Mindset Building

Training Modules: Pedagogy And Psychology For Career Counselling

Training of the future Career Advisers including antifragility, mindset building, ikigai, career counselling tips and pedagogical approaches to career guidance.

Part 2

Duration and Contact Hours

2 ECTS

Three half-day meetings á 3 hours and independent work 35 hours. Peer exercises 10 hours.

Introduction

Mindset building:

Navigating employability in a V.U.C.A landscape

Objective: Equip career guidance practitioners with the skills and strategies needed to enhance their clients' employability in a Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous (V.U.C.A) world.

Competence Goals

Objectives for this module:

- To teach students to understand the VUCA landscape
- To teach students to understand how VUCA underpins career guidance coaching
- To teach students to identify skills are and how to acquire these skills
- To teach students to be able to show evidence of the skills they have acquired

Learning outcomes

- Knowledge of the VUCA landscape
- How to apply elements of the VUCA theory to help shape their career flexibility and adaptability.

Session 1:

Understanding the V.U.C.A landscape.

Objective: Provide an overview of the V.U.C.A concept and its implications for employability.

Introduction to V.U.C.A world:

Definition of V.U.C.A

V.U.C.A. stands for **V**olatility, **U**ncertainty, **C**omplexity, and **A**mbiguity. It is an acronym that originated in the military and has been widely adopted in the business world to describe the unpredictable and rapidly changing nature of the modern environment. Each component of V.U.C.A. represents a different aspect of the challenges organizations and individuals face:

- **Volatility:** Refers to the speed and nature of change. In a volatile environment, conditions and situations can change rapidly and unpredictably.

- **Uncertainty**: Describes the lack of predictability and the presence of unknown factors. In uncertain situations, it's difficult to anticipate outcomes or events.

- **Complexity**: Signifies the intricate and interconnected nature of problems. Complex situations involve multiple factors and relationships that can be challenging to understand and navigate.

- **Ambiguity**: Refers to a lack of clarity or the existence of multiple interpretations. Ambiguous situations make it hard to make sense of information and can lead to confusion.
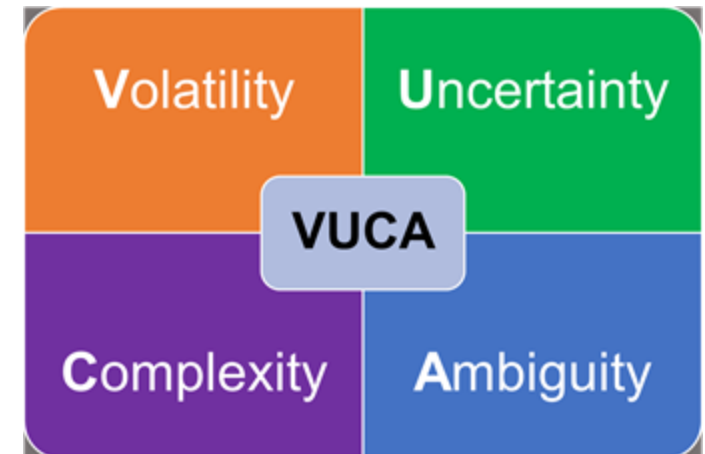
Real-world examples illustrating V.U.C.A scenarios.

These examples highlight how V.U.C.A. is a pervasive and dynamic aspect of the modern world, affecting various aspects of life, business, and society.

	Examples
Technological disruption	The rapid advancement of automation and artificial intelligence (AI) in manufacturing has led to volatility in job roles. Traditional manufacturing jobs are being automated, creating uncertainty for workers and requiring them to acquire new skills to stay employable.
Global economic changes	The 2008 financial crisis and its global repercussions exemplify volatility, uncertainty, and complexity. The crisis led to economic downturns, job losses, and a complex web of interconnected financial issues, affecting various industries worldwide.
Pandemic response	The COVID-19 pandemic introduced extreme levels of volatility and uncertainty globally. The sudden onset of the pandemic led to rapid changes in business operations, remote work becoming the norm, and disruptions in supply chains, illustrating the complex and ambiguous nature of navigating a global health crisis.
Political instability	Political upheavals, such as Brexit, have introduced uncertainty in various sectors. Businesses faced ambiguity about trade regulations, market access, and currency fluctuations, making strategic planning challenging.
Start-up ecosystem	The startup environment is inherently volatile and uncertain. Startups often operate in rapidly changing markets with ambiguous futures. They face challenges like securing funding, navigating regulatory landscapes, and responding to dynamic consumer preferences.
Climate change impact	The increasing unpredictability of weather patterns and the rise in natural disasters due to climate change create volatility. Industries such as agriculture, insurance, and real estate face uncertainty as they grapple with the evolving and unpredictable impacts of climate change.
Cybersecurity threats	The constantly evolving landscape of cybersecurity presents a V.U.C.A. scenario. Organizations deal with the volatility of new cyber threats, the uncertainty of potential vulnerabilities, the complexity of securing diverse systems, and the ambiguity surrounding the origin and intent of cyberattacks.
Trade wars	Trade tensions between major economies, such as the U.S.-China trade war, introduce uncertainty for businesses relying on global supply chains. Fluctuating tariffs and changing trade policies create a complex and ambiguous environment for strategic decision-making.

The impact of V.U.C.A on the job market is significant

V.U.C.A. has transformed the job market, requiring individuals to develop a set of skills and attitudes that enable them to thrive in an environment characterized by constant change and unpredictability.

Here are some keyways it affects employment and careers:

- **Job insecurity**: Rapid changes in technology, markets, and global conditions can lead to job instability. Traditional job roles may become obsolete, and workers may need to adapt quickly to new demands.

- **Demand for adaptability**: V.U.C.A. requires individuals to be flexible and adaptable. Employers seek candidates who can learn quickly, embrace change, and navigate uncertainty effectively.

- **Skills evolution**: The skills required in the job market can change rapidly. Continuous learning and skill development are crucial for staying relevant and competitive in V.U.C.A. environments.

- **Entrepreneurial mindset**: Individuals need to adopt an entrepreneurial mindset, taking initiative and being proactive in identifying opportunities and solving problems.

- **Globalization impact**: V.U.C.A. is often amplified by global factors. Economic shifts, geopolitical events, and pandemics can have far-reaching effects on the job market.

- **Emphasis on soft skills**: Communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and emotional intelligence become increasingly important in navigating the complexities and ambiguities of the modern workplace.

- **Gig economy growth**: The rise of the gig economy is partly a response to the uncertainty and volatility in traditional employment. Individuals may engage in freelance work or short-term contracts to maintain flexibility.

Task 1

On the next diagram tick the boxes corresponding to what you are experiencing personally regarding the VUCA world.
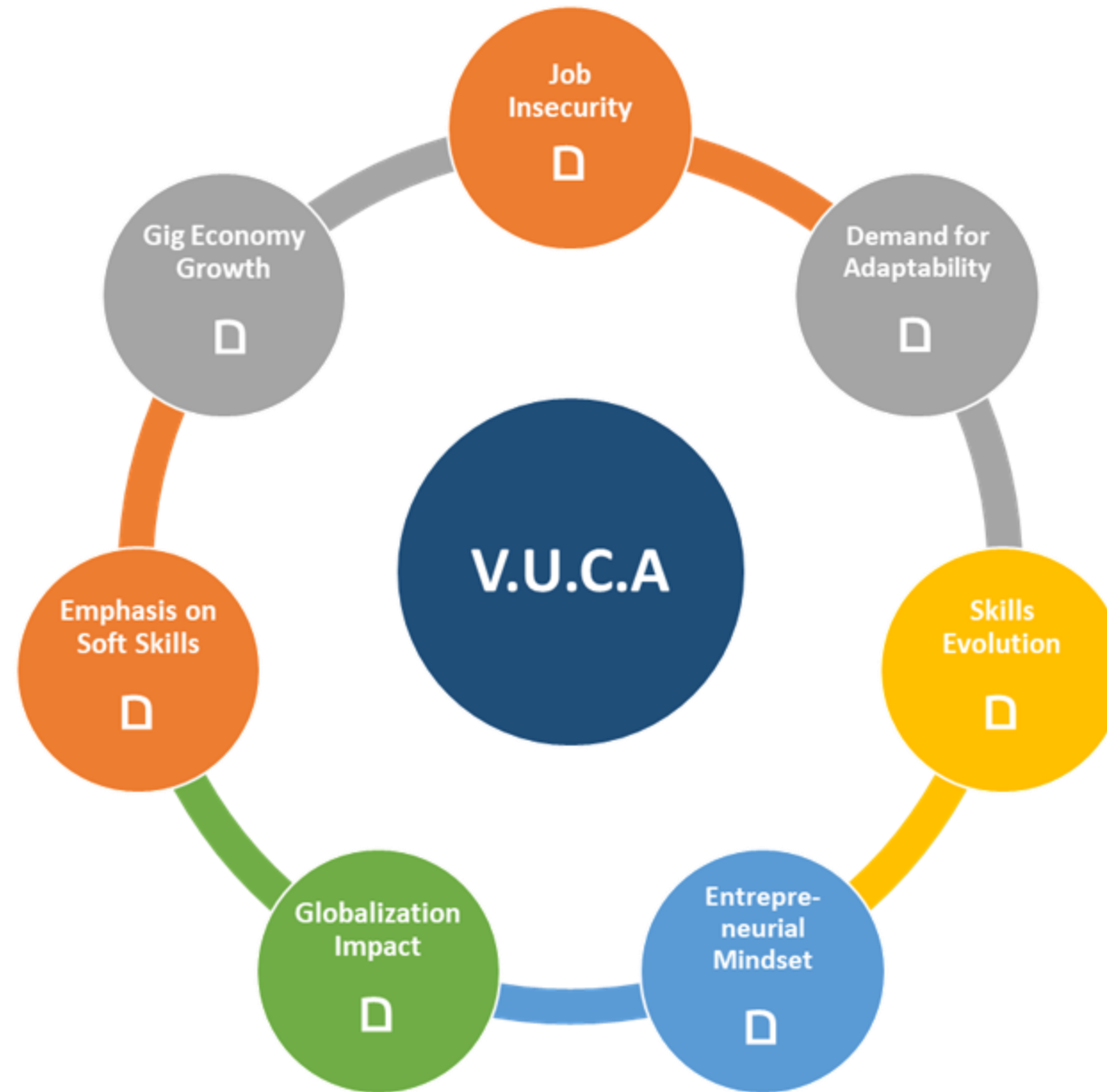
Key components of the best mindset to thrive in a V.U.C.A world.

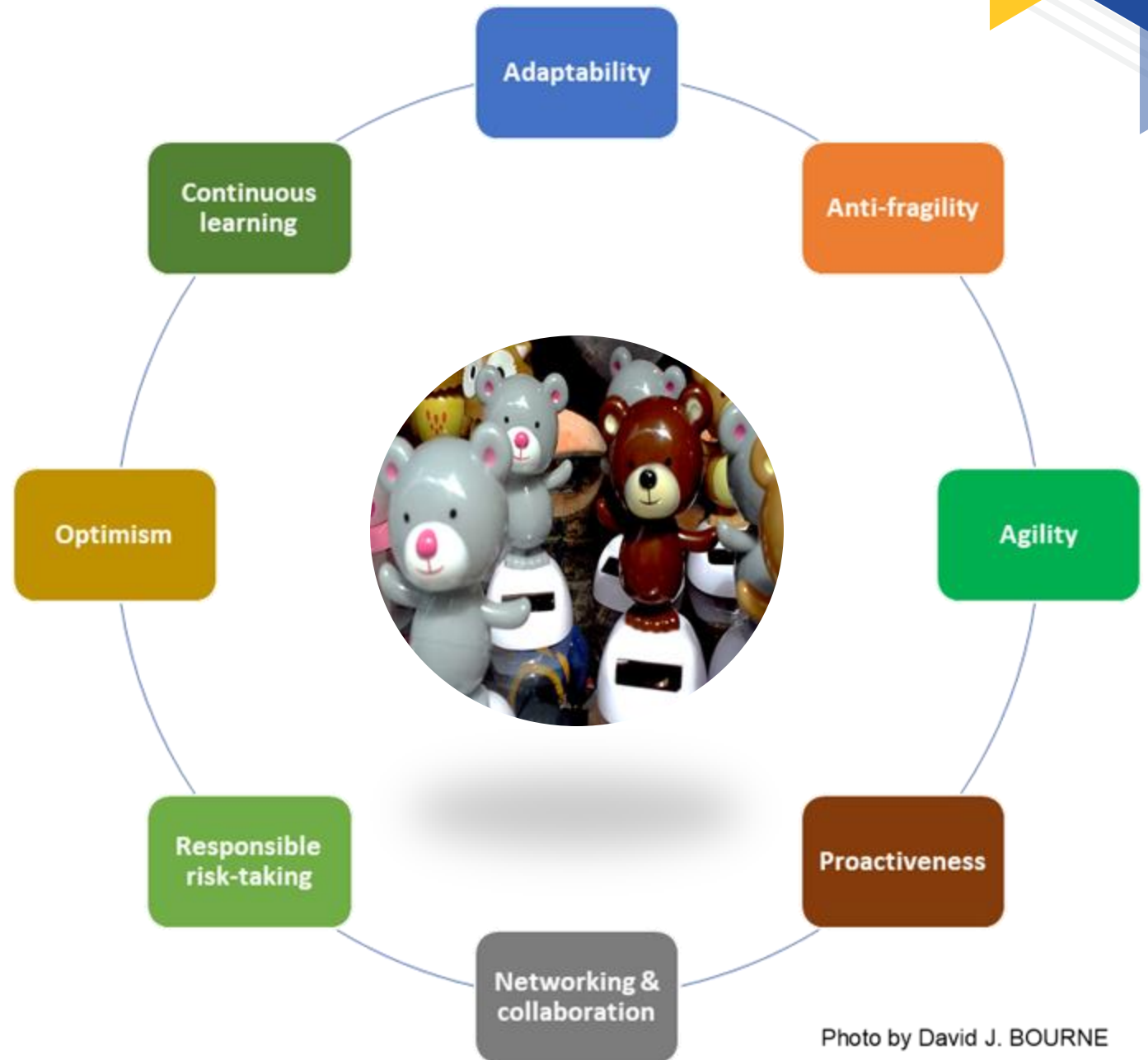By cultivating this mindset individuals can not only survive but thrive in the V.U.C.A. world.

- Adaptability
- Anti-fragility
- Agility
- Proactiveness
- Networking & collaboration
- Responsible risk-taking
- Optimism
- Continuous learning

Photo by David J. BOURNE

Tips to thrive in the V.U.C.A. world.

Adaptability:

- Embrace change as a constant and be willing to adjust strategies, plans, and perspectives accordingly.
- View challenges and disruptions as opportunities for growth and innovation rather than obstacles.

Anti-fragility:

- Develop anti-fragility mindset to navigate setbacks, failures, and uncertainties without losing motivation or confidence.
- Cultivate a positive attitude and the ability to bounce back from adversity with renewed determination.

Continuous Learning:

- Have a growth mindset that values lifelong learning and personal development.
- Stay curious and open-minded, actively seeking new knowledge, skills, and experiences to stay ahead of the curve.

Agility:

- Be agile and adaptable in decision-making, problem-solving, and goal-setting.
- Quickly pivot and adjust strategies in response to changing circumstances or new information.

Tips to thrive in the V.U.C.A. world.

Proactiveness:

- Take initiative and ownership of your career and professional development.
- Anticipate future trends, challenges, and opportunities, and take proactive steps to position yourself for success.

Networking and Collaboration:

- Build strong professional networks and collaborative relationships to leverage diverse perspectives, insights, and opportunities.
- Foster a culture of teamwork and cooperation, recognizing the value of collective intelligence and shared goals.

Responsible Risk-Taking:

- Be willing to take calculated risks and step out of your comfort zone in pursuit of growth and innovation.
- Balance ambition with prudence, considering potential outcomes and consequences before making decisions.

Optimism:

- Maintain a sense of optimism and possibility even in the face of uncertainty and adversity.
- Focus on solutions rather than dwelling on problems, and approach challenges with a mindset of resilience and determination.
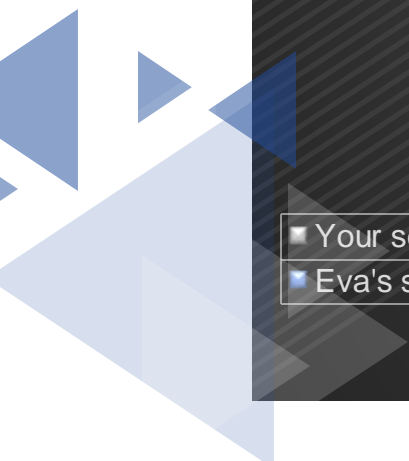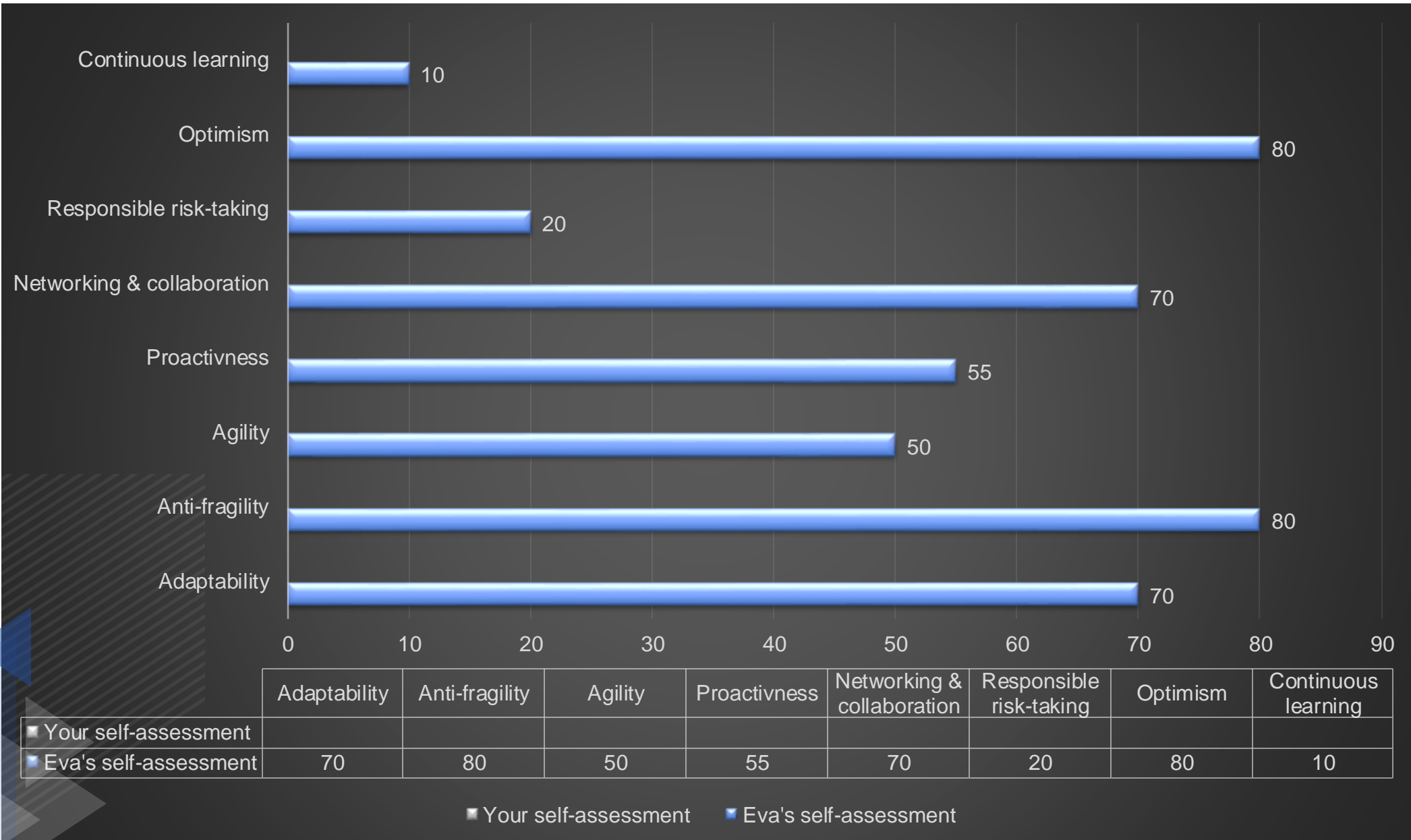
Task 2

A soon-to-be-graduated student, Eva wonders about her integration into the job market.

She self-evaluated her score with regard to the 8 components relating to the VUCA.

What about you ?

- What do you think your own situation is like ?
- Indicate as a percentage each of the 8 scores that currently characterize you.
- What areas of progress do you want to work on?

	Adaptability	Anti-fragility	Agility	Proactivness	Networking & collaboration	Responsible risk-taking	Optimism	Continuous learning
Your self-assessment								
Eva's self-assessment	70	80	50	55	70	20	80	10

Introduction to Mindset Building

Mindset building is a very active process and is influenced by many factors such as age, life experience, education, social status, work experience, access to supports, amenities and general luck.

With regards to careers, mindset building or a adopting a specific mindset can help support and develop a successful career.

In this module we will examine mindsets and explore how we can teach and encourage people to adopt a 'growth mindset' to explore, develop, create and secure career opportunities to help a person carve out a successful career.

Competence goals

After this training, counselors can

- examine the concept of mindset

- explore a fixed mindset vs. a growth mindset

- show how to develop a growth mindset for career success

- examine how adopting growth mindset can help with career development

What is a fixed mindset?

- A *fixed mindset* is the belief that abilities are innate and unchangeable. This perspective leads individuals to view success or failure as a reflection of inherent proficiency, often limiting personal growth.

- Many people would naturally default to a fixed mindset unless they work to build and develop an alternative mindset such as a growth mindset.

- *In the fixed mindset, everything is about the outcome. If you fail—or if you're not the best— it's all been wasted. The growth mindset allows people to value what they're doing regardless of the outcome. They're tackling problems, charting new courses, and working on important issues.*

(Carol Dweck, 2006; Mindset: The New Psychology of Success)

What is Growth mindset?

According to Dweck (2015), "In a growth mindset, people believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work—brains and talent are just the starting point."

This 'growth mindset' can positively influence motivation and achievement.

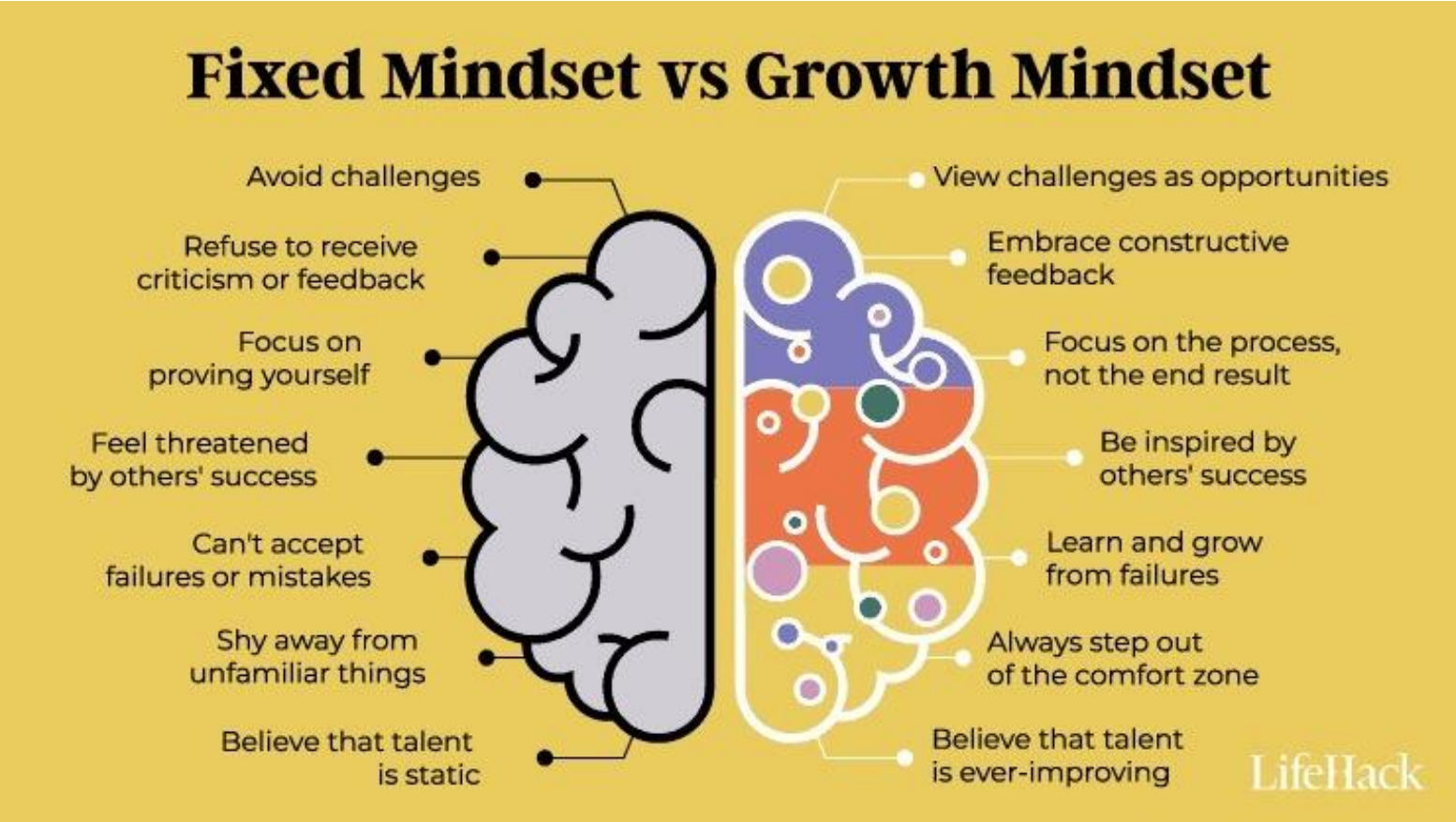A Growth Mindset Drives Motivation and Achievement

I can get smarter → Learning is my goal → I'd spend more time and work harder → Higher Achievement

Effort makes me stronger

Blackwell, Trzesniewski & Dweck (2007) *Child Development*

Fixed Mindset vs. Growth Mindset

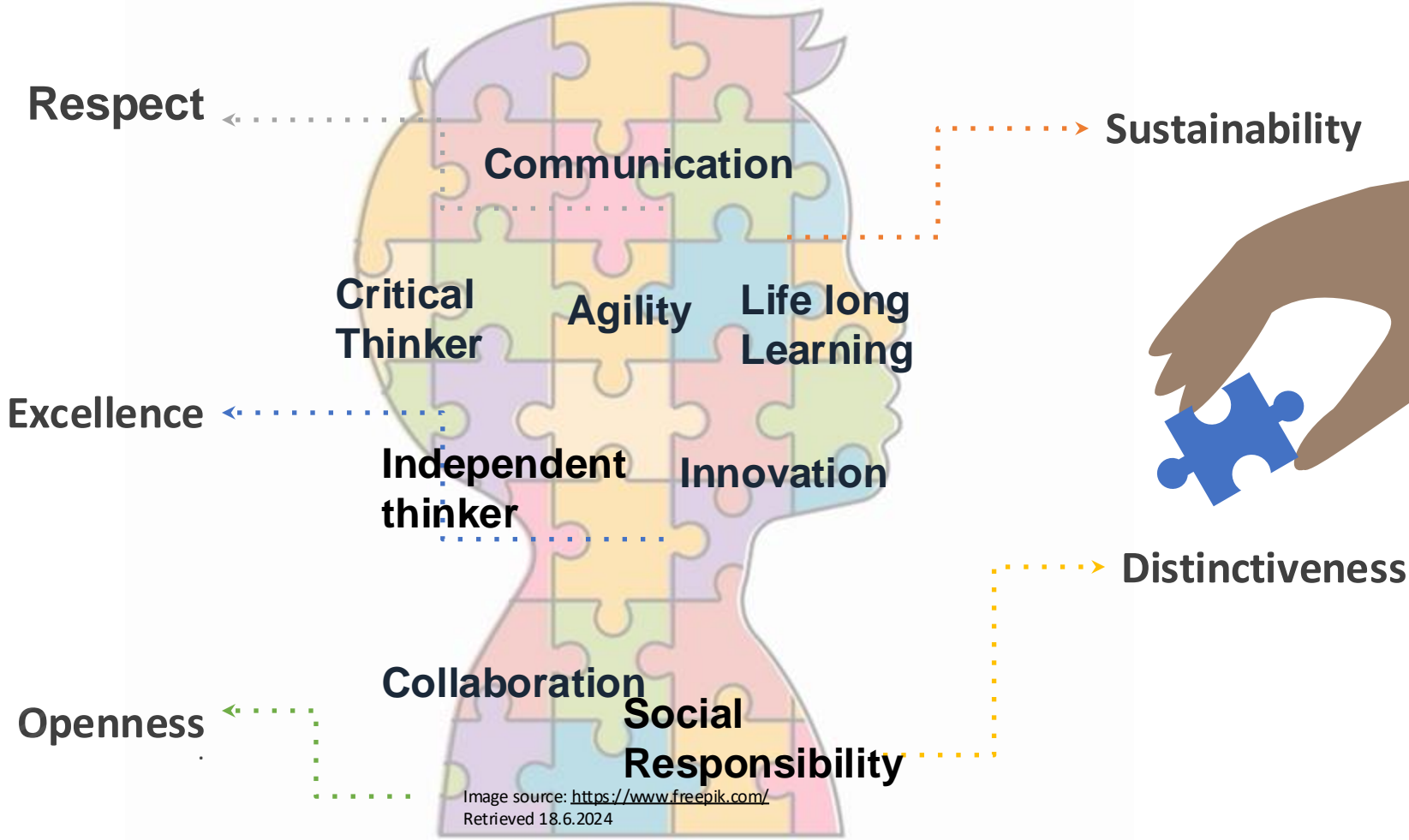Source: https://www.freepik.com/ Retrieved 18.6.2024

- There is no one fixed mindset that can be applied to any situation.

- In order to cope and effectively prepare ourselves for a VUCA world, we need need to adopt a mindset which will allow us to assess our life, our career, identify options and how can we create and leverage opportunities for career success.

- Here is a survey to help you figure out what mindset you have: https://blog.mindsetworks.com/what-s-my-mindset

Growth v's Fixed mindset

Source: lifehack.org Retrieved 18.6.2024

What does A successful mindset look like?

Respect

Communication

Critical Thinker

Agility

Life long Learning

Excellence

Independent thinker

Innovation

Collaboration

Openness

Social Responsibility

Sustainability

Distinctiveness

Image source: https://www.freepik.com/
Retrieved 18.6.2024

Knowledge – Skills – Values - Behaviour

Benefits of a Growth mindset

There are many advantages to adopting a growth mindset:

• A growth mindset will allow you to become more adaptable and more flexible especially after discovering many different pathways to reach the same destination especially after completing some of the tasks

• A growth mindset can teach you alternatives and help you identify your weaknesses and therefore allowing you to adopt coping mechanisms of building on your weaknesses so that in time they become strengths. All of this in turn can help you become more adaptable and encourage an individual to embrace the unknown at work fro example unknown tasks or situations.

• Embracing the unknown and learning new things can allow you to experience and see things from a different perspective and therefore can in some situations allow you to over come previously perceived barriers which in turn increases your motivation.

• Embracing the unknown and working on your weaknesses and also realizing that weaknesses do not have to be an obstacle of a barrier can curate resilience within a person

• Approaching tasks, jobs and your career with an open curious and non-judgmental mindset can allow for better cooperation and collaboration in teams but also at work. This can also encourage people to continually learn and engage in life long learning.

• Approaching anything curiously, with empath in a non-judgemental manner will in turn help to improve a person' mindset because nothing is perceived as a true obstacle and barrier and this will help a person in their career and jobs.

Task 1 for Designing your life

Think of people in the career you think you would like on LinkedIn or through personal connections e.g. family friends or professional connections., people through extracurricular activities

Growth mindset and Design thinking

What is Design thinking?

Design thinking is often proposed as an educative strategy to enhance growth mindset, problem solving, and creativity (Dosi, Clio & Guerci, Eric & Jakieła, Jacek & Świętoniowska, Joanna & Vordou, Eleni & Varadinov, Maria & Vignoli, Matteo & Marques, Gastão & Wójcik, Joanna 2024)

Design principles can be used as educational tools and as part of Career Guidance strategy to enhance and positively influence mindset and subsequently the Career Decision making process.

Source: Dadswell, Kara & Sambol, Stjepan & Yager, Zali & Van Dyke, Nina & Pascoe, Michaela & Dallat, Clare & Brown, Claire & Parker, Alexandra. (2022). Together we grow: Evaluation of a design thinking professional development workshop for outdoor educators indicates improvements in growth mindset. Journal of Adventure Education & Outdoor Learning. 24. 10.1080/14729679.2022.2075412.

Designing your life- tools and resources

In response to the VUCA and BANI world, a different mindest coupled with antifragility such as a growth mindest, can help to reframe life/career transitions as a design thinking challenge in a useful way to help us identify and plan our next careers next steps (Dosi, Clio & Guerci, Eric & Jakieła, Jacek & Świętoniowska, Joanna & Vordou, Eleni & Varadinov, Maria & Vignoli, Matteo & Marques, Gastão & Wójcik, Joanna 2024,) There are many careers tools such as the like human-centered design to navigate career transitions. These tools are based on the book 'Design your life' By Bill Burnett and Dave Evans to help clients articulate their career goals and devise a plan to achieve these plans

Source: Dosi, Clio & Guerci, Eric & Jakieła, Jacek & Świętoniowska, Joanna & Vordou, Eleni & Varadinov, Maria & Vignoli, Matteo & Marques, Gastão & Wójcik, Joanna 2024

Summary of Design thinking methodology

The Hasso-Plattner institute of design at Stanford **D. SCHOOL, (**Hasso plattner institute of design at Stanford University**)** originally proposed a model consisting of five stages for the design thinking process.

These phases are as follows:

1) **Empathize:** What are the so called barriers or obstacles in front of you that may prevent you from achieving your career goals

2) **Define:** what are you trying to achieve in your career or job. Think if a problem statement to articular this

3) **Generate:** Try and think of some solutions or ideas to solve these problems (With or without a career adviser)

4) **Prototype:** Write down or map out the career journey or pathway

5) **Validate** Discuss your solutions or proposed ideas with a variety of specialists e.g. HR specialist, Career advisers, Entrepreneurship adviser to ensure that your idea or pathway is correct and realistic and that you have all of the necessary resources to achieve what you want

Source: An Introduction to Design Thinking PROCESS GUIDE. (2017). Retrieved 19th August, 2024, from https://dschool-old.stanford.edu/sandbox/groups/designresources/wiki/36873/attachments/74b3d/ModeGuideBOOTCAMP2010L.pdf?sessionID=1b6a96f1e2a50a3b1b7c3f09e58c40a062d7d553

Employing a growth mindset through adopting the Design thinking Methodology

- The next five steps employ the design thinking methodology to design your career and in the process change your mindset to help you achieve your career goals.

- This methodology will help you plan out a 'map' to achieve your career goals

- These goals may change over time or various aspects of your goal or career path may change so you may only want to use one of two of the tools at certain times throughout your career

Designing your life
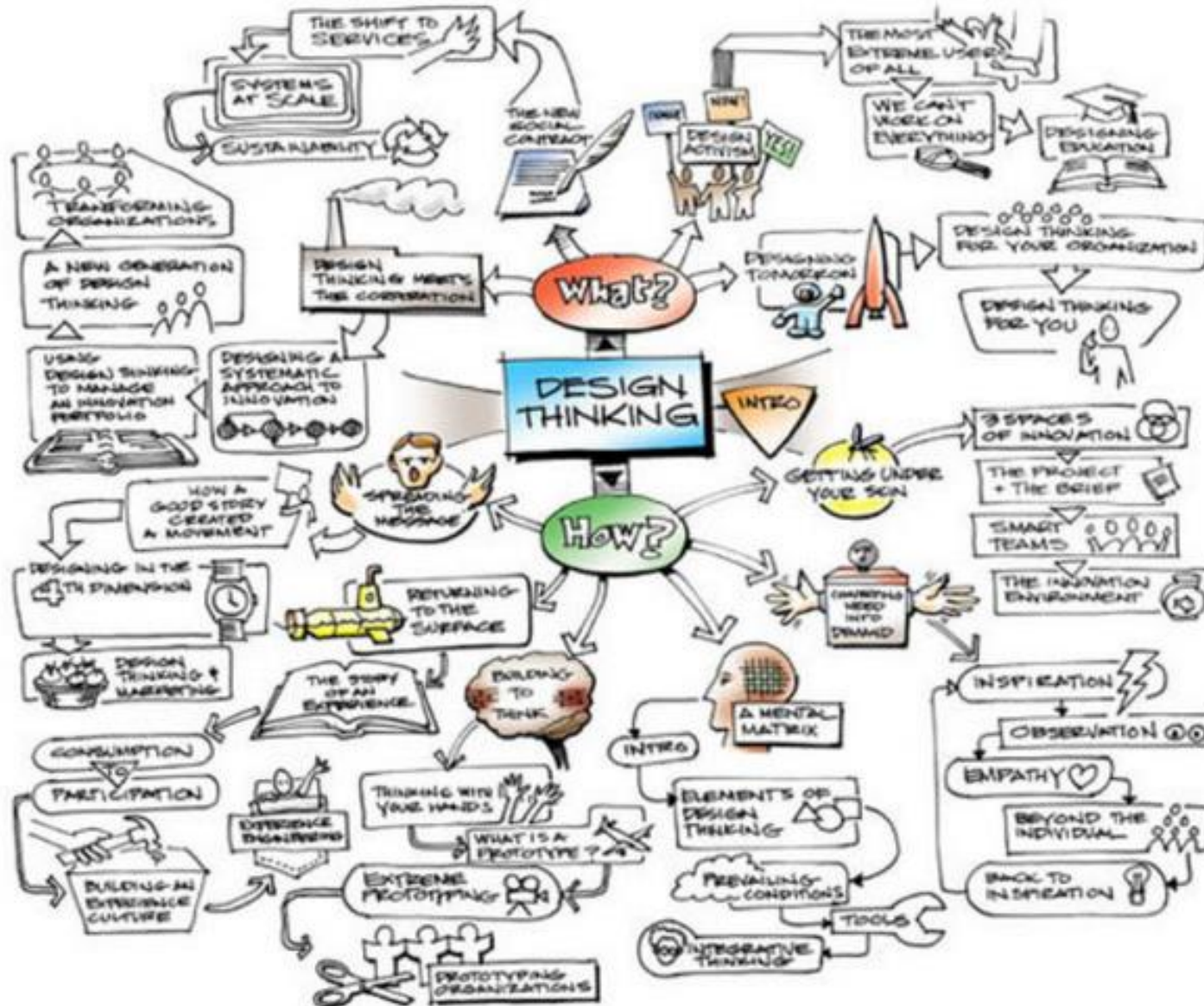
Step 1 - Empathize

- When you are designing anything for example your life or a career or professional goal, the first phase of the process — is understanding your own needs, preferences, abilities, values, strengths, aptitudes and lifestyle. This create initial awareness This can be carried out through personal reflection, subject tests, psychometric testing and entrance examinations to help you understand yourself better. It is important to take everything into consideration.

- This can be done by carrying out a self- audit by carrying out any of the tasks outlined but start off by putting down your ideal career so ask yourself 'if I had a magic wand' where there were no barriers or obstacles what would I want?

Step 2 - Define

- The 'Define step' of the process is a great way of gaining clarity of what you actually want to achieve in your career and how you can help our elf achieve it. This phase of the process helps us to identify 'what success looks like'. Career success or job success goals are very subjective and look for different things but defining what you want very early on will help with the entire process and it will also help the person completing the 'define stage' to reflect on their mind-set towards achieving these goals.

- A personal vision statement or even a few lines outlining what your goal is and details around this goal and how you know you will have achieved this goal.

Step 3 - Ideate

- The 'ideate' phase is probably the most fun part of the brainstorming stage whereby the person imagines or tries to imagine how they can achieve their career goals. There are no right or wrong answers at this stage and it is important to map every possible idea and the more ideas the better.

- Unfortunately most western education systems are guilty of teaching rotational otherwise know as 'teaching for the exam' learning whereby one one answer is correct and there is no need for ideation or brainstorming.

Step 4 - Prototype

- The world of work is changing and as a result many people decide to change their career. Many people may decide to change their career because their jobs become obsolete or their circumstances change due to illness or having kids or some people may get bored or the industry of the job they are in. Whatever the reason in can sometimes be daunting changing your career

- Prototyping helps to mitigate against risk and help figure out what is necessary for a career change or even to plan their first career. When people can overcome their risks, it usually helps them to overcome barriers and risks and therefore identify the necessary actions but also feel more motivated about achieving their goals

- Prototyping can also let people experiment or try out their dream career in a low risk environment, For example they might volunteer as a social media specialist in an NGO or charity and evaluate their experience before they actually leave their current job and apply to a full time permanent social media role.
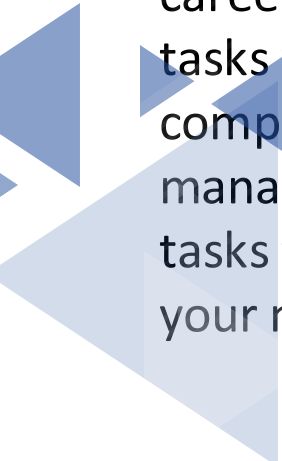
Step 5 – Test & Validate

- Prototyping is about experimenting with reality and testing your idea with all the data you have gathered for example the idea of working in a certain industry or a certain company or in a certain job. This is about using all of the data you may have collected so for example talking to people in a career, researching jobs on LinkedIn. attending an open day at a university.

- It is taking all of the data and evaluating it to see if for example the career, job or type of study you want is realistic and can be implemented or what do you need or need to consider to implement it? So you may have a few prototypes or pathways which you would like to experiment with but it is important to ask these questions

- Do I have enough financial resources to achieve this?

- Do I have the grades to achieve this?

- Do I need to move location to achieve this?

- Do I want this after all my research?

Task 1 - Design thinking career development tools

.1 Energy evaluation exercise – personal or professional

- According to the authors of *designing your life*, "where we put our attention (our brain energy) is actually how we experience our day".

- This is another really important exercise to identify where we put both our physical and emotional energy and how much return on these investments we actually receive.

- This can easily be applied to your job and the day to day tasks you do, and how much value they add to your career progression and your continuous learning and development. This task may help you to identify some tasks you can delegate but also some tasks that you may want to change or a task that can be done by a computer programme so for example instead of manually project managing a task you could employ a project management tool such as Monday.com or Microsoft Visio to do the work for you so that you can focus on othe tasks that bring you joy and add value to your career and career progression. This exercise may help to alter your mindset towards these tasks as now you are clear on what you are getting out of these tasks.

Task 2 - Design thinking career development tools

2. How can I improve log sheet?

- As with anything in life, it is always important to take in account all of the things in your life that didn't go that well and why they didn't go that well and ask yourself 'what could I have done differently?

- It is important to remember though that sometimes projects or things fail due to factors beyond our control so don't be so hard on yourself.

- This exercise is not designed to make you feel bad but to help you identify your own weaknesses or knowledge gaps or growth opportunities so that you can develop opportunities to improve yourself or your skill set or simply to avoid making the same mistake again.

- This task can help you develop a positive mindset as this task helps you to navigate your way through so called barriers or obstacles.

Task 3 - Design thinking career development tools

3. A Gratitude Journal

- As it suggest by the name, this activity is to look for the good in everything and try and identify what brings you joy and how you can you incorporate more joy into your working life and career so that you may get more satisfaction but also be able to incorporate these elements and skills into your career so for example if you are creative and enjoy art and designing things, you may enjoy a job which involves marketing activities such as designing a marketing campaign or promotional materials.

Task 4 - Design thinking career development tools

4. Work life balance worksheet

- There are four influential areas in our life - love, play, work, health. All of these elements are interconnected and can effect our life but also our career but in order to be successful in our career it helps if we have the balance that we want, that is that our career is aligned to our values so for example, some people value a lot of time off in their career and don't want to be working all the time so they value their time off, therefore it would be advisable for this person not to have a career whereby they are required to work very long hours.

- Another objective of this exercise is to try and identify the elements in life in which you have a control over and then change these accordingly so for example if you have a job whereby you are not happy, you may try and look for a job whereby you will be happy for example if money is important to you may try and secure a job which pays more.

Task 5 - Design thinking career development tools

5. Pathway planning worksheet

- The pathway planning worksheet allows you to explore different versions of what your life *could* look like, mapping out multiple ways your life could unfold. You can get the advice of a Career Guidance Counsellor to help you make these plans. Very often there are many pathways especially career pathways which lead to the same end destination. For example you may want to be a doctor but you could student science first and then do postgraduate medicine or go directly into Medicine. It is suggested to have three five year plans. This is important as life may not go the way you want it but if you have a contingency plan, it may be less disruptive and more comforting.

Questions

1. What is a mindset? What does a mindset entail?
2. Define a growth mindset?
3. Name and describe the five stages of a growth mindset?

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An introduction to design thinking PROCESS GUIDE. (2017). Retrieved 20 August, 2024, f
https://web.stanford.edu/~mshanks/MichaelShanks/files/509554.pdf

TASK 1

- Think of interview questions you would like to ask these people about their job or career and write down these questions? For example:

- How many hours do you work? Is it a 9-5?

- What are the specialities? How did these people get to where they are? Did they do courses?

- Do you spend much of your day in the office?

- What type of jobs did they have?

- What skills do they posses?