



QUALIFY

Learners' Pack

INNOVATIVE COACHING INTERVENTION PRACTICES FOR
CAREER GUIDANCE PRACTITIONERS
DEVELOPED BY INOVA CONSULTANCY



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WEEK 3: Brand You, Networking, Relational Competence, Social Media and Professionalism

1. Objectives

At the end of this week, you will have:

- explored their own competences
- explored the need for branding, for self and for client
- explored additional competences their clients often need to develop, e.g. networking, soft skills, ICT etc.
- explored the benefits of networking
- explored effective use of social media for career development
- explored the importance of professionalism
- explored relational competence
- explored the importance of branding

2. Introduction

This lesson explores how relationships and interpersonal awareness are important skills required by many employers and it goes on to explore creativity and link this to the goals that were set in previous weeks. Focusing on peer input and feedback on the creative tasks this session leads in to the use of Career Circles for enhancing the profession, personal development and client development.

3. Professionalism

Professionalism can be described as the qualities connected with trained and skilled people. We can think of 6 attributes of professionalism:

1. **Key Knowledge** – this does not mean collecting several qualifications or certificates. What it does mean is having a personal commitment to develop, improve and keep up-to-date your skills, mastering any knowledge you need to succeed in your work.
2. **Competency** – getting the job done. Being reliable and keeping promises, no excuses.
3. **Honesty and Integrity** – do what you say you will, do not compromise your values and be humble. Always ask for help when you need it.
4. **Accountability** – being accountable for your thoughts, words and actions, especially when you have made a mistake.
5. **Self-Control** – staying professional under pressure. This means staying calm when faced with difficult people and situations and always showing respect for everyone.
6. **Looking the Part** – dressing appropriately whatever the situation

4. Social Media

Social Media is websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking.

Social media has become a fast and cheap background check for employers, they use it to verify facts on your CV or application, to check your knowledge and what you express publicly and also to see how good your communication skills are.

Social media has also become a way that employers identify job candidates as it is often faster and cheaper than posting a job, so make sure what you post on social media is always something you wouldn't mind your potential employer to see.

Using Social Media Professionally

Here are some tips about how to use LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter to help you find a job, and how to present yourself professionally on social media and be ready if an employer seeks you out through social media.

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a professional's social network, the network most preferred by employers, recruiters and head-hunters. Members connect with each other, participate in Groups, connect and interact with each other. In 2017 LinkedIn had nearly 500 million members in 200 countries.

- **Your LinkedIn Profile**

Your LinkedIn is pretty similar to writing an online CV. Make sure you use a compelling headline that makes you stand out from the crowd. Use your biography to let recruiters know what type of role you're after. You can list your education, work experience, interests, hobbies and key accomplishments.

- **Personal Testimonials**

Ask people you know for example ex-employers, clients and even friends to write a few positive words about your work capabilities on your LinkedIn page. The fact that another individual has taken the time to write positive things for and about you will be viewed by others as an indication of credibility and authenticity.

- **Searching for jobs on LinkedIn**

Use the job page to browse potential jobs by job title and location.

- **On LinkedIn Employers will find You!**

Employers can come looking for you on LinkedIn – so make sure your profile is relevant, up to date and shows you off in the best light. Also make sure your contact details are listed so potential employers can get in touch.

- **Networking on LinkedIn**

It is usually frowned upon to connect with people you don't know, but you can use it to cement a connection once you've been in touch, e.g. through a networking event.

- **Join groups on LinkedIn**

They can come in useful for staying up to date with industry trends and news. They are also useful to find people sharing job leads in your local area.

Facebook

Facebook is the largest social network, with over 2 billion members worldwide. Users can add friends and send them messages and update their personal profiles to notify friends about themselves. Additionally, users can join networks organised by city, workplace and school or college. Facebook is quite informal, it is largely used by people for connecting with friends and family, but it is increasingly being used by organisations for commercial reasons.

CAUTION – the boundaries between personal and professional are quite blurred on Facebook so make sure you are always aware of what information about you can be accessed and by whom.

- **Your Facebook Profile**

Provide details about your professional or work profile – it should offer insight into what you can offer potential employers. Include details about your education, work experience, life experience and skills.

Use the ‘**View as**’ button to see how your profile looks like to a passing potential employer.

- **Use your Personal Connections**

Ask your personal connections for information and support for your career or job search.

- **Facebook’s Job Portal**

This will show you jobs in your local area, though it is not widely used at the moment. You can apply straight through Facebook for jobs advertised in this way and your personal contact information is shared.

- **Check out company or organisations’ official pages**

Click ‘**like**’ or ‘**follow**’ on a Page to see that company’s updates in your News Feed.

Company’s Facebook pages will give you some knowledge that will be useful to take to an interview, as will their website.

Twitter

Twitter is a free social networking and service that enables its users to send and read messages known as tweets. Tweets are text-based posts of up to 140 characters displayed on the author’s profile page and delivered to the author’s subscribers who are known as followers. In 2017, Twitter had over 320 million active users.

- **Your Twitter Profile**

Twitter is much more informal than LinkedIn but your profile should include a professional looking photo and a link to your CV

- **Tweeting**

You don't have to tweet yourself, you can just follow companies or topics and retweet. You could use your own tweets to show your interest in a particular career and tweet about current affairs in the sector you wish you work in.

- **Searching for jobs on Twitter**

Twitter has far more feeds dedicated to advertising jobs than on Facebook. Put 'jobs' in the search box and then click on the People tab to find good suggestions about job-related accounts you can follow based on the accounts you are already connected to.

Use hashtags such as #jobsearch, #writersjobs or #developerjobs to find out more in your area of expertise

- **Networking on Twitter**

Networking and following people you have never met and would like to work with is much more acceptable on Twitter than it is on Facebook. So, follow potential employers organisations and people to find out more about the industry you are interested in working in.

5. Personal Branding: Introducing Yourself Positively

What you say, how you present yourself and your behaviour always reveal something about your core values, passions and achievements. These are what people look at when assessing candidates for a job. A positive personal brand can help you meet new people who share your interests and may offer opportunities.

How to Create a Personal Brand

1. **Be Aware** – The most obvious and convincing element of your brand is you – how you present yourself and communicate.
 - Dress appropriately for the job interview or occasion
 - Listen well and empathise with others – develop your relationships
 - Be conscientious – if you help others, they are likely to do the same for you, be on time and acknowledge other people’s efforts
2. **Identify Your USP (Unique Selling Point)** - Find out what makes you uniquely valuable and focus on promoting it.
 - Identify your personal values and what's important to you
 - Think about your strengths and what opportunities you have to use them
 - Be ready to talk about your achievements – what you have to offer
3. **Be Authentic** – Be yourself, have a clear mental picture of goals and where you want to go. People who are authentic are more likely to be regarded as positive and trustworthy.
4. **Identify Your Audience** – You need to be sure who your personal brand is aimed at for it to be effective. For potential employers your brand should highlight the similarities between your values/beliefs and theirs. Think of examples from your life you can use to showcase how your values align with theirs. Always aim for continuous improvement and invest in your personal development

Recap

Play to your strengths, don’t try and do everything, set yourself achievable targets, look at your SMART objectives and Action Plan.

Be prepared to accept constructive criticism and feedback.

Be prepared to make positive changes if necessary.

Be your own friend and life coach.

6. Self-Development: Investing in You

You are the most important person you can spend your time and money on. Investing in yourself may very well be the most profitable investment you will ever make. No improvement in your life will happen automatically, you have to work at it:

- **Invest in Your Creativity** – creativity allows you to have fun and inspires you, it also helps develop certain areas of your brain. All children are creative, as adults we sometimes forget. We are all creative in different ways, it may be gardening, painting or dancing, whatever it is finding your inner creativity is important.
- **Invest in Your Self-Confidence** - Learn to have the courage to speak your truth. The more you love yourself and own the value that you offer, the more confident you will become in sharing it with others.
- **Invest in Your Health** – fuel your body with the right kinds of foods which will make you feel better and give you more energy. Exercising creates a healthy mind and body, the benefits include disease prevention, better mood, lower body-fat and weight, increased energy and better sleep.

Exercise does not just mean going to the gym, it is anything that gets your heart rate up. There are so many different ways to exercise so find the kinds that you find fun. Walking the dog is a great example!

- **Invest in Your Relationships** – good relationships take time and effort. The more they grow, the more value they will have and the more valuable benefits you will see. Surround yourself with people that love you and support you in your goals.
- **Invest in Your Knowledge** – reading books: stimulates your imagination, improves your vocabulary, and general knowledge. Learn a new skill: the world is constantly changing, and you need to keep your knowledge up to date, sign up for a class online or local, or go to talks. You can listen to TED talk from home for free! You can also buy word-search or sudoku books very cheaply, these will help stimulate your brain.

7. Networking

Often the idea of ‘networking’ can seem like a scary or cringe-worthy prospect, but it is a really good way to make connection and relationships which can help you find a job. It can boost your self-esteem and provide access to support. Networking can also give you access to skills and knowledge and are a great place to find jobs which may not necessarily have been made public yet. By meeting these people, you have a good way of putting your foot in the door and have a better chance of getting the job than just submitting an application to their organisation.

Networking Tips

1. **Have an open mind**

Focus on meeting the right people where you can discuss issues that are applicable to you. Start off finding free networking events in your area, you will be surprised how many there are!

2. **Do Your Homework**

Try to find out who is going to the event, focus on the people you would most like to meet and do your research. This can make approaching them less daunting. Be brave and contact the people who can help you personally. Ask them to meet up for an informal chat.

3. **Set Goals**

Set yourself one or two realistic goals so that you can network in a targeted way, with a clear vision of what you want to achieve!

4. **Prepare your Conversation**

Lots of people worry about what they are going to say.

- **Prepare some Informal Openers:** This will help you when first making conversation with someone, for example “Hello my name is... how are you?”
- **Prepare your introduction:** your name and why you are attending
- **Prepare some open-ended questions to ask them:** it is important to build rapport with the other person, ask them about themselves and listen closely

5. **Arrive Early**

It is much less daunting to arrive early when there are not as many people there. You can get comfortable with your surroundings and start up conversations with the organisers and other early people when there is less pressure.

6. **Take a Friend**

Bring a friend, especially if you are feeling a bit nervous. They can help you start conversations and provide reassurance if your confidence slips.

7. **Send the right Signals**

Even if you are shaking inside and wishing you were anywhere else, try and give the impression of confidence through your body language, you’ll look more open and engaged. Try to look relaxed,

warm and alert. SMILE! Maintain an open body posture (arms uncrossed) and make eye contact with people you want to meet.

8. Be authentic

Be yourself because above all people are attracted to someone who is real and sticks to their values. If you're feeling terrified sometimes it is good to be open about it, doing so invites the other person to empathise with you and can help make a connection. You never know, they may feel terrified too!

9. Know when to End a Conversation

Aim for short memorable conversations. If you're nervous do not try and fill all the gaps by talking non-stop. Trust your instinct and keep an eye on the other person's body language for signs they want to end the conversation. Then smile and ask the other person if it is ok to exchange contact details.

10. Register your Interest

Often networks have an opportunity to register for organisations or training. Even if you are not sure if it is right for you it is good to register your interest. This way you can find out more about other opportunities that might be of interest to you.

Further Information

(to be added by Inova and partners if they have some sources!)

Social Media:



Personal Branding:

Investing in Yourself

Networking