Ready for Work?

A guide to developing the competences of young people entering the world of employment

The Journey of Young People into Employment

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INTRODUCTION

"The future does not wait for the perfect – it waits for the brave."

Each of us will one day stand at the threshold of our working life. Some of us will step forward with confidence, others with questions – but all of us with hope that we will find a job that we enjoy, that fulfils us, allows us to realise our potential, and provides financial security.

The guide **"Ready for Work?"** is here for you if you are at the beginning of your career path, have already had a few part-time jobs, and want to go to work regularly for more than just a pay cheque.

In this guide, we will show you that being "ready for work" does not mean knowing everything. It means being able to learn, to try, to be ready to grow – and also to make mistakes.

You will find tips and activities that help you manage stress, improve communication, understand teamwork, discover what you enjoy, and set up your life so that you have time for yourself – not only for work. These are not boring rules or empty phrases. They are ideas, tasks, and challenges designed to move you forward.

Each chapter gives you something you can try right away – at work, at school, in a part-time job, or simply in everyday life. "It is not only important to have a job. What matters is knowing why you do this kind of work – and how you can grow through it."

So let's begin – slowly, with an open mind and a desire to discover what is inside you and how you can continue to develop it.

"This is a journey that starts with YOU."

1 Positive Approach at Work – your life super-tool

Why should this matter to you?
At work, there will always be someone or something that puts you in a bad mood – a colleague who is late, a customer who complains, or a task that is new to you. The difference between those who move forward and those who stagnate is not luck, but attitude. A positive approach does not mean smiling all the time. I**t is the ability to stay calm, look for solutions, and do things properly – even when no one is watching.**

"A positive approach is not a gift – it is a decision I make every day."

1. Hľadaj riešenia, nie vinníkov

When something goes wrong, do not start with: "It wasn't me." (or "It was him/her.") Instead, ask yourself: "What can I do to fix this?" This approach shows responsibility and professionalism – and that is exactly what employers value most.
Your mission:
Next time a problem appears, suggest at least one possible solution before you start explaining who caused it.

2. Stay calm even under pressure

A positive approach is tested when things do not go according to plan. Instead of shouting or using sarcasm, take a deep breath and respond with respect and a clear head. People who can manage their emotions earn natural respect at work – from managers as well as colleagues.
Your mission:
In the next stressful situation, use a one-minute pause: take a breath, count to five, and only then respond. You will see how the atmosphere changes.

3. Notice what makes sense to you

Your energy depends on whether you see meaning in your work. Even in a part-time job, you can notice what you enjoy, what you are good at, and how your approach affects others. A positive person does not work only for a pay cheque – they find value in learning and growing.

Your mission:

Remember a moment from a part-time job when you felt good. What did you do differently? Write it down – it is your treasure that you can always return to.

Your action plan (what you take with you)

- **Change in mindset**: I will look for solutions, not excuses.
- **Behaviour change**: Before reacting, I will take a pause – breathe, think, respond.
- **Specific goal**: At least once a week, I will reflect on what made sense to me at work or in learning.

Motto for you: ***"A positive approach is not a gift – it is a decision I make every day."***

2 Organisational and Planning Skills your key to calm in chaos

Why should this matter to you?

At work, it is often not enough just to "do the task". You need to know what to do, when, where, with whom, and how. A good plan saves you time, nerves, and energy. It also shows your employer that you can rely on yourself.

The ability to plan and organise is your super skill – it turns chaos into order and completed tasks into success.

"Those who can plan, can cope."

1. Think like a strategist, not like a firefighter

Anyone can react to problems. The real skill is being able to anticipate them. When you have a plan, you have control – and even when something changes, you know where to return. Planning is not about perfect spreadsheets. It is about knowing what matters most.

Your mission:

Take a piece of paper or your phone and write down three things you need to do today. Then add: what you think the priority is, how much time each task needs, and what would happen if you did not do it. This is how you train "work-oriented thinking".

2. A deadline is not a threat

Time pressure is not an enemy – it is a test of your system. If you break tasks down, set priorities, and leave some time reserve, you can handle even the impossible. At work, it is often not only the result that matters, but also the way you achieved it.

Your mission:

Try breaking a complex goal into smaller steps: 1. gather information, 2. plan the steps, 3. check the result. Thanks to small steps, you feel progress every day.

3. Learn to delegate

You do not have to do everything on your own. Delegation does not mean avoiding responsibility – it means trusting others. A good team plan means setting clear tasks, deadlines, and rules of communication. When everyone knows what to do, work flows smoothly – and you keep clarity and calm.

Your mission:

If you have a task that could be done together with others, try to divide it:
Who in the team could help, and what do they need to know?
This trains not only organisation, but also cooperation.

4. Be ready for change

Even the best plans sometimes fall apart. That happens. A professional does not freeze, but quickly looks for new solutions. Flexibility is not a weakness – it is proof that you can respond to change and stay calm.

Your mission:

When something does not go according to plan, do a short reflection:
What happened? What can I do differently next time? What worked well, even though the situation changed?

Your action plan (what you take with you)

- **Change in mindset:** I will no longer wait for tasks – I will plan them in advance.
- **Behaviour change:** Every evening, I will prepare a short plan for the next day.
- **Specific goal:** I will learn to set priorities and complete at least 80% of my plan.

Motto for you: ***"Those who can plan, can cope."***

3 The Secret of Communication – more than just words

Why should this matter to you?

Every day, we say something, write something, respond to something – and sometimes we even argue. However, communication is not only about words. It is also about whether we truly understand each other. At work, it is not enough to say: "Do it." What matters is how you say it, how you listen, and what others feel from it. If you can communicate clearly and with respect, you become someone everyone enjoys working with.

"Communication is not about words. It is about understanding."

1. Listen to understand – not just to reply

Active listening means giving the other person your full attention. You do not immediately think about what you will say next, but instead try to understand what the other person wants to tell you. Eye contact, nodding, asking a question – all of this shows that you are listening.

Your mission:

Today, try three things in a conversation with a colleague or friend: look them in the eyes, do not interrupt, and at the end repeat what you heard: "So you mean that…?" You will notice how the atmosphere changes.

2. Your body speaks louder than your words

People trust what they see more than what they hear. No one will believe you if you frown and say: "It's fine." Tone of voice, posture, facial expression – all of this creates your non-verbal language. When what you say matches how you say it, trust is built.

Your mission:

Try this: stand in front of a mirror and say the sentence: "Good morning, I'm looking forward to working together." Say it first without expression, then with a smile and open posture. Which version feels more convincing to you?

3. Understand that words have “layers”

Every sentence has more than one level. Sometimes you are stating facts, other times you are expressing feelings or expectations. Example: “That task is not finished yet.” This can mean: – a fact: the task is not done, – a relationship message: I am not satisfied, – an emotion: I am stressed, – a request: please finish it. If you want to avoid misunderstandings, ask questions and check whether you understood the message correctly.

Your mission:

When you receive instructions or criticism, do not guess what the other person meant. Simply say: “Just to make sure I understand, do you mean…?” This helps you avoid unnecessary stress and misunderstandings.

4. Stop the “whisper chain” – distorted messages destroy trust

Information passed “second-hand” is like the broken game of Telephone. Everyone adds something, changes something, or leaves something out. If something is unclear, ask directly. Be specific, clear, and always check that the other person understood what you meant.

Your mission:

The next time you receive a work task or a change, check that you understood it correctly, for example by saying: “Do I understand correctly that…?” You will gain clarity and respect.

Your action plan (what you take with you)

- **Change in mindset:** I will listen more than I speak.
- **Behaviour change**: Before reacting, I will think about whether I truly understood what the other person meant.
- **Specific goal**: Once a day, I will check whether my words match my behaviour.

Motto for you: *“Communication is not about words. It is about understanding.”*

4 Teamwork your super skill at work

Why should this matter to you?

In every job, you will work with different people, styles, and opinions.You do not always choose who you work with – but you can choose how you work with them. Teamwork is not only about dividing tasks. It is also about trust, communication, mutual understanding, and respect. When you know how to work well in a team, you become someone everyone wants to work with.

„In a team, success is multiplied and problems are shared.“

1. Every team is like a mosaic

Each team member brings something new and different – experience, pace, ideas, mood. The secret of success lies in how you connect these differences into one whole. A team is not about everyone being the same, but about how well people can complement each other.

Your mission:

Think about your last team (at school, at a part-time job, or in a project).

Write down what your strengths were and what the strengths of others were.You will discover that real strength lies in differences.

2. Share what you know – you help yourself and others

When you share a tip, experience, or idea with someone, you are not helping just one person – you are moving the whole team forward.

Sharing know-how saves time, prevents mistakes, and builds trust.

Your mission:

Next time someone is dealing with something you already know, offer them advice.

Or ask: “How did you do it?”

By doing this, you help create a culture of learning and cooperation – something that is highly valued in teams.

3. Empathy is your team radar

Not everyone has a good day all the time. Sometimes people are quiet, sometimes they are frustrated or angry. Instead of jumping to conclusions, try to understand what is behind another person's behaviour. A team that can empathise with others can also recover from crises more quickly.

Your mission:

If someone in your team seems unpleasant or distant, quietly ask:
"Is everything okay? Do you need anything?" Sometimes one sentence is enough to make someone's day better.

4. One goal – different paths

Everyone in a team can contribute to cooperation in a different way. Some people plan, others solve problems, others encourage the team. In a team, it is not about who is right, but about whether you are moving towards a shared goal. When you are aligned, even difficult tasks become easier.

Your mission:

During a group project, ask yourself: "How can I personally contribute so that we move forward?" That is the language of a true team player.

Your action plan (what you take with you)

- **Change in mindset:** Instead of thinking "me", I will think more about "we".
- **Change in behaviour:** I will try to share my experience with others and give feedback with respect.
- **Specific goal:** At least once a week, I will consciously support someone in my team.

Motto for you: ***"In a team, success is multiplied and problems are divided."***

5 Self-Reflection and Feedback – the mirror in which you grow

Why should this matter to you?

Being successful at work does not mean being perfect. **It means learning from your own experience and being able to accept feedback without fear or anxiety.** Self-reflection is your inner coach – it helps you understand what you do well, where you can improve, and how to move forward. Feedback is your compass – if you know how to accept it, it will guide you in the right direction.

"A mirror does not show you mistakes – it shows you where you can grow."

1. Look in the mirror – honestly, not harshly

Self-reflection is not about searching for your flaws. It is about learning from experience. When you admit to yourself what did not go well, you do not lose value – on the contrary, you gain wisdom. Being honest with yourself is a sign of strength, not weakness.

Your mission:

Think of a situation that did not go as planned (at work, school, or at home). Write down what you did well, what could be done better, and what it taught you. A small failure today = a big lesson tomorrow.

2. Feedback is not an attack

Not all feedback hurts – only the kind we take as a personal attack. Constructive feedback is a gift – it shows you how you can move forward. The "sandwich method" works simply: start with appreciation, suggest steps for improvement in the middle, and end with encouragement.

Your mission:

When someone gives you feedback, do not defend yourself immediately. Take a deep breath and say: "Thank you for telling me." Then reflect: What is useful for me in this feedback? What can I apply in my life?

3. Every problem can teach you something

The STAR method helps you look at a difficult situation with perspective:
S – Situation: What happened? T – Task: What was my responsibility?
A – Action: How did I respond? R – Result: What did I learn?
When you write it down, you will see that every mistake hides a life lesson.
Your mission:
Choose one challenging moment from your recent job or part-time work. Go through it using the STAR method and write down what you learned about yourself. This is how you build your "growth journal."

4. Be someone who grows – and helps others grow

It is important to know how to accept feedback, but it is even more important to know how to give it. If you need to point something out, do it with respect. Avoid sentences like: "You did it wrong." Replace them with: "Next time, try this – it might help." Respect opens ears. Blame closes them.
Your mission:
Try giving someone feedback using the sandwich method:
1.praise / appreciation, 2. suggestion for improvement, 3. encouragement.
Notice how the reaction changes.

Your action plan (what you take with you)

- **Change in mindset:** I will not be afraid of feedback – I will see it as help, not criticism.
- **Behaviour change:** After every bigger task, I will do a short self-reflection: "What went well? What can I improve?"
- **Specific goal**: At least once a month, I will ask for feedback about myself – from a colleague, friend, or supervisor.

Motto for you: ***"A mirror does not show you mistakes – it shows you where you can grow."***

6 Problem Solving – when an obstacle becomes an opportunity

Why should this matter to you?

At work, problems and obstacles are unavoidable. The difference between those who get stressed and those who move forward lies in how they approach them. A problem can be your dead end – or your launch pad. Learn to think analytically: break things down, understand them, think them through, and find a solution. You are not "the one who has a problem", but the one who knows how to solve it.

"Those who can analyse can turn a problem into success."

1. Slow down so you can move forward

For some people, the first reaction to a problem is panic or a quick "backup plan". Try to pause and ask yourself: What is really happening? Why is it happening? Who is involved? When you understand the core of the problem, you already have part of the solution.

Your mission:

The next time something goes wrong, do not rush to fix it immediately. Write down three questions: What is the real problem? Who is involved? What do I want to change?

2. Break the problem into small parts

Big problem = big pressure. But when you break it down, you will see that each part is manageable. Divide the issue into causes, consequences, and possible solutions. Small steps are faster than big leaps.

Your mission:

Choose one problem that is bothering you at work. Draw it as a map: write the problem in the centre and all ideas for solving it around it. Then circle the ones you can influence – start there.

3. Every idea counts

Sometimes the best solutions come from “crazy” ideas. When brainstorming, the rule is simple: do not judge, do not dismiss, write everything down. Creative thinking is like a muscle – the more you use it, the stronger it becomes.

Your mission:

You have a topic you need to solve. For 5 minutes, write down all ideas that come to your mind – even the wild ones. Then choose three that seem most realistic and take the first step.

4. Always ask: “What works and what doesn’t?”

Analytical thinking means looking at the outcome and evaluating what works. Not to criticise someone, but to improve the process. Every problem can teach you something if you look at it with distance.

Your mission:

After you manage to solve something, pause and write down: What worked? What would I do differently next time? What did I learn about myself?

Your action plan (what you take with you)

- **Change in mindset:** I will not see problems only as obstacles, but also as opportunities to improve.
- **Behaviour change**: Before solving a problem, I will take a short pause and identify its real core.
- **Specific goal**: Once a month, I will choose a real-life problem and solve it systematically using these steps: understand → break down → solve → evaluate.

Motto for you: ***“Those who can analyse can turn a problem into success.”***

7 Proactive Approach – your starter for success

Why should this matter to you?

At work, there are two ways to operate: reactively (you wait until someone tells you what to do) or proactively (you actively look for ways to contribute, improve, and grow). Employers notice not only your skills, but also your attitude. A proactive person does not wait for instructions – they act with reason and genuine interest. This is exactly why they become an irreplaceable member of the team.

"A reactive person waits for an opportunity. A proactive person creates one."

1. Think ahead, not backwards

A proactive person asks: "What can I do to make things work better?" They anticipate problems and look for solutions before they appear. They do not need to wait for instructions – they act because they care about the result.

Your mission:

Pay attention to what could be improved at work or in your team. Choose one thing you can influence and take the first step. Start with the question: "What can I do?"

2. Do not be afraid to ask and offer help

Being proactive does not mean knowing everything – it means being curious and engaged. When something is happening, ask: "How can I help?" or "What could I do differently?" Questions are proof that you care about your work.

Your mission:

During the next team task, offer help to a colleague without waiting to be asked. You may find that your approach positively influences others as well.

3. Look for solutions, not excuses

A reactive person says: “It’s not my fault.” A proactive person says: “What can I do so this doesn’t happen again?” Taking responsibility is not a burden – it is an advantage.

Your mission:

When something goes wrong, instead of complaining, write down: “What happened?” “What could I influence?” “What will I do differently next time?”

4. Be a light in the team

A proactive person brings energy, ideas, and solutions. They help when they see it is needed, encourage others when things are quiet, and are not afraid to suggest change when they see a better way.

Your mission:

Once a week, try to do something extra – help a colleague, tidy a shared space, or ask how you can contribute. Small steps can have a big impact.

Your action plan (what you take with you)

- **Change in mindset:** I will not wait for someone to tell me what is needed – I will take action.
- **Behaviour change**: Every day, I will ask myself: “What can I do to make things better?”
- **Specific goal**: Once a month, I will suggest one concrete improvement at work or in my team.

Motto for you: ***“A reactive person waits for an opportunity. A proactive person creates one.”***

8 Decision making – when you have to choose a path

Why should this matter to you?

Every day, you make decisions – what to wear, what to write, where to go.

At work, however, decisions carry more weight – they affect colleagues, results, and your position.

Some decisions are quick, others require more energy. The good news? Decision-making can be trained – just like a muscle. You only need to know techniques that help you think clearly, not under pressure.

„Making a decision means moving forward."

1. Decide wisely, not quickly

Stress and pressure often push you to act impulsively. Sometimes it pays off to slow down, take a breath, and ask yourself three questions: What is the real problem? Which solution will have the biggest impact? What will happen if I do not do anything? A decision is not about perfection, but about making a conscious choice.

Your mission:

At your next decision (at work, school, or home), pause for 30 seconds and go through these three questions. You will discover that your brain works better in calm than under pressure.

2. The 80/20 rule – focus on what has the greatest impact

Only 20% of actions create 80% of results. **Focus on what truly matters – not on what is the loudest.** This also applies at work: not everything urgent is important. Learn to sort tasks by impact and do not let stress control you.

Your mission:

Write down five tasks you have ahead of you. Mark those that will truly move your work forward – these are your "top 20%." Start with them.

3. Listen to all the voices in your head

When making decisions, you carry a whole "team" in your head: logic (calculates risks), emotions (tell you how you feel), values (show you direction), fear (holds you back). What matters is which voice you choose to listen to in the end.

Your mission:

Think of a decision that was difficult for you. Which "voice" was the loudest at the time? Which one did you maybe ignore? Write down how you would react now, knowing more than you did then.

4. The worst-case scenario can actually bring calm

If you are afraid to decide, try the worst-case scenario technique. Ask yourself: "What is the worst that can happen if I do this?" You will often find that the "disaster" is not as bad as you imagined. When you realise you could handle even the worst case, it paradoxically brings calm – because you are prepared.

Your mission:

For every bigger decision, write down 2–3 possible consequences. Evaluate which of them are manageable – and act accordingly.

Your action plan (what you take with you)

- **Change in mindset**: A decision is not a threat – it is an opportunity to show who I am.
- **Behaviour change**: Before every choice, I will take a short pause and answer three questions: What? Why? How?
- **Specific goal**: At least once a week, I will consciously notice how I decided and what it brought.

Motto for you:"Making a decision means moving forward."

9 Motivational Approach at Work - your inner drive

Why should this matter to you?

Everyone has days when they do not feel like doing anything. It is exactly at those moments that what truly drives us becomes visible. Motivation is like an engine – you can start it from the outside (money, praise), but without inner drive, you will eventually get tired. This section will help you discover what can truly move you forward – at work and in life.

"Motivation does not start with a command – it starts with curiosity and purpose."

1. Discover your drive

Some people are driven by salary, others by the meaning of their work.
Both are fine, but those who do something that fulfils them have long-term energy. Ask yourself: "What gives me the feeling that my work matters?" This is your inner engine – take care of it.

Your mission:

Write down three reasons why you go to work or a part-time job.
Which of them motivates you from within (joy, purpose, growth)?

2. Boost yourself when you don't feel like it

It does not always come naturally. Everyone has an occasional "Monday" – a day when motivation is low. Motivation can be trained like a muscle.
A small step is enough: music, a short break, movement, or a conversation with someone who encourages you. The key is not to give up immediately – sometimes moving just a little is enough for energy to return.

Your mission:

Choose one technique that motivates you the most (music, a goal, a reward, movement, conversation). Try using it when fatigue appears.

3. Learn and you will grow

Learning is not only about school. Every new skill increases your confidence and sense of growth. When you learn something new – even a small thing – your brain sends you a message: "I managed it!" And that is the best motivation.

Your mission:

Choose one small thing you want to learn this week – a new trick, a recipe, photo editing – and try it. The feeling of success will boost you.

4. Be a voice of motivation for others

Motivation is contagious. Your energy can encourage the people around you. When you appreciate a colleague, praise someone, or say: "We can do this," you improve the atmosphere. Motivational words matter – including yours.

Your mission:

Find someone at work today and say something encouraging. Not because you have to – but because you want to, and it will change the mood of the whole team.

Your action plan (what you take with you)

- **Change in mindset:** I will pay attention to what truly motivates me at work – not only rewards.
- **Behavioural change**: Every day, I will remind myself of at least one reason why my work matters.
- **Specific goal:** I will regularly learn something new that strengthens my motivation and self-confidence.

Motto for you: "Motivation does not start with a command – it starts with curiosity and purpose."

10 Managing Stress your calm in chaos

Why should this matter to you?
Stress affects all of us – at school, at work, and at home.
It is not your enemy, as long as you know how to work with it.
On the contrary – a small amount of stress can motivate you to perform better.
The key is **"not to let stress take the wheel."**
Learn how to recognise it, manage it, and use it to your advantage.

"Stress can slow me down or make me stronger. The decision of how I use it is mine."

1. Identify what stresses you

Each of us has different stress triggers. Some people feel stressed by time pressure, others by unclear instructions or criticism. When you know what triggers stress for you, you can prepare for it. The first step in managing stress is understanding yourself.

Your mission:
Think of three situations at work or in a part-time job that cause you stress. Write them down and note what could help you in each situation.

2. Use the S-T-O-P technique

When you feel tension, use a simple technique that helps you gain perspective.
S – Stop: Pause. Do not react immediately.
T – Take a breath: Take a deep breath.
O – Observe: Notice what is happening –what you feel and what triggered you.
P – Proceed: Respond thoughtfully, not emotionally.
This short pause helps you regain control of the situation – and of yourself.

Your mission:
Try the STOP technique the next time you feel stressed – for example before a conversation with your manager or during a conflict with a colleague. Observe what changes.

3. Create your personal work-health manifesto

Stress will not disappear completely, but you can set boundaries for it. Write down your own principles: how you want to react under pressure, what calms you, and which values you want to protect at work. Your "manifesto" will help you maintain inner calm when external circumstances change.

Your mission:

Write the sentence: "In challenging situations, I will try to…" Complete it in your own way and place it somewhere you can see it every day.

Your action plan (what you take with you)

- **Change in mindset:** I will learn to recognise when stress is controlling me – and when I am controlling stress.
- **Behaviour change:** I will use the STOP technique whenever I feel pressure.
- **Specific goal:** Once a week, I will do a short reflection – what stressed me and how I handled it.

Motto for you: ***"Stress can slow me down or make me stronger. The decision of how I use it is mine."***

11 Ethical Approach and Responsibility – doing the right thing, even when no one is watching

Why should this matter to you?

At work, it is not only about doing what needs to be done. It is also about how you do it. An ethical approach means acting honestly, behaving fairly, and taking responsibility for your decisions. Not because someone expects it from you – but because you know it is the right thing to do. This approach is noticed by every employer, but most importantly, you notice it yourself.

**"Ethics is not only about rules.
It is about the kind of person you choose to be."**

1. Be fair – even when it would be easy to 'cut corners'

At work, you will face small temptations: to shorten or simplify a task, to hide something, or to stay silent about a mistake. In the short term, it may seem convenient. In the long term, however, you lose trust – and trust is hard to regain. Honesty and reliability are your best "work references."

Your mission:

When you make a mistake, admit it. Do not think about how to hide it, but how to fix it. Write down: "How would I want others to treat me if I made a mistake?" Then act towards others in the same way.

2. Every link in the chain matters

Responsibility is not only about you. It is also about how your work and your attitude affect others. If someone does not deliver their part, the whole project can fail. Responsibility means keeping agreements, keeping your word, and informing others when you are running late.

Your mission:

Ask yourself: "When was the last time someone was waiting for my part of the work?" Next time you are running behind, say it in advance.

Responsibility is not about perfection – it is about fairness.

3. The courage to do the right thing

It is not always easy to speak up when someone behaves unethically or unfairly. But these moments show who you really are. An ethical person does not lecture others – they simply act according to their values. Sometimes it is enough to say: "This doesn't feel right to me."

Your mission:

If you witness something that does not seem right (gossip, blaming, injustice, disrespect), try to respond calmly and politely. Not because you have to – but because it positively changes the atmosphere at work.

4. Respect and trust – the foundation of good relationships

Fair behaviour creates a positive environment where people feel safe. When you respect others, they will respect you. Protect trust through your behaviour.

Your mission:

Today, do one small act of respect: thank a colleague, praise someone's effort, encourage someone, or apologise if you were unfair. This is how a culture of trust is built.

Your action plan (what you take with you)

- **Change in mindset:** I will not look for excuses, but for solutions – even when it is uncomfortable.
- **Behaviour change**: I will communicate openly if I am running late or if something does not feel fair.
- **Specific goal**: At least once a week, I will do a short and honest "responsibility reflection" – what I handled fairly and ethically, and what I can still improve.

Motto for you: ***"Ethics is not only about rules. It is about the kind of person you choose to be."***

12 Adaptability and Flexibility – your recipe for handling change

Why should this matter to you?
The world of work changes faster than the playlist of your favourite DJ. A new manager, new colleagues, different rules, unexpected situations – these are all common challenges. Some people get lost in them, others use them to their advantage. The difference lies in how you adapt. Being adaptable does not mean letting yourself drift. It means finding your own path through change while keeping inner stability. "Change happens – growth is a choice."

"Change happens – growth is a choice."

1. Accept change as a challenge, not a threat

Change brings uncertainty, but also an opportunity to learn something new. You might ask yourself: "Why is this happening?" Try asking a different question: "What can I learn from this?"
Everyone who can adapt has an advantage at work – because they can handle situations that surprise others.
Your mission:
Think of a situation when something changed at your work (a new colleague, a new system, different tasks). What did you learn thanks to that change? Write it down as a "small success."

2. Be flexible like bamboo, not rigid like stone

Flexibility does not mean giving up your own opinion – it means being able to respond. When something does not work according to plan, try a new approach. Those who can adapt properly do not break – and this also applies at work.
Your mission:
Next time something does not go as expected, do not feel sorry for yourself. Ask: "What can I do differently?" Then try one new approach.

3. The challenge zone = the growth zone

The best things happen outside your comfort zone. When you try something new, you grow – even if it is not perfect or visible at first. Do not be afraid of challenges that move you forward. Between boredom and panic, there is a zone where progress happens – your challenge zone.

Your mission:

Choose one area where you want to feel more confident (communication, working with technology, teamwork). Take a small step and observe how you feel after overcoming the initial fear.

4. Learn to swim in change

Flexibility is like swimming – the more you practise, the easier it is to stay afloat. Do not be afraid to ask others for help, try new tasks, or experiment. Every new step strengthens your resilience.

Your mission:

Find someone around you who handles change calmly. Ask them what helps them most – you may discover that the secret is simplicity and humour.

Your action plan (what you take with you)

- **Change in mindset**: I will not be afraid of change – I will see it as a chance to grow.
- **Behaviour change**: When a situation changes, instead of resistance I will say: "Alright, let's look for a solution."
- **Specific goal**: Once a month, I will try something that moves me from my comfort zone into the challenge zone.

Motto for you: ***"Change happens – growth is a choice."***

BONUS

to the guide for developing the competences of young people entering the world of employment

1 How to Prepare an Attractive CV

Why should this matter to you?

A CV (Curriculum Vitae) is not just a list of dates and schools you have attended. It is your personal story about what you have achieved and where you want to go. An employer spends on average 20 seconds reading a CV – that is why it must be clear, structured, and honest. Your CV should show that you are a person the employer would like to work with.

"Do not wait for the perfect moment – start writing your story today."

1. CV structure

1. Personal details

Name, contact details (phone number, e-mail), city (not full address).

Do not use e-mail addresses such as "coolboy123" or ones that contain nicknames instead of your real name.

2. Profile – About me (2–3 sentences)

Briefly describe who you are, what you enjoy, what you are good at, and what you are looking for.

Example:

I am a student with experience in customer service. I enjoy working with people and learning new things. I want to develop my communication and organisational skills in the service sector.

3. Work experience / part-time jobs

Include:

- name of the company/organisation,
- your position,
- dates (month – year; clearly define the time period),
- briefly what you did and what you learned.

Do not write only: "I worked in a snack bar", but rather: "Responsible for the cash register, customer service, teamwork."

4. Education
School you attended, field of study, year of completion. If you are still studying, write for example: 2022 – present.

5. Volunteering and projects (if you have any)
Every activity is a plus. It shows that you are active and willing to get involved.

6. Skills and languages
List only skills you can actually use – and state the level (e.g. English – B1). Also include soft skills, such as: communication, reliability, teamwork.

2. What to avoid

- **spelling mistakes** – ask someone to proofread your CV,
- **too much text** – your CV should be clear and concise,
- **decorative graphics** – do not use emojis, icons, or charts,
- **different photos** – use only one neutral, professional profile photo.

3. How to turn part-time job experience into skills

Part-time job / task	Skills developed
shop assistant / customer service	communication, stress management, responsibility
summer job in a warehouse	organisation, responsibility, time management
helping at events	organisation, flexibility, working with people
volunteering	empathy, initiative, community awareness

Every experience can be described as a skill if you name it correctly..

4. Your mission

1. Write the first version of your CV – it is normal if it contains mistakes.
2. Ask someone you truly trust (teacher, friend, colleague, youth worker) to give you feedback.
3. Edit your CV into its final version and focus on your strengths.

5. Action plan (what you take with you)

- **Change in mindset**: My CV is not just a piece of paper – it is my business card.
- **Behavioral change**: Before every submission, I will reread my CV
- "through the eyes of an employer".
- **Specific goal**: I will create a digital version of my CV that I can always access and update continuously with new experiences and skills.

Motto for you: ***"Do not wait for the perfect moment – start writing your story today."***

2 A Motivation Letter with a Soul

Why should this matter to you?

A motivation letter is your opportunity to show why the job matters to you and what you personally can offer. Recruiters read hundreds of letters – most of them sound the same. If you write honestly about why you enjoy the job and what previous experience you have gained from work or part-time jobs, your letter will have a soul – and you will gain an advantage over other candidates applying for the position.

"A motivation letter is your voice on paper. Let it represent who you are."

1. Structure of a motivation letter

1. Introduction – Who am I and why am I writing?

Briefly introduce yourself. State which position you are applying for and why it caught your interest.

Example: My name is Martina Kováčová, and I am a fourth-year student at a hotel academy. I enjoy working with people, which is why I am interested in your part-time position at Café Park restaurant.

2. Main body – What do I offer?

Describe your experience and skills. Use specific examples of what you can do and what you have learned.

Example: During my summer job, I learned how to communicate with customers, work in a team, and handle stress in more demanding situations. People see me as a reliable and responsible person who learns new things quickly.

3. Conclusion – Why should they choose you, and what do you expect from the position?

Express your interest in a personal meeting.

Example: I believe that my experience and approach could be an asset to your team. I would be happy to discuss the possibilities of cooperation in person. Thank you for your time and I look forward to your response.

2. Your mission

1. Write a motivation letter for one job offer you would choose.
2. Do not only describe what you did, but also what you learned.
3. Read it out loud – do you feel like you would want to hire this person for your team?

3. Action plan (what you take with you)

- **Change in mindset**: I will not copy templates – I will write about myself honestly and with energy.
- **Behavioral change**: Before sending the letter, I will read it out loud so it sounds natural.
- **Specific goal**: I will create a universal motivation letter that I can adapt to different job offers.

Motto for you: ***"A motivation letter is your voice on paper. Let it represent who you are."***

4. BONUS – Sample motivation letter

Name Surname
City | Phone | E-mail

Company name

Dear Team,

My name is Ema Nová, and I am responding to your offer for a part-time administrative position. I am a third-year student at a business academy, and I am looking for a job where I can use my organisational skills and acquired knowledge.

During my previous office job, I learned how to work with people, documents, and time. I enjoy keeping things organised and helping colleagues so that we can complete all tasks on time together.

I am responsible, communicative, and eager to learn. I believe that I could be a valuable addition to your team.

Thank you for your time, and I look forward to meeting you in person.

Kind regards,
Ema Nová

Tip for the attachment

At the end, you can add a short checklist. Before sending, check that your letter is:

- addressed to the correct company and job position,
- free of mistakes and typos,
- clear, honest, and concise,
- sent as a PDF together with your CV.

3 Self-presentation in a Job Interview – show who you are, not only what you know

Why should this matter to you?

A job interview is not an exam. It is a conversation about future cooperation.

The employer wants to understand how you think, how you approach responsibilities, and whether you will fit into the team. It is not only about your experience, but also about what you project. Self-presentation is your way of showing that you are prepared, responsible, and willing to grow.

"Confidence is not about being perfect. It is about believing in what you can offer."

1. Three golden rules of success

1. Be prepared

Find out basic information about the company you want to work for. What do they do, what do they produce, how do they communicate, and which values do they prefer?

This shows genuine interest.

Example: "I was impressed by your work with young people and your projects in education. That is exactly the area where I would like to develop further."

2. Be natural

Do not try to act perfect. Instead, honestly show what you already know and what you still want to learn. Employers value humility and effort more than perfection.

3. Be concise and to the point

You will most likely hear the question: "Tell us something about yourself."

Do not start with your whole life story.

Focus on three points:

Who are you? → What can you do? → Why are you here?

Your mission no. 1

Try to answer these three questions:

1. What do I want my future employer to remember about me?
2. Which of my strengths do I want to highlight?
3. How can I contribute to the team?

Write your answers down and turn them into a 30-second "mini self-presentation."

2. How to answer the most common interview questions

"Tell us something about yourself."
Focus on three areas – education, experience, strengths.
Example: "I study economics and during my studies I worked part-time in a shop. I learned how to communicate with customers and handle stressful situations. Now I would like to use these skills in a job where I can continue to grow."

"What are your strengths?"
Choose 2–3 real qualities and support them with an example.
Example: "I am responsible and precise – for example, during my summer job I was in charge of the cash register and daily closing."

"And your weaknesses?"
Show that you are working on yourself.
Example: "Sometimes I want everything to be perfect, but I am learning that it is often better to finish tasks on time than to keep improving them endlessly."

"Why should we choose you?"
Connect your abilities with what the company needs.
Example: "I am a fast learner, I enjoy working with people, and I have a positive attitude. I believe I can contribute to the team with energy and reliability."

Super!

3. Body language

Your body speaks before your words.
Maintain eye contact, smile, offer a firm (not strong) handshake, and keep an upright posture. Show interest – nod, react, listen. Answer calmly and do not rush.
Small tip: Smile at yourself in the mirror before the interview.
It sets your mind into a positive mode and reduces nervousness.

Your mission no. 2

With a classmate, friend, or youth worker, role-play a job interview.
One asks questions, the other answers.

Then give each other feedback: "What felt confident? What seemed unnecessarily nervous?"

4. Action plan (what you take with you)

- **Change in mindset**: An interview is not an interrogation – it is a conversation about new opportunities.
- **Behaviour change**: Before every interview, I will say three sentences to myself:
- "I am prepared. I know what I can do. I know what I want."
- **Specific goal**: Once a month, I will practise my self-presentation out loud (for example in front of a mirror or with a friend).

Motto for you: ***"Confidence is not about being perfect. It is about believing in what you can offer."***

BONUS – Mini checklist “Before the interview”

Check	Ready? (yes / no)
My clothes look neat and appropriate:	
I know three sentences about myself that I want to say:	
I know the company name and the job position:	
I have a question prepared for the employer:	
I know where and when the interview takes place:	
I have my CV printed (and also on my phone):	

4 Body Language and First Impressions – when you speak without words

Why should this matter to you?

It has been proven that a first impression is formed within 7 seconds. Before you say anything, the other person has already created an idea about you. At work and during a job interview, it is not only what you say that matters, but how you behave while saying it. Your body sends signals about whether you are open, nervous, confident, or uninterested. When you understand body language, you can come across as natural and trustworthy.

"I believe in myself. This is a positive quality that I radiate, and others can feel it."

1. Body language – your non-verbal "self"

Posture: stand upright, push your shoulders back, keep your head up – this shows readiness and confidence.

Eye contact: expresses interest and sincerity (not staring, but a natural connection).

Smile: opens doors – it helps release tension and makes you appear friendly.

Hands: keep them relaxed, do not hide them in your pockets or cross them over your chest – this looks defensive.

Remember: your body, voice, and words should "work together".
If you look at the ground but say: "I'm looking forward to it" – your body reveals the opposite.

Your mission no. 1

Stand in front of a mirror or record a short video (for example, how you introduce yourself). Then ask yourself:

1. Do I come across as friendly and open?
2. Is my posture upright and my breathing calm?
3. Do I smile naturally?

Make small adjustments – and notice how the energy you project changes.

2. First impressions in practice

1. At a job interview or at work
Arrive on time – punctuality is the first "yes".
Smile and greet politely. Say your name clearly and with a smile.
Shake hands firmly and confidently, but not too strongly. Sit down only when invited – this shows respect.

2. During the conversation
– maintain eye contact,
– nod when listening,
– do not cross your arms,
– avoid tapping your fingers or feet (it signals nervousness).

3. After saying goodbye
Thank them for their time – even if you feel like it did not go well.
Professionalism stays in people's memory longer than a perfect answer.

3. Your body - your ally

When you feel nervous, your body can "save" you – simply relax your shoulders, take a breath, and straighten your back.
Your body sends a signal to your brain: *"I am okay."*
And your brain believes it.

Before entering an interview, try the following:
– take two deep breaths,
– smile,
– say to yourself: "I have something to offer."

Your mission no. 2

Choose one situation where you want to appear more confident (a job interview, a presentation, a new part-time job).
Practise your posture, voice, and smile in front of a friend or a mirror.
Ask yourself: *"What makes me appear confident?"*
Write it down – this is your personal strength you can rely on.

4. Action plan (takeaway points)

- **Change in mindset:** A first impression is not about beauty – it is about posture and presence.
- **Change in behaviour:** I will observe how my body behaves in different situations.
- **Specific goal:** At least once a week, I will consciously practise posture and eye contact during a conversation.

Motto for you: ***"I believe in myself. This is a positive quality that I radiate, and others can feel it."***

BONUS – Mini checklist "Before the interview"

Check	**Ready?** (yes/no)
I am standing upright, I am breathing calmly:	
I am smiling naturally:	
I greet first:	
Handshake – appropriately firm:	
Eye contact and attention:	

5 How to Recognise What I Enjoy
(self-awareness and career direction)

Why should this matter to you?
Choosing a job you enjoy is like finding a place where you feel at home.
Not because the job is easy, but because **it has meaning for you**.
That is why it is important to **start getting to know yourself**: what gives you energy, when you lose track of time and also what drains you.

"Direction is not found at the first attempt – it appears when you start walking."

1. Get to know your strengths

Everyone is good at something – sometimes they just do not see it because they take it for granted. Think about these questions:
What comes easily to me, even when others find it difficult?
What do people often praise me for?
When do I feel happy after completing a task?

Examples:

- you enjoy helping people → work in services, education, healthcare
- you are precise and reliable → administration, logistics, accounting
- you enjoy creating → design, marketing, arts
- you are active and need movement → technical fields, sports, field work

Your mission no. 1

Write down three answers to the question:
"During which activities do I feel that I am in my element?"
Then add **which skills** you use in those activities.
This is how you start creating a map of your strengths.

2. What I enjoy versus what the world needs

Joy at work comes from:
- what you enjoy,
- what you are good at,
- what has meaning for others

This is called **“ikigai”**(a Japanese concept of finding meaning in life).

Example:
If you enjoy helping others and can communicate well, working with people may fulfil you. If you enjoy planning, you may be an organiser. If you enjoy creating, you may be a designer or a craftsperson.

Your mission no. 2

Draw three circles and write into them:
-what you enjoy,
-what you are good at,
-what you believe has meaning.

Where the circles overlap – that is your ikigai. That is where it is worth looking for direction.

3. How to try and explore

You do not need to know immediately “what you want to do for the rest of your life”. What matters is **trying different things:** part-time jobs, volunteering, courses and workshops, youth projects.
Experience will show you **what suits you – and what does not.**
Sometimes discovering “this is not for me” is just as valuable as finding the right path.

Your mission no. 3

Write down three experiences from the past year that taught you something about yourself.
For each one, add:

- what you liked,
- what you did not like,
- what you learned from it.

*T*hese answers create your “work compass”.

4. Action plan (takeaway points)

- **Change in mindset:** I will not wait until I know exactly what I want – I will explore it through experience.
- **Change in behaviour:** Every month, I will try one new thing
- (a task, course, project).
- **Specific goal:** Within six months, I will create a “map of my strengths” – five areas where I feel confident and capable.

Motto for yourself: ***“Direction is not found at the first attempt – it appears when you start walking.”***

BONUS – Mini test: “Where do I feel at home?”

Situation / task	**How do I feel?** ☺ ☹ 😐
Helping other people	
Creative activity (writing, drawing, design)	
Working with numbers, tables	
Physical activity, field work	
Organising tasks or events	
Problem-solving, analysis	

Evaluation:
Where you have the most ☺ are areas worth exploring further.

6 How to Respond to Failure
(…when you were not accepted)

W**hy should this matter to you?**
Not every interview ends with the words: "Congratulations, we are hiring you."And that is okay. Successful people are not only those who succeed immediately — but those who get back up after a fall, learn from it, and move forward. Failure is not proof that you have failed. It is proof that you are trying to grow.

"Every NO moves you closer to the right YES."

1. Try to look at it differently

Rejection is not personal – often, an employer simply has different criteria, experience requirements, or timing.
Not being selected does not mean you are not good enough – it means that, at this moment, someone else was prioritised.
You may, however, **be perfect for another opportunity and profession.**

Example:
Someone is not hired at a café, but a few weeks later is accepted at a hotel, where they fit perfectly.
Not because they changed – but because they found the right place.

Your mission no. 1

After every job interview, write down three questions:
1. What went well during the interview?
2. What could I do better next time?
3. What did I learn about myself?

These are your golden lessons – they will help you grow and prepare better for the next attempt.

2. Say thank you and stay in touch

Even if you were not accepted, you can still leave a good impression.
Send a short message or email:

"Thank you for the opportunity to take part in the selection process. I would be happy to hear from you regarding future opportunities."

This attitude shows professionalism, politeness, and self-confidence.
Sometimes, they may contact you later – precisely because you responded in a respectful and mature way.

Your mission no. 2

If you experienced rejection, create a small ritual for yourself.
Write down: "What did this experience give me?"
Then treat yourself to something small that brings you joy – a film, a walk, a coffee, or a conversation with a friend. Every ending deserves a full stop – so you can move on.

3. Every "no" teaches you something

From every interview, you gain experience – how you respond to questions, what surprised you, how you felt.
All of this becomes your training in resilience. The most valuable growth often comes when things do not work out.

Example:
After three unsuccessful interviews, I realised that I needed to practise my answers more. The fourth one worked out – because I was calmer and more confident.

4. Action plan (what you take forward)

- **Change in mindset**: Rejection is not failure, but information that I should try a different path.
- **Behaviour change**: After each interview, I will do a short reflection (not self-judgement) – this is also a way of learning.
- **Specific goal**: Within one month, I will create at least one new opportunity – an application, an interview, or enrolling in a course.

Motto for you: ***"Every NO moves you closer to the right YES."***

BONUS – Mini reflection sheet after an interview

Question	My answer
How did I feel during the interview?	
What went well?	
What do I want to improve?	
What new thing did I learn about myself?	
How do I want to stay motivated going forward?	

7 Digital Profile and Safe Behaviour Online

(...or the internet remembers more than you think)

Why should this matter to you?

It has been proven that 3 out of 5 employers search for candidates online before inviting them to an interview. What they find creates their first impression. Your digital profile speaks about you – even when you are silent.

It shows your values, the way you communicate, and what you share. Learn how to be safely visible and how to present yourself in the best possible light.

"Every post you want to publish online should be carefully considered."

1.Your digital footprint

Everything you do online – posts, comments, photos, likes – stays there.

Even if you delete something, someone may have already downloaded it, shared it, or remembered it.

This is your **digital footprint** – and it follows you.

Think of it as your online business card:

– behave in a way that you would feel comfortable handing it to a future employer.

Your mission no. 1

"Google" your name. Look at what appears – posts, images, comments.

Think about:

Do I appear trustworthy and professional?

Is there something I would not want my future boss to see?

What represents me positively?

If something is not right, delete it, edit it, or change privacy settings.

2. How to create a good digital profile

Profile photo: should be neutral, natural, with a smile
Description (bio): briefly say who you are and what you enjoy (you do not need to write everything)
LinkedIn: if you have it, use it – add part-time jobs, projects, volunteering
Share content that shows your interests: e.g. teamwork, creativity, projects you enjoy

Your privacy is your responsibility.
Use two-factor authentication, strong passwords, and do not click on suspicious links.

Your mission no. 2

Choose one of your social media profiles and:
1. update your profile photo,
2. check the visibility of older posts,
3. add something that represents you positively
(e.g. an achievement, project, or volunteering activity).

3. Online behaviour = your attitude

Your behaviour online says a lot about you, so:

- respect others, even when you disagree,
- do not spread hoaxes, false information, or hate,
- behave online the way you would in a face-to-face conversation.

Your online tone transfers into the real world.
Build a **digital reputation that reflects your real values.**

4. Action plan (takeaway points)

- **Change in mindset:** The internet is not anonymous – what I share represents me.
- **Change in behaviour:** I will regularly check my online accounts and posts.
- **Specific goal:** Within one month, I will create (or update) my professional profile on LinkedIn or another platform.

Motto for you: ***"Every post you want to publish online should be carefully considered."***

BONUS – Mini reflection checklist

Question	**YES / NO**
Do I use different passwords for different accounts?	
Do I have two-factor authentication enabled?	
Does my social media profile contain offensive content?	
Do I have a photo that represents me respectfully?	
Do I share online only what I would also say in person?	

8 My Employment Rights and Responsibilities

...because fairness applies to both sides

Why should this matter to you?

By starting a job or a part-time job, you take on responsibility towards yourself, your employer, and the team. Knowing your rights gives you confidence; knowing your responsibilities earns you the trust of others. When you know what to expect – and what is expected of you – you can make fair and safe decisions at work.

"Fairness is not one-sided – it applies to both the employee and the employer."

1. Your basic rights at work

The right to an employment contract

Every job, including a part-time job, must be based on a written agreement or contract.

It should include:

- job title,
- working hours,
- rate of pay,
- pay date,
- place of work,
- duration of the agreement.
-

Never start working without an agreement – it protects you, including in cases of injury or unpaid wages.

The right to fair pay

The agreed wage (or remuneration) must be paid on time and in full.

If this does not happen, you have the right to contact the Labour Inspectorate or seek advice from a job centre.

The right to breaks and rest

If you work more than 6 hours, you are entitled to a minimum 30-minute break.

You must also have days off – working without rest is against the law.

Your mission no. 1

Check whether your last job or part-time job included everything necessary:

- a contract,
- a clearly agreed rate of pay,
- agreed working hours,
- a break.

If not, write down what you would like to have agreed more clearly next time.

2. Your basic responsibilities at work

At work, it is not only about rights, but you also have responsibilities.
Keep agreements and deadlines.
If you agree to arrive at 9:00 a.m., be on time and keep your word.
Responsibility starts with small things.
Communicate.
If you are running late, do not feel well, or do not understand something – say it.
Open communication prevents problems.
Take care of safety.
Use protective equipment, follow instructions, and look after your workplace.
Responsibilities are not restrictions –
they are boundaries that allow others to trust you.

Your mission no. 2

Write down three things that, in your opinion, every fair employee should do.
Then add three things that a fair employer should do.
Compare them – is there balance?
This balance is the foundation of trust and a healthy working environment.

3. Where to turn if something is not right

Labour Inspectorate – deals with unpaid wages, missing contracts, illegal work.
Job Centre, Social Affairs and Family Office – provides advice for young people.
Career centres, youth workers, organisations for young people – help you seek advice and respond safely.

There is no shame in asking for help – it is wise to protect yourself.

4. Action plan (what you take with you)

- **Change in mindset**: Knowing my rights and responsibilities is a sign of maturity, not distrust.
- **Behaviour change**: Before every job, I will read the contract and ask if I do not understand something.
- **Specific goal**: Once a year, I will do a "fairness check" – I will review whether my working conditions are fair.

Motto for you: ***"Fairness is not one-sided – it applies to both the employee and the employer."***

BONUS – Mini reflection sheet after a job interview

Question	**YES / NO**
Do I have a signed agreement or employment contract?	
Do I know when and how much I will be paid?	
Do I know my working hours and responsibilities?	
Do I have a break during work?	
Do I know who to contact if a problem arises?	

9 Time Management and Work–Life Balance – finding balance, not perfection

...because the time you have is your most valuable resource

Why should this matter to you?

Each of us has 24 hours a day, but not everyone uses them equally effectively. Good time management is about balance between work and rest. It includes time for responsibilities, friends, and yourself.

When you know how to plan, you save energy and gain control over your life.

"I am not busy – I am simply choosing what I spend my time on."

1. Set your priorities

Not everything that is urgent is also important. Ask yourself: Which things bring me the greatest meaning or results. Then sort the rest – some tasks can be done later, some can be delegated to others.

The 3P rule applies:

1. **Proportionality** – choose a reasonable amount of work according to priorities.
2. **Progression** – postpone less important tasks until later.
3. **Regularity** – complete responsibilities regularly so work does not pile up.

It is not a shame to postpone something. It is a shame to burn out from overload.

Your mission no. 1

Choose three things you plan to do today.

For each one, write down:

- how important it is (1–3),
- how much time you realistically need to complete it,
- when will you do it.

You will find that a day is much easier to manage when you are managing it.

2. Do not forget breaks and rest

Your body and mind are not machines. A short break every two hours improves concentration more than another coffee.
Sometimes it is enough to have:

- a deep breath,
- a short walk,
- a song that recharges your energy.

A productive person is not the one who works without breaks, but the one who knows how to recover.

Your mission no. 2

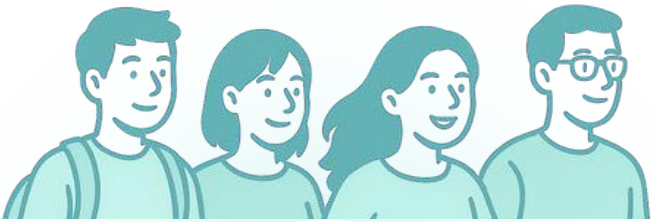
Today, consciously take two 10-minute breaks. Switch off your phone, close your eyes, and relax your shoulders. Look at the world around you, not at a screen. You will discover that even a short rest gives you more strength.

3. Balance = satisfaction

Work can fulfil you, but it should not consume you.
Every person needs **three sources of energy:**

- relationships – people you feel good with,
- meaning – what you enjoy and what helps you grow,
- calm – time for yourself when you are not working.

If one of these sources is missing, balance is lost.



Your mission no. 3

Draw three circles labelled: WORK, RELATIONSHIPS, ME.
Colour them with the same colour but different intensity, showing how much energy you give to each (use the lightest shade for the area you invest in the least).

If one circle is fading, you know where to focus your attention.

4. Action plan (what you take with you)

- **Change in mindset**: Time is not my enemy – it is my ally when I use it consciously.
- **Behaviour change**: Every evening, I will set three priorities for the next day.
- **Specific goal**: At least once a week, I will allow myself a "guilt-free day" – just for rest, friends, or creativity.

Motto for you: ***"I am not busy – I am simply choosing what I spend my time on."***

BONUS – Mini checklist "Do I have balance?"

Question: **YES / NO**

- Do I get at least 7 hours of sleep a day?
- Do I take short breaks during the day?
- Do I know what my three priorities are today?
- Do I have time for friends and family?
- Is there one day a week when I completely switch off?

10 My Personal Development Plan

…because the best investment is in yourself

Why should this matter to you?

Your personal development does not begin with your first job – it begins with self-awareness: knowing who you are and where you want to go. Every new skill, experience, or challenge you overcome moves you forward. When you can clearly name your goals and plan them, change happens consciously – not by accident. Your personal development plan is an imaginary map that shows how today becomes a tomorrow you are looking forward to.

"Every day is a new chance to be one step closer to yourself."

1. Get to know yourself – where are you now?

Start with self-reflection. Think about:

- What am I good at?
- What do I enjoy?
- What do I want to improve?
- When do I feel satisfied and when do I feel exhausted?
-

These are your starting points – the starting line for your personal growth.

Personal development does not mean becoming someone else. It means growing within yourself and strengthening your qualities.

Your mission no. 1

Write down three areas in which you want to improve.
For example: communication, organisation, stress management, and self-confidence. For each one, write why – what it will bring you if you make progress in that area.

2. Set realistic goals

Development works best when goals are **SMART**:

- S – Specific (what exactly do I want to achieve?)
- M – Measurable (how will I know I have achieved it?)
- A – Achievable (can I manage it with what I have?)
- R – Relevant (does it make sense to me?)
- T – Time-bound (by when do I want to achieve it?)
-

Example:
Not *"I want to improve my communication"*, but *"By the end of the month, I will actively express my opinion during meetings."*

Your mission no. 2

Choose **one SMART** goal for the next four weeks.
Write it down, tell someone who will support you, and track your progress.

3. Monitor your growth

Personal growth is not only about measurable results.
Each week, ask yourself three questions:

1. What did I do to achieve my goal?
2. What went well?
3. What can I still improve?

These are not control questions – they are signposts that show you that you are moving forward.

Your mission no. 3

Create a mini personal development diary:

- Every Monday, write down what you want to try.
- Every Friday, write down what you have learned.

After a few weeks, you will see how many steps you have taken.

4. Action plan (what you take with you)

- **Change in mindset**: Development is not random – I decide about it.
- **Behaviour change**: I will regularly write down my small wins.
- **Specific goal**: Within three months, I want to have my personal development plan written down – with goals that truly make sense.

Motto for you: ***"Every day is a new chance to be one step closer to yourself."***

BONUS – My Personal Development Plan (template)

1. Area I want to improve:
2. Why this is important to me:
3. Specific goal (SMART):
4. Deadline:
5. How I will know I am making progress:

You can print this table, fill it in, or decorate it in your own way – it is the story of your personal growth.

BONUS REFLECTION – My small wins

Write down three things that have gone well for you recently – even small ones that you may not have noticed at first.

CONCLUSION

And we have reached the end…
Everyone who has made it this far should now know more about themselves – about their possibilities, their potential, and hopefully also about the direction to take when searching for their dream job. That was our intention.

It is important to realise that the journey itself also matters.
It is often not straightforward to reach a dream goal.

There is nothing more rewarding than going to work with enthusiasm and joy, working in a team that enriches us and helps us move forward –and then coming home, knowing how to relax and rest properly among family and loved ones. When these two worlds come together, a person reaches true fulfilment. The authors of this guide sincerely wish you success on this journey.

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- *Foundation for Non-Formal Education in Bielsko-Biała (Poland)*
- *Žilina Self-Governing Region (Slovakia)*

READY FOR WORK?

This is not just a guide.
It is your companion in the world of work, where you learn from others, about others – and above all, about yourself.

Here you will find what school may not always teach you, but what you will need at work every single day: communication, stress management, motivation, decision-making, and balance between work and rest.

This is your space to discover what you enjoy, what you are good at, and where you want to go. Each chapter offers a small step, a task, or a thought that will move you a little closer to yourself.

Open it when you need inspiration. Return to it when you are looking for courage. And write your own story into it – because the most important project is YOU.

"Every journey towards work begins with the courage to know yourself."

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