LEARNING BOX OF UNPLUGGED ACTIVITIES

The "Skill Barter" Network Builder

This unplugged activity empowers learners to recognize their own "hidden" or "unticketed" skills—such as cooking, mending, or gardening—and see them as valuable assets. Participants use color-coded index cards to list what they can offer and what they need, then physically connect these cards on a wall using yarn. This creates a tangible "web" of community support. The activity introduces computational thinking by requiring learners to strip away formal titles to find core capabilities (abstraction) and identify overlapping needs within a group (pattern recognition), fostering a sense of agency and community resilience without digital tools.

Target Group

- ☑ Low-skilled adults with low digital competences
- ☑ Low-skilled adults with limited formal education or qualifications
- ☑ Low-skilled adults with low participation in lifelong learning / training opportunities

Learning Objectives

- To help participants identify and articulate their own hidden, unticketed skills.
- To communicate the value of personal capabilities to others.
- To build a localized, paper-based exchange system to solve everyday problems without money.

Competence Areas

a) Innovation Competences

- ☑ Creativity
- ☐ Critical thinking
- ☐ Problem solving
- ☑ Communication
- ☑ Collaboration

Co-funded by the European Union

CC BY NC SA

This project has been co-financed with support from the European Commission's ERASMUS+ programme. This publication reflects only the views of its authors, and neither the European Commission nor SEPIE can be held responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained herein.

Theme

Community building, self-empowerment, and alternative economies

Duration

90 min

Level

Beginner

Computational Thinking Steps Used

- ☐ Decomposition
- ☑ Pattern recognition
- ☑ Abstraction
- ☐ Algorithmic thinking

Methodological Approach

- ☑ Gamification
- ☑ Challenge-Based Learning
- ☑ Collaborative learning
- ☑ Experiential learning

b) Information Literacy Competences

- ☐ Ability to access, understand, and critically analyse information
- ☑ Interpretation of digital and visual content
- ☐ Awareness of media influence and biases

c) Life and Career Competences

- ☑ Flexibility and adaptability
- ☐ Initiative and autonomy
- ☑ Sociability and intercultural competence
- ☐ Productivity
- ☑ Leadership and responsibility

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the activity, participants will be able to:

- Articulate at least three personal capabilities or "hidden" skills.
- Actively listen to and identify the needs of others.
- Map out a functional, visual barter exchange network.

Notes

- Materials Needed: Index cards (two different colours, e.g., green for "I can offer", red for "I need"), markers, a large corkboard or wall space, pins, and yarn/string.

- Facilitator Notes: Many low-skilled adults suffer from "imposter syndrome" and may feel they have no valuable skills because they lack formal degrees. Spend the first 20 minutes explicitly validating everyday life skills (fixing a leaky tap, organizing a kitchen, listening to a neighbour). Use the yarn to physically connect the cards, as this makes the abstract concept of a "network" visible and easy to understand for basic-level learners.

The Value Workshop & The Challenge (20 minutes).

Start with a discussion to combat "imposter syndrome." Help participants realize that life experience is a skill set. Introduce the challenge: "Design a system where everyone in this room gets one of their needs met today without spending a single euro." Explain the gamified "Trade Chain"

goal: teams earn points for creating the longest continuous chain of skill trades.

COMPUTATIONAL SENIORS

Co-funded by the European Union

The "Skill Barter" Network Builder

Step 1: Abstraction - Identifying Assets

Hand out the green cards. Ask participants to list three things they can do well. Guide them to use abstraction: instead of writing a formal job title like "Mechanic," write the core capability like "I can fix things with my hands" or "I understand how engines work." This helps focus on the *essence* of the skill rather than the qualification.

Duration app. 15 minutes

Step 2: Identifying Needs

Hand out the red cards. Participants write down three things they need help with at home or in daily life (e.g., "I need someone to help me move a heavy sofa" or "I need a recipe for cheap healthy meals").

Duration app. 15 minutes

Step 3: Pattern Recognition - Mapping the Network

Participants pin their cards to the wall. The group then looks for patterns:

- Do three people need help with gardening?
- Do we have two people who love being outdoors?

Use the yarn to physically link a "Need" card to an "Offer" card. Encourage the creation of "Trade Chains" (e.g., Maria helps Jose with his taxes, Jose fixes Ahmed's bike, Ahmed teaches Maria how to bake bread).

Duration app. 25 minutes

Step 4: Reflection & The Trade Pitch

Review the visual "web" on the wall. Discuss how it felt to see their skills connected to others' needs. Ask: "How can we use this 'algorithm' of bartering in our actual neighborhood?" Award "Trade Chain" points and conclude by emphasizing that information (knowing who can do what) is a powerful tool for independence.

Duration app. 15 minutes