YOUTH LEADERSHIP COMPETENCE MODEL FOR BRAVEHEART

This model is inspired by existing competence models and our personal experience so far. It is not meant to be seen as a 'must-have' list of competences and it doesn't cover the whole Youth worker's competence profile. It includes just that part of youth leadership competences we would like to focus on and strengthen in Braveheart.

YOUTH DEFINITION

Youth is best understood as a period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood's independence. That's why, as a category, youth is more fluid than other fixed age-groups. Yet, age is the easiest way to define this group, particularly in relation to education and employment, because "youth" is often referred to a person between the ages of leaving compulsory education, and finding their first job.[1]

YOUTH WORKER DEFINITION

Youth workers work with young people in a wide variety of non-formal and informal learning contexts, typically focusing on their young charges' personal and social development through one-on- one relationships and group-based activities. While acting as trainers/facilitators may be their main task, it is just as likely for youth workers to take a socio- educational or social work-based approach. In many cases, these roles and functions overlap.[2]

YOUTH LEADERSHIP

By Youth leadership we mean that part of youth worker's competences important for leading youth individuals or groups in their development or learning process. We divide them into two areas: **INNER LEADERSHIP** and **OUTER LEADERSHIP**.

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[1] United Nations Youth definition: http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/youth-definition.pdf

[2] Salto-youth definiton of youthworker: https://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-3045/Glossary%20-%20Set_of_trainer_competences_low%20resolution.pdf

PERSONAL VISION AND VALUES

- You are aware of your own life vision (how your life and the world around you should look like).
- You are aware of your own values as a person and as a citizen (e.g. respect to human rights, non-violent behaviour, behaviour leading to sustainable development...). You work with your values in a way that they raise quality of your youth work.
- You are aware of your own youth work values (e.g. youth empowerment, relations based on mutual respect as a key features of youth development...). You work with them in a way that they raise quality of your youth work.

INNER RESOURCES, INNER ENERGY

- You know why you work as a youth worker. You know why it's meaningful for you (what kind of energy it brings to you).
- You are aware of your own inner resources and capacities. You work on them continuously and you deepen your self-knowledge in this area.
- You are able to manage your own resources (your physical and mental energy) so that you are capable to lead/support the development of youth you work with.

AUTHENTICITY AND INTEGRITY

"What I feel is what I express, what I believe in is what I do."

- You are aware of your own values, attitudes, feelings, behaviour and your energy level.
- You work on your self-knowledge in this area.
- You communicate them in a way that supports the development of youth you work with.

SELF CONFIDENCE

- You know your strengths and potential challenges.
- You make use them in various situations in a way that supports the development of youth you work with.
- You deepen your self-knowledge in this area.
- You deal with adequate challenging situations and you are able to learn from them.

OUTER LEADERSHIP
Our competences to strengthen and to work on

FACILITATION OF (INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP) LEARNING PROCESSES

Learning to learn:
- You understand learning process in general and are aware of different learning styles (EG Kolb's learning styles).
- You use such knowledge in a way that supports the development of youth you work with.
- You support the ability of youth to lead their own learning process independently.

Reflection of experience:
- You support the ability of youth to reflect on and learn from their own personal or group experience.

Group dynamics:
- You understand group processes and group dynamics.
- You manage them to support individual and group learning.
- You effectively balance learning goals with the participants' and group needs to support their learning.

Conflict management:
- You understand a conflict as an opportunity more than a threat.
- You are able to handle your or someone else's strong emotions.
- You are able to mediate or facilitate conflicts in a way that supports learning of youth you work with.

SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF ONE-TO-ONE OR ONE-TO-GROUP COMMUNICATION

Feedback:
- You see giving and getting feedback as a meaningful self-development tool.
- You are able to use the basic principles and mechanisms of giving, getting and integrating feedback in a constructive way.
- You are able to give and get feedback in a way that youth you work with can learn from.

Active listening:
- You listen carefully to others without interrupting and in an unbiased manner in order to recognize the message.
- You create the environment in which openness and authenticity for youth is more comfortable.

Clear expression:
- You support clear expressions of thoughts, feelings and attitudes.
- You clearly express them in a way that is appropriate within your role and its power, and supports the youth development.

Nonverbal communication:
- You pay attention to your nonverbal communication so that it is in harmony with what you say.

UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORTING MOTIVATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Increasing motivation:
- You understand the roots of motivation and the needs of youth you work with.
- You understand the motivation theories applicable in youth work, and use them in order to increase the inner motivation of youth.
- You understand and support them to overcome the obstacles that decrease or block their motivation.

Building meaningful relationships:
- You create with youth relationships build on equality and mutual respect.
- You support creating of such relationships among youth as well.
- You create a safe environment where feelings & emotions can be freely and respectfully expressed.

Openness and curiosity:
- You have and display interest in and curiosity about youth you work with, and their needs.
- You accept and understand their needs and work with them in a way that supports their development.

DESIGNING AND LEADING ACTIVITIES

Preparation and planning:
- You are able to map and analyse the young people's needs and learning goals.
- You are able to find, adapt or create your own activity accordingly.
- During the preparation you pay attention to all the phases (preparation, activity presentation, activity leading, reflection, cleaning after the activity) and plan all of them precisely enough.

Activity presentation:
- You present the activity and its goal in clear, understandable and attractive way.
- You use visuals or other (creative) tools to support that.
- You are able to raise the interest of youth and to motivate them to actively take part in the activity.

Activity leading:
- During the whole activity you keep an eye on the objectives of the activity & the young people' needs.
- You manage the activity in order to balance them and to support the youth development.

Reflection:
- You know the basic principles and mechanisms of the reflection leading and group dynamics.
- You plan the reflection according to the learning goals and activity flow. When planning, you anticipate possible topics and emotions.
- You lead the activity reflection towards the learning goals when balancing them with group needs.
- You create and support the atmosphere of trust, empathy, and mutual respect.
- You are ready to manage unexpected emotions and reactions in a way that supports individual and group learning.

Risk management:
- You accept the risk as a part of a youth development process.
- You assess the possible risks in all phases of the activity (preparation, leading, after-activity phases).
- When managing the risks you balance the activity goals, safe environment and learning opportunities.