but also help you to solve them. The aim of this exercise is to learn more about conflict resolution skills, it will help you to identify the causes of conflicts, understand more about the role of conflict in society and teach you about different ways to resolve conflicts and the differences between them.

Estimated time: 40 minutes.

Preparation: Before starting the task, prepare A4 sheets of paper and pens.

If necessary - explain to participants the rules of brainstorming - or talk about it in advance - ask them to prepare for this exercise.

Brainstorming in this exercise will look at the causes of conflicts that may arise during work or that arise frequently.

Starting the exercise, the group is asked to sit down and form a circle. After this you introduce a brainstorming task.

Part I: You ask the participants about:

- Where do conflicts come from;
- Examples of conflict resolution methods;
- Methods of dispute resolution in the workplace.

Participants write down the proposed conflict resolution methods on a flipchart.

For example, these could be: asking a colleague for help, asking a supervisor for a resolution, etc. Trainer can deepen the discussion by asking what is the path to finding a solution to the dispute looks like in each case, which methods are more brutal and which are the most frequently used.

Participants can work out the **advantages and disadvantages** of each of these methods in smaller groups or in pairs. It is important to discuss their references in the forum.

Part II: Participants provide examples of conflicts they know from studies or previous practice and how they were resolved. Together, they develop methods of how these situations could be resolved in a mutually beneficial way.

Reflect on the assignment with your mentor. You can use the questions listed below:

- ❖ What did this exercise teach me?
- ❖ How do I perceive the conflict now?
- ❖ What I want to learn more about conflict resolution in practice?

The soft skills you will use in this assignment are:

Communication, Conflict resolution, Problem solving, Confidence.



Assignment 21 | Project of self-development

This assignment focusses on self-development and is divided in two parts. In the first part of the assignment you will reflect on the concept of self-development by answering a few questions. In the second part you will illustrate your self-development by making a collage about how you see your personal development in the next three years. Afterwards you will reflect together with your natural mentor.

Part 1 - Reflections

Take a moment and write down your answers to the following questions, afterwards you can share your answers with your co-workers or present your reflection in the group.:

- What is the meaning of self-development for you?
- What is for you the most important in self-development? Write down all factors?
- What have you done for your own development during last year? Write down.
- What do you want to do for you self-development during next 6 months?

Part 2 - Invent your future life

For this part of the assignment you will prepare a collage which will illustrate the process of your self-development during next 3 years. You can use pictures from colored magazines or any other material you see fit. Take your time during this creative process. When you have made your collage, look at the scheme think about realization of your plans. Choose one thing and illustrate its realization in details.

Reflect on the assignment with your mentor. You can use the questions listed below:

- ❖ What is important for you?
- ❖ What conditions (factors) can motivate you to realization?
- ❖ What is useful in a form of project for your future realization?
- ❖ How your plan links up with current work placements. How you can develop yourself in the course of apprenticeship taking into account your development plans?

The soft skills you will use in this assignment are:

Motivation, Creativity, Time management, Confidence, Willingness for personal development.



Finishing apprenticeship assignments

Congratulations, you made it! We hope this guide, together with the guidance of your mentor, helped you on developing your soft skills even more!



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