

MOMAP TOOL

Planning Islands

MOMAP Dimension: Intercultural Skills

MOMAP Domain: Active Control and Planning

Active control and planning is the process of taking active steps to face a challenge - the capacity to take action to solve problems. As such it is clearly a problem focused activity (Carver, Scheier & Weintraub, 1989).

Target group:

Type of mobility:

Geographic Mobility: X

Social Mobility: X

Implementation phase:

Before: X

During: X

After: X

Duration:

Number of sessions: 2

Time: 2 hours 40 min

Tool objectives / short description:

This tool helps participants to define goals in the near future and plan the journey that leads to their future vision. It helps them to think through difficulties, challenges, resources, solutions and helpful elements in their environment.

This tool is also good to use during the closing sessions of a guiding process as it defines the next steps towards personal development. It helps to rethink future plans, taking into consideration the experiences gained during the guiding process.

Sessions:

SESSION 1

Session Objectives:

This session is about finding out the future wishes of the participant and comparing it with their current situation. It also helps to get a picture of their view about their present circumstances and the possibilities concerning their future wishes.

Time: 1,5 Hours

Materials: A3 paper, coloured pencils, crayons, markers

Preparation needed: Please read about the theory of SWOT analysis before starting to use this tool (see below in Background information/Theory section).

Step-by-step activity:

Lead in: (15 min)

If you use this tool at the beginning or the end of the guiding process, you can have a lead in discussion about the participant's mobility experience:

New things I have learned during my mobility experience:

- New things I have experienced
- Things that confirmed the knowledge I already had
- Surprising moments – about situations, myself, others
- Things I had or have to reconsider

For socially mobile participants it is important that you try to define together the beginning of their mobility. It helps them to separate their mobility experience from their daily life. If they have moved many times to a new place or situation, it helps to define a certain time to work with in these sessions. If the social mobility did not happen alongside geographic mobility, try to find out when she/he had the biggest changes – new friends, new working place, started school etc.

For people who are preparing for mobility you can start with the tool Flow Flowers (Motivation Tool) and then begin this tool from the second session. In this case the lead in activity will be summarising the results of the Flow Flowers exercise.

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Activity 1: My future (15 min)

Ask your participant to take a piece of A3 paper and fold it in the middle. In the first round he/she will draw on the right hand side of the paper only.

First he/she should imagine a future moment in his/her current mobility experience. Work together with your participant to identify the best time – usually 6 months to 1 year ahead, but you need to take into account which phase of mobility they are in:

- Before mobility: You can consider the time until he/she starts his/her mobility experience – in this case the focus will be for on the preparation for mobility. Alternatively you could choose a date in the future by which he/she would like to accomplish certain things, e.g. getting a new job abroad, returning from mobility etc. In social mobility you could choose between 6 months to 1 year, or whatever feels suitable.
- During mobility: Here it is important that the participant stays within his/her current mobility experience. So for example if they will be returning home after 4 months, choose a shorter time.
- After mobility: Anything between 6 months and 1 year.

To help with visualising the future moment, you could write an exact date on the right hand corner of the paper before drawing.

He/she should visualize this moment and draw it as an island. All the things they would like to have on that future date should be represented on the island:

- What kind of things, situations, possibilities he/she would like to have
- How his/her life would look – what would be the most important things, activities, people, work, free time activities or situations around?

Follow up discussion: (10 min)

When your participant has finished the picture, have a discussion to find out about his/her future wishes. Try to find out as many details as possible. Help him/her to describe the things as much as possible.

Helpful questions:

- What is on your island? What represents what?
- Why did you draw them like this?
- Was there something that you felt you wanted to draw at first, but you changed your mind later? Why?

- Why is this important for you?
- What does it mean to have a “better job” / “more money” / “speak the language”? What language level would you like to reach? How often do you want that thing to happen?

It might be that during the discussion new things come up. If so, ask your participant to add them to the picture.

Possible modifications:

- If you have a short term mobility participant, you can ask them to draw a backpack and put the things in it that he/she would like to take with them at the end of that experience.
- If your participant does not feel comfortable to draw at all, you can use magazines, glue and scissor to cut out pictures and glue them on the right hand side of the paper.

Activity 2: My present (10 min)

Ask your participant to this time draw on the left hand side of the paper.

He/she should now draw an island that represents the current situation that he/she has now linked to the things they he/she expressed on the right side. (e.g. if he/she would like to be in a nice new flat in 6 months, then he/she should draw his/her current home on the left and try to express the differences that are important for him/her between the two situations.)

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Follow up discussion: (10 min)

Try to find out the main differences between the two islands.

- Why did you draw the things like this?
- What makes the pictures different? What is missing on the left hand side?
- Is there anything that you could draw on the left hand side that is currently influencing your life very much, but which you would like to get rid of later?
- What are the things that are already there? What is good about the things you have now?
- What have you achieved already?

Activity 3: Bridge to the future (15 min)

Ask your participant to draw a bridge between the two islands that represents a kind of SWOT analysis. He/she should think about how to get to the second island from the first one.

What are the resources that can help him/her to accomplish what he/she wants. What opportunities or solutions can he/she list for the achievements, what are the weak points, and what might be the problems or obstacles along the way.

The different parts of the bridge represent different things:

- o The bridge surface - for the **S**trengths
- o The water around – for the **W**eaknesses
- o The holding columns (legs) - for the **O**pportunities
- o The sharks – for the **T**hreats

Follow up discussion: (10 min)

Help your participant to find out as many strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats as possible. Whenever he/she says something, ask “Why?”. If there could be another solution for something, try to ask: “What if this doesn’t happen? Is there another way to solve this?”. Try to find out if the listed weaknesses are really weaknesses or whether they could be strengths in other situations. Are the threats real threats? What will the participant lose if they happen?

Closing the session: (5 min)

Summarize for your participant the three step planning and the main results. Explain how important is to set goals and wishes first – it gives space for us to think more freely without “but”-s.

At the end of the session you should have a clear picture about the things that are important for your participant about his mobility situation - what are his/her intentions, what are his/her expectations?

The session was successful if you managed to talk about concrete things and did not stay on a general level (e.g. participant would like to have a nice home – this is too general, what does “nice” mean to him/her, what makes a home nice?)

Knowledge that may need to be explained is the method of SWOT analysis.

Ideas for homework:

- You can ask your participant to think more about his/her bridge to the future and collect more strengths/opportunities/weaknesses/threats before the next session
- Also he/she could think about and try to find solutions for the upcoming threats he/she sees. They could ask around to see if there is somebody in their environment who has already solved similar problems.



- He/she can name a person he/she trusts and who knows his/her situation to talk about the wishes and ideas and ask that person's opinion – as an outsider who sees things from a different angle.

Possible modifications:

Lead in:

If you use this tool at the end (second part) of the guiding session:

As an introduction summarise for your participant the guiding process up until now. What kind of exercises did you do, what were their goals and what were the most important issues or questions you have talked about. If there are still doubts or questions you could have a short round of reflections. However, the main idea is to help the participant think over the guiding process.

Ask your participant to make brief notes about the followings:

- New things I have learned during the guiding process
- New things I have experienced
- Things that confirmed the knowledge I had already
- Surprising moments – about situations, myself, others
- Things I had or have to reconsider

If you use the tool just for evaluation to summarise the guiding process:

In this case you do not need to talk about all the details - just make a picture with your participant. You can also give out as homework the islands "task sheet" and use it as a base for evaluation of the guiding process.

If you want to skip the 2nd session:

You do not have to go on to the 2nd session. The two sessions work separately as well. In this case you can close the 1st session with the following questions:

Think about the next steps for making sure that things will happen as you want, in particular the most important actions for the next "X" months. You can write as many things as you want. Write under your drawing:

When I return, I'll do.....

Within one week, I'll do.....

Within one month, I'll do.....

Within six months, I'll do.....



Hints for the coach:

Some participants will talk about their future wishes in a less concrete way, or about things that are not easy to grasp or make plans for. For example someone may have the wish to have a nice boyfriend – it is hard to make sure it will happen. However you can help your participant to put in words as much as possible what a “nice boyfriend” means.

If you have an after mobility participant try to make him/her consider the mobility experiences during future planning. What are the knowledge, experiences or other resources that were gained during the mobility and can be used to achieve future aims?

SESSION 2

Session Objectives:

Ask the participant to list priorities from the future wishes, find alternative solutions and activities, and decide on the first actions towards their future plans.

Time: 1 hour 10 min

Materials: paper, pen

Preparation needed: Think through the results of the session before.

Step-by-step activity:

Lead in: (10 min)

Summarise what you have achieved together in the last session and look at the homework together.

Activity 1: (15min)

Look at the island drawing with your participant. Ask him/her to work with the future island and prioritize the things that are shown:

- Which are the most important?
- Which things are not so important?

Take the list of the most important things (maximum of five) and ask your participant to write them down on a piece of paper. For each item, ask him/her to describe the following:

- What will you gain if this happens? (Knowledge, skills, feelings, opportunities etc..)
- What will you lose if it does not happen?

Follow up discussion:

Help the participant to find as many things as possible that he/she would gain and lose. Find out why she/he listed those things and how important they are to him/her.

Activity 2: (15 min)

Ask your participant to concentrate on the things he/she would gain and ask him/her to think through and list other things that could satisfy that kind of need. In this way we get a bigger view about the different solutions and how she/he can satisfy his/her own needs in different ways.

E.g. A participant would like to be a volunteer in Africa and writes down that she would gain specific knowledge about poverty, the feeling that she can help people, and self-confidence. The guide would ask her to think of and list other things that could satisfy that kind of need – for example being a volunteer in Europe, finding out about poverty issues from books or other research, helping people in her own environment.

Try also to find other options for the things he/she could lose – if she/he does not have that particular activity, how he/she could have the benefits anyway through other experiences.

Activity 3: (10 min)

As the next step, look again at the priority list and list the resources the participant has (inner resources/outside help), and the resources he/she does not have to accomplish the future wishes.

Activity 4: (15 min)

Finally choose the first steps he/she needs to make towards accomplishing the first five priorities. Choose one step for each and ask the participant to put a deadline by which they will do that step.

It is important to help your participant understand that this planning is for them and that they need to check for themselves about meeting the deadlines. However if you do this tool at the beginning of the guiding process, you may be able to set deadlines for activities concerning his/her future achievements that are still during the guiding process. In this case the best way would be for your participant to do small steps from session to session so that you could see how the process is going together.

For example if someone would like to learn a language, the first steps could be finding out the learning possibilities at first (friend, course, internet etc.), then to set up the first sessions, apply to a language school etc...

In this way this tool would be followed up through the whole guiding process and at the end as well.



Closing the session: (5min)

Summarise the things you have talked about during the session.

By this time your participant needs to be clear about which are the most important goals for him/her in the future and what are the first steps he/she is willing to make to accomplish that.

If you used the tool from the beginning of the guiding process you can look at the Planning Island picture together with your participant on the last session and discuss about how many steps he/she already made between the present and future island. You can also set up the next steps that should happen after the guiding process.

Possible modifications:

You can go into more details towards future wishes and ask your participant to plan the “step-by-step activity plan” from the beginning to the end concerning each accomplishment and aim. In this case you need more time for the tool.

Hints for the coach:

Be aware that it can be hard for people to put into words what they are actually willing to gain from their experiences. Ask as many detailed and describing questions as possible. Ensure that the participant sets deadlines that are realistic, and that they set deadlines for themselves, not just what they think you as the guide want them to do. It may also be that at the end of the process they realise that a certain thing is not as important as they originally thought.

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Closing:

Evaluation of the tool:

Find out what worked best for your participant:

What was the most challenging?

What will help them most in the future?

Combination with other tools:

The tool works well after the tool “Flow Flowers”.

The tools also can be combined with the tool “Colouring Steps”.

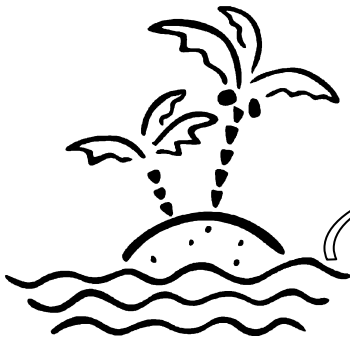


Handouts:

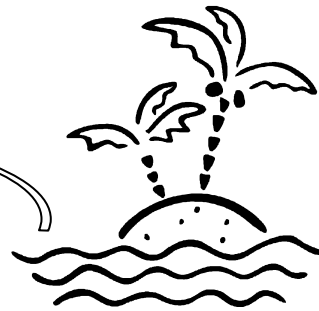
Handout 1

Task Sheet:

NOW



FUTURE



BRIDGE

I. Show your aims and goals in relation to your future situation (visualize it on the second island, use symbols, keywords etc.) – what would you like to get? You would be satisfied ifhappens?

II. Show the situation now. Think about the aims that you have put on the future islands and work out where you are now in relation to those aims – visualize it on the first island.

III: There is a bridge between the two islands that symbolizes your SWOT analysis about the mobility experience:

- The bridge surface represents you Strengths
- The columns of the bridge are the Opportunities
- The waters around are the Weaknesses
- The sharks in the water are the Threats

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Background information / theory:

SWOT analysis

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SWOT_analysis

SWOT analysis (alternatively **SWOT Matrix**) is a structured planning method used to evaluate the **S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities, and **T**hreats involved in a project or in a business venture. A SWOT analysis can be carried out for a product, place, industry or person. It involves specifying the objective of the business venture or project and identifying the internal and external factors that are favorable and unfavorable to achieving that objective. The technique is credited to Albert Humphrey, who led a convention at the Stanford Research Institute (now SRI International) in the 1960s and 1970s using data from Fortune 500 companies. The degree to which the internal environment of the firm matches with the external environment is expressed by the concept of strategic fit.

SWOT ANALYSIS



Setting the objective should be done after the SWOT analysis has been performed. This would allow achievable goals or objectives to be set for the organization.

- **Strengths:** characteristics of the business or project that give it an advantage over others
- **Weaknesses:** are characteristics that place the team at a disadvantage relative to others
- **Opportunities:** elements that the project could exploit to its advantage
- **Threats:** elements in the environment that could cause trouble for the business or project

Identification of SWOTs is important because they can inform later steps in planning to achieve the objective.

First, the decision makers should consider whether the objective is attainable, given the SWOTs. If the objective is *not* attainable a different objective must be selected and the process repeated.

Users of SWOT analysis need to ask and answer questions that generate meaningful information for each category (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) to make the analysis useful and find their competitive advantage.

Matching and converting

One way of utilizing SWOT is matching and converting. Matching is used to find competitive advantage by matching the strengths to opportunities. Converting is to apply conversion strategies to convert weaknesses or threats into strengths or opportunities. An example of conversion strategy is to find new markets. If the threats or weaknesses cannot be converted a company should try to minimize or avoid them.

Internal and external factors

SWOT analysis aims to identify the key internal and external factors seen as important to achieving an objective. The factors come from within a company's unique value chain. SWOT analysis groups key pieces of information into two main categories:

1. internal factors – the *strengths* and *weaknesses* internal to the organization
2. external factors – the *opportunities* and *threats* presented by the environment external to the organization

Analysis may view the internal factors as strengths or as weaknesses depending upon their effect on the organization's objectives. What may represent strengths with respect to one objective may be weaknesses (distractions, competition) for another objective. The factors may include all of the 4Ps; as well as personnel, finance, manufacturing capabilities, and so on.

The external factors may include macroeconomic matters, technological change, legislation, and socio-cultural changes, as well as changes in the marketplace or in competitive position. The results are often presented in the form of a matrix.

SWOT analysis is just one method of categorization and has its own weaknesses. For example, it may tend to persuade its users to compile lists rather than to think about actual important factors in achieving objectives. It also presents the resulting lists uncritically and without clear prioritization so that, for example, weak opportunities may appear to balance strong threats.

It is prudent not to eliminate any candidate SWOT entry too quickly. The importance of individual SWOTs will be revealed by the value of the strategies they generate. A SWOT item that produces valuable strategies is important. A SWOT item that generates no strategies is not important.

Use

The usefulness of SWOT analysis is not limited to profit-seeking organizations. SWOT analysis may be used in any decision-making situation when a desired end-state (objective) has been defined. Examples include: non-profit organizations, governmental units, and individuals. SWOT analysis may also be used in pre-crisis planning and preventive crisis management. SWOT analysis may also be used in creating a recommendation during a viability study/survey.

Source:

Wikipedia - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SWOT_analysis