Recommendations and tips for career advisors and trainers on using the "Ready to start" project materials

The materials available on the FERI platform have been designed to provide comprehensive support for young people and advisors in the process of career planning. Below are recommendations and tips for working with the materials for each module.

Each module consists of the following elements:

- A script for the advisor
- 10 worksheets
- Role-playing scenarios: 4 per module
- Comics: 2 per module
- Pre-test and post-test
- Multimedia presentation
- Podcasts: 4 per module
- Additional materials: cards, tests, online games, infographics, and a video on career counseling

Module 1: Know yourself

Module description:

This module focuses on self-discovery, identifying career predispositions, values, and the strengths of participants. Its goal is to help young people better understand themselves, forming a foundation for conscious career planning.

Module objectives:

1. Increase participants' awareness of their talents, interests, and values.
2. Develop the ability to analyze career predispositions in the context of future educational and professional choices.

3. Facilitate participants in identifying potential career paths aligned with their strengths and life priorities.

Learning Outcomes:

- Participants will be able to name their strengths and areas for development.
- Participants will identify their core values, serving as a guide in making career decisions.
- Participants will understand which careers align with their interests and skills.

Available tools in the module:

1. **Career predisposition test -** helps identify talents and career preferences.
2. **Value cards - s**upports reflection on what is most important for the participant in life and work.
3. **Worksheets -** aid in analyzing test results and values.
4. **Podcasts -** inspirational recordings introducing the topic of self-discovery.
5. **Talent mapping technique -** a visual representation of the participant's strengths.

Recommendations:

1. Begin with tests and exercises—use the career predisposition test and value cards as a starting point. These tools will help participants discover their strengths and priorities.
2. Use worksheets individually and in groups—participants can work on their results collaboratively, encouraging an exchange of experiences and mutual support.
3. Conclude workshops with reflection—encourage participants to record their discoveries and insights after completing the exercises. Suggest maintaining a personal development journal.

Tips:

- Use available podcasts to introduce participants to the topic of self-discovery.
- Employ the talent mapping technique as an additional tool to support work with test results.

During lectures and program implementation, it's helpful to enrich the sessions with real-life examples or anecdotes – suggestions:

1. *"Once, during a workshop with young people, one participant said: 'I have two left hands; I can't do anything.' After completing the tests and having a conversation, it turned out he had excellent organizational skills and was the leader in most school group projects. Sometimes our talents remain invisible until someone helps us discover them."*

   The Story of Kamil: Kamil was a vocational school student who thought he didn't have any particular talents. After completing a career predisposition test, it turned out he had strong analytical skills and excelled at tasks requiring precision. With this knowledge, he decided to pursue a career in industrial engineering.

2. *"During one session, a participant said: 'Values at work are just about salary.' After working with value cards, she realized that the work environment and opportunities for personal growth were equally important to her. Today, she consciously builds her career in a company with clear advancement paths."*

   The Story of Ania: Ania wasn't sure which educational path to choose. While working with value cards, she discovered that creativity and helping others were her top priorities. This realization guided her toward studying psychology with elements of art therapy, emphasizing the importance of values in career planning.

Discussion questions:

1. What are your greatest strengths, and how can you use them in your work?
2. Could any of your interests evolve into a future career path?
3. What is most important to you in your professional life: stability, creativity, independence, or something else?
4. Which careers do you find interesting, and why?
5. Do the results of your career predisposition test align with how you perceive yourself?
6. What challenges have you faced in the past, and how did you overcome them? Could these experiences benefit your career?
7. If you had to choose one skill to develop in the near future, what would it be and why?

8. Who is your role model in your professional life? What qualities of this person would you like to develop in yourself?

9. What values are most important to you in teamwork and collaboration?

10. Imagine your ideal day at work—what are you doing, where are you, and who are you working with? What does this say about your career preferences?

Module 2: Coaching Tools

Module description:

This module introduces participants to coaching, presenting foundational techniques that support personal and professional development. Participants learn to ask questions, set goals, and develop strategies, enabling them to build their future consciously and thoughtfully.

Module objectives:

1. Equip participants with coaching skills such as active listening and question formulation.
2. Enhance planning abilities and the execution of actions leading to goal achievement.
3. Strengthen the ability to solve problems independently and analyze situations.

Learning outcomes:

- Participants will use the GROW model to define and achieve goals.
- Participants will apply active listening techniques in professional and personal interactions.
- Participants will develop the ability to ask coaching questions that support decision-making processes.

Available tools in the module:

1. **GROW model -** a structure supporting the goal-setting and achievement process.
2. **Coaching question cards -** a tool for conducting engaging coaching sessions.
3. **Podcasts - e**ducational materials explaining coaching techniques and philosophy.

4. **Simulation scenarios -** exercises allowing participants to play the roles of coach and client.

Recommendations:

1. Introduce the GROW model—explain its stages and practice it using everyday life examples.
2. Apply active listening techniques—teach participants to ask open-ended questions, paraphrase, and build relationships.
3. Use coaching question cards—help participants develop skills for asking questions that encourage independent thinking.

Examples and anecdotes:

1. *"During coaching workshops, one participant, Tomek, said, 'I don't know what I want to do; everything seems difficult.' Instead of giving answers, I asked coaching questions like: 'What brings you joy in daily life?' and 'What would you do if you had full freedom of choice?' After some thought, Tomek discovered his interest in organizing events and decided to explore a career in event management."*
2. *"Karolina, a student, struggled to define her career priorities. Using the GROW model, she identified her goal (finding a job that combines creativity and learning), assessed her current situation (lack of experience in creative fields), explored options (taking a graphic design course), and created a plan. Today, she's a junior graphic designer."*
3. "During one of the simulated coaching sessions, a participant took on the role of the coach. After the session, they admitted: 'I never realized how difficult it is not to interrupt and to truly listen.' This experience demonstrated how crucial listening is in coaching, as it builds trust and allows the client to find their own solutions."

Discussion questions:

1. What coaching questions can help in making difficult decisions?

2. In what situations can active listening improve communication?

3. How can the GROW model be applied to career planning?

4. What are the differences between giving advice and using coaching techniques?

5. How does active listening contribute to building trust in professional relationships?

6. What questions asked by a coach make it easier for you to discover your strengths?

7. How can active listening help in building better professional relationships?

8. Have you ever solved a problem thanks to well-asked questions? What were those questions?

9. Why do you think it is important to come to solutions independently rather than receiving ready-made answers?

10. What differences do you notice between traditional career counseling and the coaching approach to goal setting?

Module 3: Decision-Making

Module description:

This module aims to develop the ability to make conscious career decisions by analyzing options, evaluating consequences, and choosing the best solution. Participants learn to assess risks, anticipate outcomes, and plan future steps.

Module objectives:

1. Develop participants' ability to evaluate career options.
2. Teach participants to analyze the consequences of different career decisions.
3. Strengthen the ability to make conscious and responsible decisions.

Learning outcomes:

- Participants will use SWOT analysis to evaluate career opportunities.
- Participants will understand the stages of the decision-making process and apply them practically.
- Participants will gain confidence in making key career decisions.

Available tools in the module:

1. **Decision-Making Games -** interactive simulations for practicing decision-making.
2. **SWOT Analysis - a** structured tool for evaluating strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.
3. **Worksheets -** materials for individual and group analysis of career options.
4. **Podcasts -** inspirational content on making decisions in various professional contexts.

Recommendations:

1. Start with SWOT analysis—teach participants to assess their strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities.
2. Use decision-making games—engage participants in realistic scenarios to practice decision-making in a safe environment.
3. Break the process into steps—show participants how to make conscious decisions step by step.

Examples and anecdotes:

1. *"During a decision-making game, one participant had to choose between an internship at a small firm with flexible hours and a higher-paying corporate job with a rigid schedule. SWOT analysis revealed that flexibility was more important to them, leading to a fulfilling choice."*
2. *"Monika, a workshop participant, wanted to open a café but feared failure. Through SWOT analysis and group discussions, she realized she had the resources (savings, family support, and industry knowledge) but lacked confidence. She eventually opened a successful café."*

By following these recommendations and using real-life examples, advisors and trainers can effectively implement the "Ready to Start" modules and inspire participants to plan their futures with confidence and purpose.

Discussion questions:

1. What are the biggest challenges in making career decisions?
2. How can SWOT analysis help in choosing a career path?
3. Is taking risks in career decisions always necessary? Why or why not?
4. How can decision-making games reflect real-life career dilemmas?
5. What are the consequences of postponing career decisions?
6. What criteria are most important to you when making career decisions? Why?
7. Have you ever regretted a career decision? What did you learn from the situation?
8. How do you handle pressure from others when making important decisions?
9. What risks are worth taking in career choices, and which might be too great?
10. What tools or strategies do you use to analyze available options before making a decision?

General recommendations for implementing the three modules:

- **Monitor participants' progress regularly** – Offer consistent meetings and support to evaluate how they are applying the knowledge and skills gained during the workshops.
- **Encourage collaboration** – Create spaces for participants to share experiences, such as support groups or discussion forums.
- **Reinforce learning outcomes** – Prepare follow-up materials or webinars to deepen the understanding of concepts taught during the workshops.
- **Adapt approaches** – Every participant is different, so it's essential to remain flexible and tailor methods to their needs and preferences, using a variety of teaching tools.

Good luck!