

Coaching Returned Victims/Survivors of Trafficking Toward Gainful Careers: A Manual for Coaches



**Economic and Social Empowerment of Returned
Victims of Trafficking in Thailand and the Philippines**

Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

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Foreword

Effective economic and social reintegration for trafficked persons continues to be a challenge. In addition to their need to recover from psycho-social, medical and health-related problems, many victims and survivors of trafficking also face employment and skills-related concerns. For the International Labour Organization (ILO), economic empowerment interventions are just as important as social preparation, counseling and legal assistance in ensuring that the trafficked persons are able to reintegrate with their families and into their communities of origin. Victims and survivors require assistance to identify career opportunities, develop skills and obtain decent work in order to achieve economic independence and a strong sense of self worth.

Meaningful and fruitful reintegration for trafficked persons requires that service providers are well-versed in both psychosocial aspects and economic dimensions. The latter includes career and occupational guidance and other work- or livelihood-related issues. Many service providers, however, often find they have inadequate knowledge, aptitude and skills in these areas yet they are expected to have and should have competencies to assist victims and survivors with their economic reintegration.

It is on this premise that the ILO-HSF Project – *Economic and Social Reintegration of Victims of Trafficking in Thailand and the Philippines* – has developed this tool called, “*Coaching Returned Victims of Trafficking Towards Gainful Careers: A Manual for Coaches*”. The Manual seeks to equip service providers with appropriate skills to help victims and survivors of trafficking get back to a world of work that is realistic, safer and satisfying. The ultimate goal is to prevent them from being re-trafficked. It emphasizes “coaching” as an approach with the service provider as a “coach” and the victim or survivor as a “coachee”. This helping relationship makes professional assistance more accessible, translates the process of overcoming the trafficking experience into more practical terms and looks at the future more realistically.

The ILO sincerely hopes that this tool will be useful for service providers and, more importantly, that it will be beneficial for victims and survivors of trafficking.

Linda Wirth
Director
ILO Subregional Office
for South-East Asia and the Pacific

Preface

Every chance I get to work with the ILO is always a privilege and an honor.

This latest project for developing a Manual/Toolkit for service providers in facilitating economic reintegration of victims/survivors of trafficking under the ILO-HSF project “Economic and Social Reintegration of Returned Victims of Trafficking in Thailand and the Philippines” is no exception.

It’s like coming home to the work I love to do, with people I enjoy working with, with an organization whose ideals I continue to uphold, and on projects that have grown in scope and magnitude through the years. My work with the ILO has spanned all of 14 years since 1995. I have been engaged as external collaborator on a wide variety of areas: child labor, labor inspection, occupational safety and health, youth employment, domestic work, career guidance, and now trafficking in persons. I’ve also done work on various capability-building, program planning, program assessments and reviews, strategic planning, trainers’ training and team-building for both the ILO and its tripartite partners. I have also received training from the ILO on gender audit and SOLVE.

Through all of these, I have never hesitated to accept, grown tired, nor lacked the drive to deliver my portion with excellence. This is because I am convinced that anything worth doing for the ILO should be done in the best possible way.

I am grateful to the ILO SRO Manila for supporting me in this project: Director Linda Wirth; Deputy Director Keiko Niimi; Sr. Programme Officer Concepcion Sardaña; and Sr. Programme Assistant Hilda Tidalgo. I wish to thank Atty. Robert L Larga, National Programme Coordinator, for his valuable comments on the manuscript; attentive support during the writing, critiquing, revising, partner presentation and training; and generally easy management style which afforded me the time, space, and freedom I needed to do a good job. Many thanks to Ednalyn D. Gulane, Administrative Secretary, and Angelina dela Cruz, Finance Assistant, for their commendable attention to the many detailed requirements of the project. Thanks, too, to Mitchell Duran, formerly with the ILO-IPEC, who provided Atty. Robert with my contact details so I could be reached. For a largely stress-free working relationship with the ILO HSF Trafficking Project Team, I thank you all.

I thank Ms. Alcestis “Thetis” Abrera-Mangahas, Senior Regional Migration Specialist based in Bangkok. She introduced me to the ILO while still with ILO-IPEC in 1995 and remains a major career break-giver, colleague and friend.

I wish to thank all the partners who participated in the book presentation and training workshop, and who gave valuable comments, suggestions, and insights which have enriched the book by enriching my understanding of trafficking. Their names are listed in the Workshop Participants page (Page 98). Special thanks to the victims/survivors of trafficking who shared their private stories with me during the workshop breaks. They have affirmed and validated that the principles

in this Manual **will** work because in their own experiences of successful reintegration, it is these same principles that **have** worked to help them move on.

The project has also given me the rare opportunity to work closely with my research assistant, my eldest son James-Lawrence “JL” Mante, a recent Sports Science graduate of the University of the Philippines in Diliman. He performed his assigned role creditably, including reliable data-gathering, sensitive literature review, and efficient workshop support. His crisp write-up of the primer on trafficking (Module 1), a calculated risk I took since he was new to the field of research and to the subject, far exceeded my expectations. He has truly made me a proud mom.

May this Manual be used in every meaningful way possible to bring even a glimpse of hope to those who suffer the scars of the trafficking experience.

Loree Cruz-Mante
Quezon City, Philippines

How to use this Manual

This Manual is intended for service providers, social workers, case managers, and all who help victims/survivors of trafficking for the purpose of facilitating their economic recovery and reintegration, preferably in conjunction with psychosocial processes.

It contains basic principles, concepts, strategies, practical tips and tools on coaching as they are used to help victims/survivors of trafficking become economically and socially empowered. Organized into six themes (realistic self-assessment, skills-building, updatedness, networking, communication skills, and human relations), the Manual discusses six key factors that are critical in building gainful careers. There are also exercises designed to help coaches in the various subject areas under discussion.

The Manual proposes key approaches for helping coaches in providing meaningful guidance on careers and occupations, skills recognition and assessment, job search and job placement. Insights and ideas are included on entrepreneurship, managing money, micro-finance, networking, and safe-remigration cautions.

Two sections would be of particular interest to the target users. A brief but comprehensive primer on trafficking in persons is provided, with a reliable literature review of what has been done and what is currently the situation of returned victims/survivors of trafficking. It can be a good starting point for understanding trafficking and the unique situation of potential coachees, while serving as a refresher for those who are already knowledgeable in the field. There is also a section with a few inspirational pieces that can help provide a continued dose of inspiration and soothing for the often physically exhausted and emotional drained coaches.

It is highly recommended that the Manual be studied and used as sequenced since the ideas build upon each other. The six themes form the backbone of the entire Manual and must be understood before any of the other succeeding discussions.

Much effort was exerted to bring the overarching philosophy, principles and approaches of coaching to a level where they can be most useful and relevant to the peculiar and unique circumstances of returned victims/survivors of trafficking. No attempt to do that, however, will be totally successful because of the complicated web of nuances by which the unique coaching profiles and situations intercept with known ideas.

In the final analysis, it is you, the reader, who must translate the insights into workable form because it is you who are able to appreciate more fully the human ethos, passion and drama of the world in which these ideas germinate and blossom.

Introduction

Why a “Manual for Coaches”?

The title *Coaching Returned Victims/Survivors of Trafficking toward Gainful Careers: A Manual for Coaches* has come as a surprise to many. This reaction is both anticipated and understandable. After an initial explanation and a few questions, however, both title and Manual were well-received by ILO partners to whom the Manual was presented for comment. And, needless to say, the decision-making that went into choosing it is a well thought-out, lengthily-deliberated, and meticulously-critiqued process in order to explain why this title best captures the essence and ethos of this Manual.

The word “coach(es)” is not usually a term used for counseling and counseling-like approaches, especially where returned victims/survivors of trafficking are concerned. Coaches are more associated with basketball, football, boxing and the whole array of sports activities where coaches are responsible for preparing their respective teams to win. Coaches develop plays, drills, strategies, tactics; they determine teaming and fielding. They look at their team members’ strengths and capabilities and match them against the competing team’s arsenal of talent. In short, coaches are the “brains” behind each team, each game, each winning (or losing) moment.

In recent times, coaching has been increasingly acknowledged as a viable approach to helping people. The use of the coaching approach and the word “coach” is now widely applied and accepted in various other fields that have no relation to sports. The term “life coach” is now very much in vogue and life coaching has grown to be a respectable field of endeavor since the eighties. And so are the fields of executive coaching, career coaching, work coaching, even financial coaching. Coaching is now no longer limited to its traditional homebase, the sports arena.

Coaching is not the same as counseling although there are very fine and often indistinct differences. We must be careful not to use the two terms interchangeably, however. There still remains a lot of ambiguity about both words but there are some very obvious distinctives between the two. The differences may be roughly classified as follows:

- **Focus**

Counseling deals with the past (including traumatic experiences) and how an individual reconciles it with the rest of life, while coaching uses the present as a springboard towards ensuring a more desirable future. Counseling focuses on feelings while coaching focuses on outcomes and actions.

- **Basis**

Counseling is based on medical and diagnostic analysis, while coaching is based on learning and developmental theories that help individuals to make personal decisions about their lives.

- **Nature**

Counseling is prompted by a dysfunction identified to be a hindrance to living fully, while coaching is occasioned by a usually fully-functional individual's desire to reach full potential.

- **Goals**

Counseling goals are intended to seek understanding of the past, including acceptance and closure, while coaching sets realistic goals for acquiring the skills and mindset necessary for a more successful future.

Helping styles also differ widely. Whereas counselors are “patient, nurturing, evocative, indirect, parenting and cathartic, “ coaches do not exhibit parenting behaviors, and are additionally “catalytic, challenging, direct, use straight talk and accountability.” (<http://humanresources.about.com>)

Perhaps the most important distinction, particularly for our purposes in this Manual, is that counselors and therapists have received formal/academic training in the field of counseling and therapy. This serves as certification of their fitness for the role. Professional certification is required before calling oneself a counselor or therapist, and in some countries, the practice of the profession is governed by professional regulatory boards. Therapists can become coaches if, in the course of their practice they see its benefits, but coaches cannot become therapists as a matter of personal decision.

This is where this Manual's philosophy and design take off. The reality about helping returned victims/survivors of trafficking and many other similarly-situated people needing attention is that access to real professional counseling services is not easy. In many cases, it is unrealistic and impractical, if not completely out of reach.

A parallel reality running alongside this fact is that there are countless social workers, case managers, NGO workers, even researchers, teachers and go-to persons like parents, peers, and friends, who find themselves in counseling situations. Should they refuse to help simply because they are not trained to counsel or advice? What are they called to do in the face of clear pleas for assistance, whether verbalized or muted?

The answer seems pretty obvious and the course of action rather clear. Reach out, offer help, show empathy, help clear up a confused mind. And where do the answers come from? Clearly they come from helpers digging deep into their emotional and spiritual reserves that point the way, an innate resource that formal training enriches but cannot snuff out.

So this is what you in the field have been doing and continue to do when faced with victims/survivors of trafficking, child laborers, abused and exploited men, women, and children. It does not matter what you call yourselves or whether you have been formally trained to respond.

Whether you know it or not, you are a coach.

Becoming a Career Coach

One of the challenges you face as you help trafficked persons is that you now have to be a coach. Whether you like it or not, and whether it is really part of your job description or not, you cannot get away from the fact that people will seek your advice. This will thrust you into a role you may not be prepared for. It may be something you either welcome, wish to avoid, or absolutely dislike.

Very often, the avoidance of coaching others stems from a lack of confidence that you know how to do it right. Admittedly, coaching is not an easy thing to do, especially when someone has absolutely no idea about what it is. But it can be a meaningful and satisfying endeavor once you realize the impact it can have on the people you help.

The preferential use of the term “coach” is very critical. Imagine a basketball game, football or soccer game where coaches are quite a visible figure on the court or field. What do coaches do? Before the game, they pep up the team for the game ahead. They repeat the game plan, making sure each one understands what to do. They dwell on what winning the game means for the team. They harp on the lessons learned from countless hours of practice and learning how to be a team. They tell the team that they can and will win this game.

During the game, coaches watch closely. At breaktime, they tell the players what they did well and what they did not. They praise some and scold some. They remind the team of the game plan.

After the game, what do coaches do? Still the same things they did before and during the game. The objective of it all is that the team plays as a team and wins, and talking about what they did well and what they can improve on are important inputs to success the next time.

Coaching in the context of the work that you do is pretty much the same. The audience may be different but the principles are basically the same as those used by game coaches. Just as the players turn to their coaches for help on how they can improve themselves in the game, so do the people that you help. It is often difficult to limit your coaching to those areas that you are really competent in because you are a person they can logically go to for help. Rather than turn them away, it might be best for you to acquire the necessary coaching skills to help them, not just with their psychosocial, medical or health-related concerns, but in their economic reintegration, as well. This includes career and occupational guidance and other work-related issues.

The objective of your coaching is to get them back in the job market in jobs and careers that are hopefully safer and more satisfying this time. Through career guidance, you can help them plan their re-entry into the world of work. It is also important that you distinguish between “job,” and “career,” where a job is anything that anyone does as a task or assignment to make a living. Career implies something deeper and more expansive, and denotes what one considers his/her life purpose. In many ways, it is actually one’s self-image because it is what one considers as a primary preoccupation among the many possible affairs of one’s life.

There are two basic expectations of you as coach:

- First, provide professional support by way of career guidance;
- Two, provide emotional support for the often discouraging search for meaningful careers.

In both cases, you must gain enough expertise to be able to navigate the complex psychological, emotional and professional needs of the people you help.

Here are some principles that can guide you as you start and continue to gain experience in coaching people:

- **Coaching is a mutually-enriching endeavor.** You cannot proceed from a know-it-all stance or from a position of power. Both coaches and coachees are rewarded by the experience, and both learn valuable lessons from the relationship. This means that listening to each other is very important. There must also be a lot of respect for each other so that you do not unnecessarily trivialize what may be considered very important by your coachees.
- **Coaching is other-centered.** You must start where your coachees are, not where you think they should be. Their experiences of pain and abuse will never be completely erased from their memory. They will forever carry scars of their trafficking experience even though they may appear to have fully recovered. It is important that you are able to determine what is real help for them, help that empowers but does not breed dependence on you and on others.
- **It is still the coachees who must “press the button.”** Some coaches tend to do everything for their coachees, not realizing that this is not empowering to them. You may provide all the advice and help, but in the end it is your coachees who must want to do what is good for them. No matter how someone waits for the television to come on, for example, it will not show anything on the screen unless you get up and press the button. In much the same way, coachees must own the process for themselves. They must do the researching but you can help make sense of it for them. They must do their own biodata but you can point out the errors to be corrected. And you can't go with them to the interview or go in their place!
- **Coaching generates hope and builds confidence.** There is a great deal of hopelessness and helplessness in the case of trafficked persons. Coaching helps them experience hopefulness as they increase their skills or prepare for an interview. When they sense that they have the tools to reenter the job market, then they gain confidence that they can look to the future with hope.

As a coach, you can make a valuable contribution in the lives of people. You have a rare opportunity to reverse the ill effects of the traumatic trafficking experience and put people back on the track of the living.

Coaching is a taxing role, emotionally exhausting and physically draining at times. But the rewards of knowing that you have helped someone with meaningful advice and not just empty hope far exceed the challenges.

The following article may help put context in your work as a coach and help sustain you for the arduous task ahead.

Helper's High

Helping others results in a certain kind of high similar to that experienced by joggers. In jogging, the body releases endorphins which are chemical compounds known to produce a sense of well-being and pain relief. Endorphins give joggers a reinvigorated feeling that they can go on running forever. It is actually difficult for them to stop. They feel that they can run or jog to the ends of the world and not grow weary. The high that they feel, brought about by endorphins, is a reward in itself.

In counseling, helpers also experience this. It is called helper's high. As in jogging, the act of helping others results in giving counselors a kind of high that will make them seek it out and desire more of it.

Helping ... people through their transition from ... unemployed can give counselors a helper's high. It is in participating in their young lives at this stage in their life journey that

is the rare privilege of the counselor, whether he/she is a trained professional, a parent, a sibling, or a relative, a friend, a teacher, a schoolmate, occasionally even a stranger. Giving of oneself to another in this form and being able to participate in an otherwise personal and esoteric experience is enough cause for helper's high.

It is important that counselors recognize this vital energizer that can keep them patiently journeying along with the jobseeker. Counseling is not prescriptive or insistent. Rather, it is life-giving and uplifting. It is precisely in the idea of giving jobseekers the freedom to decide on their own, in their time, that helper's high resides. Help is unconditionally given, and even help that is thwarted is unconditionally accepted. If counseling were selfish, then it would not produce helper's high because the advice would be given conditionally. There would be strings attached, and mostly this would be in the form of exacting compliance. Jobseeker-counselees would be acceptable only if they took the counselor's advice and acted on it. If they did not do as advised, the counselor would be dissatisfied. This does not make helper's high possible.

As long as counselors experience helper's high, they would go on doing what they are doing. Despite the difficulties, they will feel as though they could go on running forever. And indeed they can.

Written by Loree Cruz-Mante. Taken from ***Guiding Youth Careers: A handbook for those who help young jobseekers***, ILO, 2007



Module 1

Understand the situation of returned victims/survivors of trafficking

Module 1

Understand the situation of returned victims/survivors of trafficking

The first thing that career coaches must do is to check their understanding of the situation of their coachees.

There is no one-size-fits all approach to coaching people like returned victims/survivors of trafficking. Successful coaching is not about applying sophisticated know-how and methodologies in an unanalytical, automatic way. The key is knowing how to approach the coaching situation using whatever methodologies are available.

You need to develop sensitivity to the needs of each particular coachee in his/her unique situation. Very often, you begin by genuinely listening to the person, not just to what is said but, more importantly, to what is not said. This kind of listening should not be judgmental or prescriptive, but sensitive and compassionate. It takes practice to listen with patience and empathy and still maintain enough psychological distance so that you are not so taken by your emotions that you lose your objectivity to be of real help. You need to be uninvolved enough to see the situation with objective eyes yet engaged enough to assure your coachees that you somewhat understand what they must be going through.

An excellent resource material from the ILO is the Training Manual on Psychosocial Recovery, Social and Economic Reintegration of Trafficked Persons prepared by the Social Technology Bureau of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). The Manual details a training design that will help participants to acquire a deep understanding of the situations of trafficked persons and use the network of help available to them. It also provides step-by-step skills development on the use of the national referral and data management systems developed under the ILO-HSF project.

The entire coaching process for returned victims/survivors of trafficking espoused in this Manual must be set against the context of the case management process described in the DSWD training manual. “The case management process is adopted from the Manual on Gender Responsive Case Management (GRCM) to ensure that victims-survivors are provided with appropriate interventions in a gender-based manner.

Gender responsive case management is a process of coordinating and providing direct services to victims-survivors with a systematic attention given to the differences between women and men in society with a view of addressing the structural constraints to gender equality.” The Manual referenced above should be requisite reading before using this Manual for Coaches.

The following exercise will help ensure that you begin with the right understanding before starting any coaching task. It is simple and powerful. The real message is that you begin without any preconceptions about your coachees or their situation, and to trust your instincts about what would be most helpful to them at this point in time.

Exercise 1

Understanding the Profile of Returned Victims/Survivors of Trafficking

List down what you have observed to be general issues of returned victims/survivors of trafficking in three areas: personal/family, career, and financial issues.

Personal/family issues:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Career issues:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Financial issues:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Exercise 2

Understanding your coachee's unique situation

Using what you have found out in Exercise 1 as a starting point, identify what you see are your coachee's peculiar needs. These needs may be expressed by the coachee, but you must also add your own observations about both what he/she says or does not say.

Personal/family issues:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Career issues:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Financial issues:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

The information you gather through the exercise is in no way comprehensive or complete, but it is a good starting point. Remember that you are not a professional coach and are simply trying to do your best in the coaching role without the benefit of real formal training. There are limits to what you can do and you must know when to direct your coachee to professional help provided by trained counselors. The foregoing exercise would give you some idea of where to begin. It is suggested that you even check these observations with your colleagues to establish a sense of the commonalities existing among the people you are coaching.

Understand the global and national problem of trafficking in persons

Your understanding of your unique coaching situation must be rooted in a solid understanding of the larger picture of the trafficking problem. Many coaches do not situate themselves in the larger context of the problem they are seeking to address. Knowledge is an important ingredient in successful coaching. It is the responsibility of coaches to update themselves on what's going on in the world outside their unique situation.

The following brief on the problem of trafficking is a useful overview and/or refresher against which you can check your understanding. It is important that you keep yourself updated as more recent developments happen. Data are destined to be outdated at some point and it is your job to keep abreast of new information as it comes.

Trafficking in Persons: A Brief Look

Definitions

1. Trafficking in Persons

United Nations Definition:

Article 3, subparagraph (a) of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. "‘trafficking in persons’ shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs." (Kangaspunta, 2003)

Definition under R.A. 9208 (Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003):

Section 3. Definition of terms "(a) Trafficking in Persons - refers to the recruitment, transportation, transfer or harbouring, or receipt of persons with or without the victim's consent or knowledge, within or across national borders by means of threat or use of force, or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or of position, taking advantage of the vulnerability of the person, or, the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person for the purpose of exploitation which includes at a minimum, the exploitation or the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery, servitude or the removal or sale of organs.

The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall also be considered as ‘trafficking in persons’ even if it does not involve any of the means set forth in the preceding paragraph.” (www.lawphil.net)

2. Smuggling of Migrants:

Article 3, subparagraph (a), of the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air. “‘Smuggling of migrants’, shall mean the procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the illegal entry of a person into a State Party of which the person is not a national or a permanent resident.” (Kangaspunta, 2003)

Definition of “Trafficking in persons” explained

The definition of trafficking in persons in the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children (Palermo Protocol) adopted in 2000, supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, is too wordy or complicated that makes understanding it a bit difficult. For easier understanding of trafficking in persons, the definition can be broken down in its 3 basic elements as follows:

Acts	Means	Purpose
Recruitment	Threat	Prostitution
Transportation	Use of force	Other form of sexual exploitation
Transfer	Coercion	Forced labour or services
Harbouring	Abduction	Slavery and practices similar to slavery
Receipt	Fraud	Removal of organs
	Servitude	
	Deception	
	Abuse of power	
	Abuse of position of vulnerability	
	Giving or receiving payments or benefits	

When any one of the elements from each of the three columns above can be applied together to the situation of an individual, the individual is considered to be “trafficked.”

In trafficking in persons, consent of the victims becomes irrelevant. “The Palermo Protocol does not distinguish between innocent and guilty, or deserving and undeserving victims of trafficking, thereby obliging states to provide care for all those identified as victims. The definition also removes a major burden on the victim, as proving lack of consent is a formidable hurdle in legal settings. The definition makes choice irrelevant in defining trafficking because it recognizes that the ‘choice’ to succumb to exploitation is very often not a real choice but a forced circumstance.”

“The definition further protects not only those victims who were forced, or where coercion, abduction, deception or abuse of power was used, but also those who were pushed into exploitation by less explicit means of “abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability of the victims. By abuse of position of vulnerability is meant abuse of any situation in which the person involved has no real and acceptable alternative to submitting

to abuse. The vulnerability may be of any kind, whether physical, psychological, emotional, family related, social or economic. The situation can be any state of hardship in which a human being is impelled to accept being exploited, such as illegal or uncertain immigration or status, past sexual abuse or prior exposure to violence or poverty.” (UNODC and Government of India, Training Manual for Prosecutors on Confronting Human Trafficking, 2008)

Moreover, while the protocol lists a number of exploitative purposes, the enumeration is merely “at the minimum,” which means other conditions or situations similar to those initially listed may be considered within the purview of “exploitative purposes.”

Trafficking in persons: A transnational problem

The issue of trafficking humans is just as intricate as drug trafficking or smuggling of goods; it is also, in many aspects, more complicated because people are the main “products” of this trade and these people who are forced into being trafficked are driven into a corner where they become very vulnerable to all sorts of abuse. It is a problem that knows no borders and is very hard to quash since often these operations start from very poor and remote towns and villages where poverty and a lack of education become driving forces for people to seek employment abroad or in other parts of their home country. This serves to open the door to opportunists scouting for able workers. It is hard for enforcement agencies to identify victims and also identify possible victims due to a massive lack of understanding about the problem.

Millions of people are forced to work in less-than-ideal conditions, are sexually exploited and are promised a bright future and a stable job when in reality they are treated inhumanely and much like slaves. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), around 12.3 million people are in forced labor or in sexual servitude. These include mostly women and children. A US-sponsored research in 2006 put the figures at 800,000 people being trafficked from across borders excluding the people being trafficked locally. The actual figures are believed to be much higher since these figures are based on official entrances and exits from countries and excludes backdoor entries and exits. It is also very hard for government to monitor these activities and so it is good to assume higher figures of incidences and victims.

Some hallmarks of human trafficking are forced labor, bonded labor, forced child labor and sexual servitude (TIP 2007). Most of the victims are women and children with only a small percentage of men. Majority of the women are forced into sexual exploitation mainly to repay their employers.

Some prostitutes and mail-order brides are also victims of trafficking. Children are mostly sent to factories and some serve households as helpers. The recruiters prey on poor people, promising better lives elsewhere. They use very creative and seductive means to lure their prey and also conveniently leave out important information as to the exact job being offered on the table. Some even promise the families of the victim that earning the necessary amount to repay them is easy and does not require a lot of time.

In this sense the families also become victims themselves. Poor areas, whether rural or urban, are good hunting grounds for recruiters since they appear as white knights leading hapless people into the light and to a world better than the one they are in, only to be later thrown into the dungeons of despair, abuse and exploitation.

Trafficking in persons and its human rights dimension

As can be gleaned from earlier discussion, trafficking is defined by the coercive, non-consensual and exploitative or servile nature of the purpose of movement, and involves a number of serious human rights violation, including forced labour, sexual and labour exploitation, violence and abuse of the victim. “Violations of human rights are both a cause and a consequence of trafficking in persons. Accordingly it is essential to place the protection of all human rights at the centre of any measures taken to prevent and end trafficking. Anti-trafficking measures should not adversely affect the human rights and dignity of persons.” (ILO, An Information Guide, Booklet No. 6, Trafficking of Women and Girls, p.11)

Trafficking and its gender dimensions

“A rights-based concern is necessarily also a gender-inclusive concern. Gender is a determining factor in trafficking, both on the supply and demand sides. Women and girls are much more likely than men and boys to be the victims of trafficking, in particular into prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation, but also into labour exploitation and contemporary forms of slavery. Trafficking is a serious manifestation of the feminization of poverty and girls in a world characterized by gender discrimination, both within and outside the labour market.”

“However, it is important to avoid the misperception sometimes made that “men migrate or smuggled, women are trafficked.” In some areas, the largest numbers of victims of trafficking may be male. For example, studies have suggested that over 80% of the migrants trafficked into Ukraine and Poland have been male. Boys from poor families are also in great danger of being trafficked; there are many cases of abduction of male children in Pakistan.” (ILO, p. 12)

Trafficking in persons and its links to organized crimes

“Trafficking in persons is increasingly perpetrated by organized, sophisticated criminal enterprises. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has described trafficking as the fastest growing business of organized crime - because of the number of the people involved, the scale profits being generated and its multi-fold nature. It is one of the most lucrative criminal enterprises in the world, estimated to be the third largest source of profits, behind only drugs and crime. Trafficking is also aided by official corruption among enforcement, immigration and judicial officials in countries of origin, transit and destination, thereby threatening the rule of law. Human traffickers, are often highly successful because of links with other transnational criminal groups, such as arms dealers, drug traffickers and car theft rings, which provide them with safe and tested routes, access to cash, forged documents, and officials to bribe.” (ILO, p. 13)

Trafficking in persons and decent work

“Trafficking is inimical to the ILO’s primary goal of promoting opportunities for women and men to obtain decent work and productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. Trafficking flouts fundamental labour standards and proper working conditions for all workers, national and migrant. Trafficking disrupts or circumvents the efficient functioning of labour market institutions in source, transit and destination countries.” (ILO, p.12)

Migration and smuggling of people are not trafficking

“Many people move legally for work, temporarily or on a more permanent basis. If people cannot move legally to find work-for example because a country will not

accept workers from elsewhere or because they do not know how to use legal channels for migration-they may turn to illegal means. They may obtain fake documents that allow them to enter a country fraudulently; or they may enter with a tourist visa and then leave the country when the visa expires. Sometimes, they may just enter a country using a route that avoids official border crossings, so they arrive without any entry papers, thus becoming undocumented. All of these constitute illegal migration (sometimes called 'irregular migration')."

"If would-be illegal migrants pay someone to move them into a country clandestinely, then we consider them to be smuggled. For example, people may pay the owner of a boat to take them to another country by sea, or they may identify a person or agency that operates vehicles that cross borders by road, often carrying other goods as well as people. Smuggling of people across national borders is illegal and both the smugglers and the people who pay to be moved are breaking the law. Smuggling is also dangerous. There have been many instances of people hidden in sealed containers in trucks and boats who have died from starvation, heatstroke or lack of air to breathe, and of people who have died crossing harsh terrain or rough seas." (ILO-IPEC, *Combating trafficking in children for labour exploitation*, p.10, 2008).

Although often used interchangeably, the terms "trafficking in persons" and "smuggling of migrants" should not be confused. Often the use of these terms as synonymous leads to a basic confusion in the identifications of cases pertaining to trafficking and therefore to further problems in terms of quantifying or generating figures reflective of the actual occurrences of this particular problem. Smuggling of migrants is a more limited activity than trafficking in the sense that the relationship between the smugglers and victims ends in the transport of the victim to another country as an illegal immigrant. In trafficking, however, the victims are not only transported but also escorted to the people or organizations who have paid for their recruitment and then afterwards forced to repay their "recruiters." They are usually bonded until they have the means to comply with this requirement. This puts them in a position to be exploited by their employers and more often than not, this happens because of false promises given by these recruiters to them and to their families. Human trafficking is also considered by some to be the new form of slavery or modern-day slavery which puts people's lives and livelihood in a very vulnerable position open to lies, abuse and exploitation. Illegal migration and smuggling of migrants are not the same as trafficking. Illegal migration and smuggling aim at the illegal crossing of a border which is a violation of immigration law. Trafficking involves the movement of a person-within a country or across a border-which is a violation of the person's human rights and a crime against that person.

What makes trafficking such a heinous crime is that the trafficker takes advantage of the fact that the victim is out of her/his regular surroundings and isolated from safety nets and support systems, and therefore more exploitable.

Though distinct in nature, trafficking and smuggling can be related: What starts as illegal migration or smuggling may become trafficking, for instance if migrants, after crossing an international border, are lured into exploitation by a third party. (ILO-IPEC, 2008)

Trafficking is a crime that knows no borders. It is a pressing global concern that is not limited to only a few countries. The lure of a better future for those in poverty continues to be one of the driving forces of trafficking, giving exploitative people the chance to ply their trade.

Problems in data collection and reliability of data

According to Kangaspunta, it is difficult to rely on data or statistics attempting to estimate figures of actual cases and incidences of trafficking because they are often unreliable, with little explanation of how these figures came to be. In addition, these figures usually come from advocacy groups and some bias may not be ruled out. Basically, data collection is unreliable at the present time and is not of much influence in policy-making. However, some countries like the US, Germany and the Netherlands have reports of trafficking in their own soil and are some of the few countries to publish official reports.

The problem of confusion between human smuggling and trafficking also comes into play when talking about the reliability and the availability of data. Cases of human smuggling are generally entered as cases of human trafficking because there is lack of knowledge about the problem. In addition, victims of trafficking are afraid to step forward and report their cases in fear of retaliation from the ones who recruited them. Often, because of the lack of reliable information, statistics are repeated and hence the problem of human trafficking is underestimated, leading to poor plans and inadequate services to the victims.

Human trafficking in the Philippines

The Philippines was one of the first countries in Southeast Asia to enact a law against trafficking. R.A. 9208 also known as the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003 was approved by the House of Representatives and the Senate in May of that year and it gave a concrete arm for justice against the crimes of organized traffickers. An Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking in Persons (IACAT) was created to be the main policy coordinating and monitoring body for the country's anti-trafficking efforts. It developed a 6-year National Strategic Action Plan as the country's blueprint in combating trafficking in persons and addressing the needs of trafficked persons. In its recent report, a total of 12 convictions were secured against traffickers for violation of R.A. 9208.

IACAT with the support of various agencies especially the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and NGOs have spearheaded efforts to combat the rising tide of trafficking in the country by providing services that cater to the special needs of trafficked victims. These include rescue, counselling services, financial and educational assistance, legal assistance and livelihood training to name a few. However, there is still a big lack of awareness about the issue. The legal process is also still very slow and unable to keep up with the demands.

According to visayanforum.org, the Philippines is one of the leading sources of migrant workers in the world. It is not surprising that a portion of these migrant workers are victims of trafficking. The archipelagic nature of the country makes it harder for authorities to monitor trafficking activities. Numerous sea ports and airports as well as bus stations, are commonly used by traffickers and their victims, but they are commonly able to hide even they are in full view of many. What's worse is that some corrupt government officials may also be involved in trafficking.

Workers from the country eventually end up in countries like Saudi Arabia, Hong Kong, Malaysia, UAE, Singapore, Bahrain etc. Some also end up in Europe and North America. The country, though primarily identified as a source, is also a transit and destination country for trafficked persons. A small number of trafficking victims from China end up in the country before going to their destination country. South Korea, China and Japan also have a small number of citizens ending up in the Philippines and are usually thrown into prostitution and sexually exploited (TIP 2007). Domestic trafficking is also very

much alive with people from the Visayas and Mindanao regions being sent to urban areas like Manila and Quezon City.

In 2007, the country was categorized in tier 2 in the Trafficking in Persons Report (TIP) of the US State Department. It means that the Philippine government has not been fully compliant with the minimum standards given by the Trafficking Victims Protection Act although it is making steps to do so. In 2008 the Philippines is still listed in tier 2 but was shown to have made significant steps towards completely eradicating this abominable crime. The government's efforts for prevention and protection of those abroad were described as "exemplary" while on efforts for prosecuting and convicting offenders were described as "weak" (TIP 2008). A slow legal process and corruption in all levels might be contributing factors to this weakness in putting those people responsible for trafficking behind bars.

Profile of victims

There are a number of research papers and government statistics from different countries but among all these figures emerges a trend showing that women account for more than half of trafficking victims worldwide. The TIP 2008 puts the estimate of the women and girls trafficked at 80% of the total number of victims and as much as 50% of those are minors. Mapping the Inhuman Trade: Preliminary Findings of the Database on Trafficking in Human Beings estimates that of the 3,671 cases reported, there were 83% who were women while the men just comprised 4% of the total cases. The database also revealed that most of the women were trafficked for purposes of sexual exploitation while the men were exploited for forced labor.

In the Philippines, a research synthesizing cases reported to the Anti-Trafficking Project shows that of the 275 respondents in the study, women accounted for 95% of the total victims. According to this study, majority of the victims were from poor families that were relatively big in size with about 3-12 siblings in general. The fact that destination countries are usually developed ones is what attracts the victims. The wealthier countries represent a better future for those who seek employment. Migrant workers remit hundreds of millions of pesos back into the country, proving that it is a vital cog in the nation's economy. Sadly a considerable number of those working abroad are in forced labor, prostitution, domestic-servitude and child labor not by choice but by coercion and force.

A lack of a global database of statistics has been a major drawback in the effort to combat this crime. Therefore it is wise to be cautious when using statistics. It is, at the present, impossible to empirically know the true extent of the problem by just relying on statistics. This does not imply, though, that governments around the world are taking steps to combat this menace.

Psychosocial impact

Human trafficking is a very complex problem and it has more to do with the fact that people are the products or goods driving this phenomenon. People are very complex and react to different situations differently. It is in this light that the problem of trafficking gets to be complicated.

Dealing with people is always a complex matter since it involves differences in opinion and involves the human psyche. Machines can be programmed to do specific tasks and never complain about their jobs. Humans, on the other hand, have feelings and a sense of justice and a willingness to better themselves. Humans can be lied to and exploited and that is exactly why eager workers become victims of trafficking

offenders. They are told lies of better employment and compensation. Lies of the types of jobs they are being recruited for. Lies about the working conditions they are about to face. Trafficking in persons is a blatant violation of human rights and a trampling upon of one's liberties as a human being.

At a more macro level it is an economic force that is very, very profitable and rakes in amounts of money for a lot of industries. Consumers buy everyday necessities and products made by people in forced labor; households employ helpers forced into servitude; and some even become child-soldiers for militant groups. The experience of being trafficked is one of pain, hardship and trauma for the victim while the offenders enjoy the benefits of a profit trade.

Victims of trafficking are vulnerable to disease, physical and psychological abuse, emotional torture and a lot more. Traffickers use rape, beating, starvation, deception and isolation (Tudorache, 2004) as a means to intimidate and coerce their victims to doing things they would undoubtedly not do otherwise. Victims are stripped of personal choices such as when to eat or when to rest and therefore experience a loss of control. This is in many cases the most humiliating aspect of the traumatic experience (Tudachore, 2004).

Violence and repeated abuse leads the victim to be accepting of anything and to lose the ability to trust people other than themselves. A high level of constant emotional and psychological pressure is exerted on the victims. A study by Dr. Martin Seligman about constant coercive actions on animals showed that healthy subjects started to be agitated easily and were depressed while also showing weight loss. When subjects were set free some would be unable to escape while some exhibited avoidance behaviour. He termed this as "learned helplessness" (Seligman, 1975 as mentioned in Tudachore, 2004).

Humans also act in a similar way. Prolonged and constant coercion develop a sense of learned helplessness, a sense of hopelessness and acceptance of the situation which leaves trafficked persons even more vulnerable to all sorts of abuse.

Tudachore summarizes the normal human reactions to abnormal situations such as the ones endured by trafficked victims:

Physical reactions:

- Aches and pains like headaches, backaches and stomach aches
- Sudden sweating and/or heart palpitations
- Changes in sleep patterns and appetite
- Greater susceptibility to colds and illnesses (weakened immune system)
- Increased use of alcohol or drugs, and/or overeating

Psychological reactions:

- Shock and fear
- Disorientation and cognitive confusion
- Irritability, restlessness
- Worrying or ruminating - intrusive thoughts of the trauma
- Nightmares and flashbacks of the events
- Attempts to avoid anything associated with trauma
- Minimizing the experience
- A tendency to isolate oneself and feelings of detachment
- Difficulty trusting and/or feelings of betrayal
- Feelings of helplessness, panic, and loss of control
- Diminished interest in everyday activities
- Loss of a sense of order or fairness in the world; expectations of doom and fear of the future

Due to the nature of the traumatic experience, the victims endure long-standing trauma not pegged to a single event but on the constancy of abuse. The amount of time held in the trafficked situation is relative to the severity of the trauma for the victims.

These effects are not limited to women but are applicable to men and children as well. Women sometimes have worse traumatic experiences because they are sexually exploited and a basic human right to one's bodily integrity is invaded (Tudachore, 2004).

Children also exhibit adverse psychological and social effects as a result of the trafficking situation. Developmental impact includes educational deprivation, physical health problems and emotional well-being problems (Rafferty, 2008). Children in trafficked situations are, inevitably, unable to pursue their studies due to work. Opportunities to study are cut short and they are forced to abandon hopes of finishing their education. Due to harsh working and living conditions children, like adults, become susceptible to diseases. Meals are sparse and are not as nutritious and healthy as they should be, especially for growing children.

Self-confidence is wanting in children in these situations since the abuse they receive is often enough to dampen their self-belief and ability to think for themselves. Traumatic experiences in trafficking can be likened to the trauma of being separated from families and communities which often has long-lasting effects.

Psychological and social services are therefore critical in the treatment of individuals who victimized by trafficking, as well as for their re-integration to society. Critical here are government policies that endorse these services for the benefit of the victims. A strong social responsibility of governments is to protect their citizens from abuse and take care of those who are victimized by mindless offenders. It is also of importance that legislation be supported by public declarations against this crime. After all, the victims are people and people deserve to be treated with dignity.

Global efforts to combat human trafficking

In response to this global plague, a multitude of countries have launched counter-offensive measures to deal with the problem. Numerous agencies, organizations and non-government organizations spearhead a concerted effort to put a dent in the activities of traffickers round the world. Laws have been passed and enforcement agencies have been put up but majority of offenders are still able to roam the streets and potential victims are still being recruited. In spite of this, there is a consensus among nations, as ratified in the United Nation's Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, that steps have to be taken to prevent and eliminate the problem. Some examples who have acted upon the call to abolish the modern-day slave trade are as follows:

United Kingdom

The UK is placed in tier 1 of the TIP of the US State Department and has been so for the last 8 years. The country's laws prohibiting all forms of trafficking are the Sexual Offences Act of 2004 and 2004 Asylum and Immigration Act. In 2007 the UK also launched a campaign named Pentameter II which aims to disrupt trafficking networks, rescue victims, build an intelligence network and raise public awareness (TIP 2008).

Philippines

R.A. 9208 was enacted in 2003 paving the way for the prosecution of offenders, as well as for the prevention of the trade. It also allowed many NGOs to

effect programs, along with government entities, to help the victims and preventing further victims from falling into the trade. The country was placed in tier 2 of the TIP 2008 for efforts in combating human trafficking despite falling short of the standards set by the Trafficked Victims Protection Act of 2000 by the United States government.

Cambodia

Although Cambodia is a source country for many victims of trafficking, it has taken significant steps to join the global effort. It was placed in tier 2 of the TIP 2008 after fluctuating from tier 2 watch list and tier 3 in the previous years. In 2008, its Law on the Suppression of Human Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation was enacted. However, it led to only a few convictions, most likely because of the rampant corruption in government. The Royal Government of Cambodia also formed a National Task Force (NTF) for anti-trafficking operations in cooperation with various other agencies and NGOs.

Canada

Canada is a tier 1 nation signifying its continued compliance to the high standards of the TVPA. The Canadian criminal code was amended in 2005 to include all forms of trafficking as illegal. The Canadian government works closely with the US and Mexican governments and also increased its training for anti-trafficking activities. It also increased the Temporary Resident Permits (TRPs) of the victims from 120 days to 180 days, allowing for further treatment and better services to be administered.

A major mover in the fight against human trafficking is the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security (UNTFHS) which “finances projects carried out by organizations in the UN system, and when appropriate, in partnership with non-UN entities, to advance the operational impact of the human security concept. Projects are distributed globally, with priority given to countries and regions where the insecurities of people are most critical and pervasive, such as the least developed countries (LDC’s) and countries in conflict.” It has funded several human trafficking initiatives, among them the ILO project “Economic and Social Empowerment of Returned Victims of Trafficking.”

A few anti-trafficking and related programs from around the world have also been of interest. Some of them are described below:

Global Programme against Trafficking in Human Beings

The GPAT is a project spearheaded by another UN agency, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The programme helps countries to draft laws against trafficking and also formulate meaningful anti- trafficking strategies. The UNODC brings the element of criminal justice to the fight against trafficking. The programme has also yielded various toolkits, publications and reports regarding the issue.

Government of the Philippines’ Action Plan for Combating Human Trafficking

The government of the Philippines has several responses to the problem of trafficking and one such program is this action plan. Various activities done in cooperation with a number of national and local government units, agencies, non-government organizations and the private sector have provided victims with services to cope with their situation.

Project REACH

This is a project by the Trauma Center at the Justice Research Institute. The program provides services such as consultation and brief mental health services to victims of trafficking in the United States. The program also offers trainings in trauma and trafficking to local service providers. Psychosocial treatment is also available, as well as assessment of victims' needs.

Although much is still not known about the magnitude of the trafficking problem, many efforts have already been initiated with their own little measure of success. But much has yet to be done.

Victims/survivors of trafficking need psychosocial, medical and health-related interventions to help them get over their traumatic experiences. At the same time, they need help to compete in the labor market with real marketable skills. There is still a lot to be done in terms of providing career guidance, skills building opportunities, employment, and access to financing for entrepreneurial ventures. Real economic and social reintegration efforts have to be stepped up. Again, much has been done and much more needs to be done.

The idea is to locate oneself in global and national efforts and do the best that is possible within the sphere of one's influence. Coaching can be a critical first step.

ILO Action against Trafficking in Human Beings

The ILO views with serious concern the increasing volume and complexity of trafficking in persons worldwide, especially migrant women and children. It recognizes the imperative need to address it at national, regional and global levels by promoting bilateral, regional and multilateral cooperation to combat it.

The ILO considers trafficking as a form of forced and compulsory labor, one of the worst forms of child labour, among the worst forms of exploitation of migrant workers and lastly, as an issue involving a significant number of women workers. It recognizes that trafficking in women and children (boys and girls) exists not only in the commercial sex industry, but also in other sectors such as domestic service, work in plantations, construction sites, sweatshops and begging and soliciting.

In 1998, the ILO adopted the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. This Declaration, which provides ILO a strong focus on the issue and contains four principles reflecting the eight fundamental ILO Conventions. These four principles include: the elimination of all forms of forced labour; the effective abolition of child labour; the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation; and freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining agreement.

“In its many projects and advocacy activities, the ILO addresses trafficking from a labour market perspective. It thereby seeks to eliminate the root causes, such as poverty, lack of employment and inefficient labour migration systems. ILO led responses involving labour market institutions, such as public employment services, labour inspectors and labour ministries. Moreover, as a tripartite organization, the ILO consults and involves workers' and employers' organizations in its work. It is also a partner to international organizations, such as UNDP, IOM and UNICEF.” (ILO Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, ILO, 2008)

The ILO has done remarkable work on trafficking in persons and all of these programs are listed in the above-mentioned reference. The ILO has worked on the following areas:

- conventions and national laws against human trafficking
- enforcement of laws and regulations
- national and regional strategies
- regulation and monitoring of the recruitment process
- ensuring safe migration
- empowerment through employment, education and training
- business against human trafficking
- trade union action against human trafficking
- working with financial institutions
- gender mainstreaming in anti-trafficking programmes
- HIV/AIDs and trafficking
- Advocacy and global partnerships

The issue of returning migrant women and their social and economic reintegration has been a special focus of the ILO through the years. A major program addressing the Asian and Philippine context (under which this Manual for Coaches is making a contribution) is described below.

The Mekong Sub-Regional Project to Combat Trafficking in Children and Women

In the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS), human trafficking is a problem of significant proportions but was considered narrowly as a problem of commercial sexual exploitation of women and more recently, of children. Trafficking in the GMS affects all sorts of people-girls and women, boys and men-and across many economic sectors and diverse activities. Trafficked girls and women endure severe exploitation in diverse activities that include manufacturing, agriculture, domestic service, while boys and men are routinely trafficked into exploitative labour in quarries, factories, fishing boats and other work requiring hard manual labour, as well as indentured servitude.

The TICW is a project of the International Labour Organization (ILO), one of the UN's specialized agencies, which began in 2000. Through its many researches, it aims to study the ground-level situation of trafficking and offer proven practices to combat it through, among others, prevention. The project focuses on 5 countries in the Greater Mekong Sub-Region, namely Thailand, Viet Nam, China, Lao PDR and Cambodia. Aside from its valuable contribution in the area of study and research, various tools have also been developed with other agencies and organizations, all of critical value in anti-trafficking work.

ILO-HSF Project: “Economic and Social Reintegration of Returned Victims/Survivors of Trafficking in Thailand and the Philippines”

The International Labour Organization's (ILO's) project entitled, “Economic and Social Empowerment of Returned Victims of Trafficking” funded by the UN Trust Fund for Human Security (HSF) is a three-year effort to provide direct assistance to returned victims of human trafficking and, in this process, strengthen national and

institutional capacities to address in a sustainable manner the needs of this special target group of migrant returnees. In its work on return and reintegration of victims of human trafficking, the ILO has strongly advocated that economic empowerment interventions are as important as social preparation, counseling and legal assistance in ensuring that the returnees are able to reassume their work and family lives in their home countries. Victims/survivors require assistance in identifying career opportunities, developing skills and obtaining decent work in order to achieve economic independence and a strong sense of self worth.

This project has contributed significantly to the body of knowledge, resources, and real palpable help for returned victims/survivors of trafficking through its various outputs:

- Database on Reintegration of Returned Victims of Trafficking
- National Guidelines on a Referral System on the Recovery and Reintegration of Trafficked Persons
- OWWA Case Management Manual
- Catalogue of Skills and Livelihood Training Programmes and other Support Services
- Beneficiaries Training on Entrepreneurship
- Corporate Social Responsibility
- Coaching Returned Victims/Survivors of Trafficking: A Manual for Coaches



Module 2

Six Basic Themes in coaching returned victims/survivors of trafficking toward gainful careers

Theme 1: Get real: Reality Self-check

Theme 2: Continuously add to your basket of skills

Theme 3: Always be aware of what's going on in the world of work

Theme 4: Build, nurture and maintain your networks

Theme 5: Keep improving your communication skills

Theme 6: Practice good human relations

Module 2

Six Basic Themes in coaching returned victims/survivors of trafficking toward gainful careers

There are certain key themes that seem to be commonly needed in career guidance situations where help needed revolves around career management, job search, and job satisfaction. To a great extent, they also apply to returned victims/survivors of trafficking. At the same time, these themes must be adapted to the unique situations of trafficked persons, taking into consideration that the trauma of their experiences has a character that is not found in the profile of the usual jobseeker without any such past.

These themes, repeated with the right sense of urgency and importance, are very critical in helping coachees to appreciate the need for a structured way of looking at their circumstances on the aspect of careers. Furthermore, the fact that there are only five interrelated messages is a good point for memorability.

These basic themes, dealt with singly in separate chapters of the Manual, all form one distinct message: You must stand out! Of 100 applicants for the same job, why you? In the end, it's all about standing out, being noticed, being recognized as that one person who will make a difference for the company.

The six themes are:

- Theme 1: Get real: Reality Self-check
- Theme 2: Continuously add to your basket of skills
- Theme 3: Always be aware of what's going on in the world of work
- Theme 4: Build, nurture and maintain your networks
- Theme 5: Keep improving your communication skills
- Theme 6: Practice good human relations skills

As you gain experience using the suggested approach based on these key themes, gather your own coaching stories of how you have used them successfully so that you will gain confidence in making them a part of your coaching repertoire.

Following is an article that deals with three of the six themes: adding to your basket of skills, continuous networking, and keeping updated about business trends. It can give you ideas about how to use the said themes.

From lifetime employment to lifelong employability

Several years ago, Japan led the world in the concept and practice of “cradle to grave” employment. It was a much-admired practice that made Japanese workers the envy of people all over the world who wanted what Japanese companies guaranteed their employees: lifetime employment.

The idea of being employed in one company until retirement was a welcome assurance. Because employees never had to fear unemployment, they could be expected to be loyal and dedicated to this one company for their entire lifetime. Upon retirement, employees knew they would have enough to take care of their needs for the remaining years after working for the same firm.

No longer true

Lifetime employment, however, is now a thing of the past. One can no longer expect to stay with one company for his/her entire work life. The new world of work is characterized by constant change. Business decisions on downsizing, mergers and outsourcing are constantly being made, making retrenchment commonplace.

What this means is that productivity, consistently good performance, even an untainted record in honesty and loyalty, are not enough to keep a job. Longevity in a company is no longer guaranteed even if one is a valuable contributor to the business. When the company decides to outsource a function, change its business strategy, move to another location or sell out, it may even let go some very good people. Jobholders cannot control company decisions that affect them.

Job security redefined

The new world of work has redefined the meaning of job security for employees. Security is no longer a reward earned for many years of productive work with a company. It can no longer be guaranteed by companies nor achieved through hard work by employees.

What, then, are the implications of this trend for both jobholders and jobseekers? How do you ensure employability and marketability in an increasingly competitive global marketplace? How do you continue to go for the jobs you want? How do you remain attractive to potential employers?

Lifelong learning

There are three critical things that you should do to ensure that you remain employable at whatever age.

First, you must consistently be on a learning mode, all the time, in whatever circumstance. Continue to learn new skills. Add new skills to your competency base or “basket” of skills. The more skills you have, the more marketable you are and the more fields of endeavor you can pursue and make a living from.

A solid competency base would help you to offer many things to different employers. This ensures that you are not limited to any one field, industry or career because you have multiple talents to offer.

Keeping updated

Second, you must keep updated on business and work trends. You must be knowledgeable about employment trends, the changes in the world of work, in-demand careers and jobs, and such issues as globalization and technology. You must read up on local and world events because these have a bearing on employment. You must learn about new technological breakthroughs and seek to upgrade your skills in these areas. You must scan the environment for employment opportunities and check what skills the market needs. You must be constantly aware of the world and what’s happening to it.

Network continuously

Lastly, you must maintain and expand your network of relationships, both personal and professional. Touch base with your network of family, friends and associates. Keep them posted about career news in your life. Let people know what you do best and what you want to do in the future.

“Networking is not about whom you know; it is rather about who knows you.” It is about letting people know what you are good at so that your network contacts will remember you when opportunities arise.

Forever employable

Lifelong learning, keeping updated on business trends, and continuous networking-these are what ensure lifelong employability. Looking for a job in the new world of work requires multi-skilled individuals who are able to establish their worth and who keep themselves knowledgeable about what’s going on. At whatever age, meaningful engagements will always be available for those who can navigate in many different situations.

It may even be said that those who have real job security are those who have something to offer in whatever fields they choose. If you pursue security in this way, you will always remain attractive, marketable and employable, the kind of globally-competitive individuals who will survive the challenges of the new world of work now and in the future.

The sooner you shift mindset from thinking “lifetime employment” to “lifelong employability,” the sooner you will make real investments in self-development that will dictate the kind of future you eventually create for yourself.

Written by Loree Cruz-Mante.

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Theme No. 1

Get real: Reality self-check

Dealing with the past

The biggest hurdle towards empowerment of people with traumatic experiences such as trafficking is helping people to look to the future with confidence. The psychological scars of the experience will always hound them. If they allow these memories to prevent them from moving forward, then the whole process becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Messages such as “you’re not good enough” or “you’re so worthless” or “you’re so dumb which is why you were victimized” continue to wound the psyche. True or not, these messages are repeatedly played over and over until the victim actually gets to believe them. Thus entrenched in the belief system, the messages continue to be reenacted in reality. The prophecy fulfills itself.

The goal of any intervention in this case is always the same: to bring the person back on the track of life. Without this initial hopefulness in a future, there is little that can be done. This hopefulness must not be based simply on a “yes, you can do it” attitude if, in fact, there are no realistic preparations, such as skills training, access to services and the like. It is critical, then, that coaches are able to provide hope in the context of a realistic assessment of the situation, including its challenges and the demands it makes on both coaches and coachees.

Many times, the inability to deal with the present and the future is anchored on the inability to deal with the past. This must be addressed first. This is what pre-career coaching must do. It is quite difficult for career coaching to take place when the initial counseling on psychosocial and mental health has not been done.

But even as initial pre-career counseling has taken place, it is still best to begin any career coaching with an effort to make sure that the past has been dealt with adequately, at least to the extent that victims are ready to talk about a future. If they show readiness to engage the world again, either through gainful employment or entrepreneurship, then meaningful interventions directed at career empowerment can take place.

Returned victims of trafficking must be helped to come to terms with their reality. It is hoped that they have already done this by the time they come for career coaching.

To translate their understanding of their past into a career framework, the following exercise would help.

Exercise 1

Explaining your past work experiences

In a few sentences, explain your past work experiences and why you are now looking for a job.

Processing

There are no right or wrong answers here. What you merely want to surface is how your coachees view their past. By asking them to explain it to you, you will be able to gauge how much they are willing to reveal about their past, how matter-of-factly they can talk about their experiences, and how forward looking they are.

Note that coachees are in no way obligated to talk about their past or volunteer any information if they do not wish to do so. You should just be able to help them talk about the past and explain the gaps in their employment. You should, however, emphasize that they should be prepared to talk about it if asked in a job interview. Not being truthful is the worst thing they can do. It will spoil their chances of meaningful employment if they are found out, and will add to their self-doubt about their integrity even if nobody else knows. Either way, they lose out.

In coaching them, screen out any unwarranted emotional undertones which can detract from the objectivity of the explanation. The explanation should focus on an unemotional presentation of the reasons and a clear picture of what they are looking for in a future job.

Knowing what you have to offer

An unfortunate experience with trafficking does not-should not-snuff out what's good in the victims. Their talents, skills, capabilities and value remain despite what may have happened to them. Coaches must bring about this realization in their coachees.

Very often, the sad experiences of trafficking erase their belief in themselves, including their inherent value and worth as individuals. This lack of self-esteem must be dealt with. If the coachees do not believe in themselves, how can they market themselves and make others believe in them? Finding a job is all about making a potential employer believe to such an extent that they actually want to hire the applicant.

A clear and realistic assessment of self-worth is critical. Armed with self-knowledge, returned victims of trafficking will find it easier to highlight their skills which employers may be looking for.

Knowing what you have to offer also includes knowing what you do not have. It is not uncommon to find coachees desiring to become call center agents when they cannot even make a complete sentence in English. They mistakenly think that acquiring an accent is all there is. Many people also think that starting a business is all about capital. They fail to realize that they need to acquire the entrepreneurial qualities that spell success for the business, such as hard work, good communication and selling skills, sound money management practices, and competitiveness.

Finding a match between what you have and what the market needs

There are many inspiring stories of people who discovered that their skills were inappropriate or inadequate for the new demands of the workplace. On this

basis, they then acquired new skills to make themselves more marketable. Learning new skills is not dependent on age. There are many unskilled young people who cannot find jobs, and many older ones who have skills that employers want.

[A later section in this module (Theme 3: Always be aware of what's going on in the world of work) deals with research and finding out what the market needs.]

Do a reality self-check periodically

Reality testing is a key ingredient of any successful endeavor. Returned victims of trafficking are no different. As coaches, you must help them assess what they have at the moment and what they still need to acquire. It is never too late to learn new things, and this is not limited to formal training or schooling alone. Keenly observing others at their jobs, asking people to teach them the ropes of a trade, and just showing interest in as many things as possible are simple, no-expense activities that can be done by anyone.

Periodically, you must check where you are and how much you have grown in your work. Have you learned a new skill lately? Have you tried to keep yourself open to new opportunities for learning? Are you more marketable than you were last year?

[A later section (Theme 2: Continuously add to your basket of skills) deals with the subject of upskilling more deeply.]

In the end, what is crucial is whether or not you are making yourself more attractive to employers because you have skills and a track record that speak for themselves. A driver who knows how to drive a manual transmission car can learn how to drive an automatic. A laundry woman can discover a way to remove stains and market herself as a specialist in that area. A caregiver can learn a bit of patient psychology so that she can enrich her usual caregiving chores.

In all of these, what is critical is a record of integrity, honesty and quality work. These are what will make you employable at any age because your satisfied employers will speak up on your behalf.

Know what you enjoy

Very often, the focus on skills and competencies snuffs out another vital element of performance: interests and values. Knowing what you enjoy must also be part of your reality self-check.

The phenomenon of caregiving is a good example of a demand-driven occupation. Many people view caregiving as a ticket to better earning capacity abroad. This may be true, but how many people who become caregivers actually fit the profession? How many people really have the aptitude for serving others with patience, compassion and true joy?

Some people also believe that enjoying what they do is secondary only to making a living. This is true to a certain extent, but it is also true that if you enjoy your work, you do it much better than when you do not. What this implies is that if you do your job well because you enjoy it, you will tend to be noticed as a good worker. When you have a reputation for good performance, you only need a career break and you will be well on your way to career success.

Finding a fit

Aside from skills and interests/values, it is important that there is a match between you, the work you do and the company you work for. Again, it may be said that a job is a job no matter what. Given the same logic as using interests and values to drive performance, doing a job that matches you as a person will redound to greater productivity on your part.

You must make up a list of things that you are looking for in a career and employer, and see whether the job or company you are looking for matches these requirements. A lot of these things depend on your personality and your current life circumstances which may dictate what your needs are at present.

A useful exercise is the Holland Vocational Preferences Model. This is available in another ILO publication called Catalogue of Skills and Livelihood Training Programmes and other Support Services. The catalogue contains a translated version of the Holland model which has been validated with returned victims/survivors of trafficking. (Please see the bibliography.)

Three memory aids

These three words may serve as a useful memory aid on the things one must remember when assessing oneself:

- **Alam** - What do you know? What can you do well? (knowledge, skills)
- **Gusto** - What do you like or enjoy doing? What gives you delight? (interests, motivations)
- **Bagay** - Does the work fit you? Do you fit the work or organization? Is the work you are doing consistent with who you are? (beliefs, values, preferences)

Women are often less cognizant of their strengths and capabilities. The multi-tasking role of being mother, wife, sister, daughter, etc. often leaves little time for self-introspection. Getting real also means being aware of these strengths. Recognizing one's worth has nothing to do with humility. It simply means that one is aware of the limitless possibilities of personality and character on which real contribution to the betterment of the world is anchored.

Theme No. 2

Continuously add to your basket of skills

In the modern-day new world of work, two of the most common requirements of the job market and business are: multi-tasking and multi-skilling. The demands of succeeding in today's global environment are such that individuals must have multiple capabilities to handle a wide variety of situations simultaneously.

Multi-tasking requires the simultaneous performance of functions. This means that we can no longer choose to focus on one specific task at a particular time or to excuse bad performance because of lack of concentration. There is a multitude of tasks that must be done at the same time, with the same demands for excellence. Work schedules are no longer simple and linear. Many things happen at the same time, demanding attention with the same intensity.

Because people have to do multi-tasking most of the time, this also means that they need to acquire multiple skills to be able to perform multiple tasks well. People with singular skills are no longer relevant in the modern-day workplace and will find it increasingly difficult to market themselves. What the market calls for are well-rounded individuals who can thrive in many different situations, deal with all kinds of people, and perform creditably in a wide variety of tasks.

Your basket of skills

The primary requirement to meet the multi-tasking and multi-skilling demands of the new world of work is a set of skills and competencies that provide solutions to the needs of organizations.

Think of yourself as having a basket. It may be small or large, sturdy or frail, made of heavy or light material. It may have the capacity to expand and hold more things inside, or be inflexible with limited capacity.

Then think of that basket as a container for your skills. What skills do you have in that basket? Do you have only one or many skills inside? Can your basket hold more than what is currently inside or is it limited to hold only its present capacity?

If people were to come and choose from what's inside your basket, what would they take? Does your set of skills provide them with a good choice selection? And if there are many of you with baskets, all with different sizes and things inside, would they choose you? Would your basket be more attractive to them than the baskets of those around you? Will you stand out because of what your basket holds?

This analogy is an apt way to describe what the present world of work is looking for. Who do you think will find it easier to be employed or to start a business: the one who knows how to do only one thing or the one who can do many things?

The hard reality is that the more skills you have, the more things you can do for a living. The more you know, the more marketable you are. It's really as simple as that.

What are skills and competencies?

The basket of skills is technically called your competency base. This is the storehouse of things you know how to do, are good at, and which others would be willing to pay for.

There are many ways to categorize skills and many things to put in a skills list. One way to start is by looking at twenty (20) skills which the International Labour Organization (Sub-Regional Office for South-East Asia and the Pacific) and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) call “basic competencies.”

Basic competencies (also called core work skills) are “non-technical skills (knowledge, skills and attitudes) that everybody will need in to perform satisfactorily at work and in society and are considered portable and transferable irrespective of jobs or individual settings.” (For a more detailed discussion, please see Competency Standards, ILO, 2006.)

This competency list is a good starting for measuring your capabilities because whether explicitly stated or not, these are what employers will continue to look for when choosing a candidate to hire. They are also the same set of skills that can spell the success or failure of a business enterprise.

Following are the 20 key competencies as listed by ILO and TESDA:

1. **Receive and respond to workplace communication** - receive, respond and act on verbal and written communication.
2. **Work with others** - develop workplace relationship and contribute to workplace activities.
3. **Demonstrate work values** - demonstrating and living by desirable values and ethics in the workplace.
4. **Practice basic housekeeping procedures** - apply the basic housekeeping procedures.
5. **Participate in workplace communication** - gather, interpret and gather information in response to workplace communication.
6. **Work in team environment** - identify role and responsibility as a member of a team.
7. **Practice career professionalism** - promoting career growth and advancement.
8. **Practice occupational health and safety procedures** - comply with regulatory and organizational requirements for occupational health and safety.
9. **Lead workplace communication** - lead in the dissemination and discussion of ideas, information and issues in the workplace.
10. **Lead small teams** - including setting and maintaining team and individual performance standards.
11. **Develop and practice negotiating skills** - collect information in order to negotiate to a desired outcome and participate in the negotiation.
12. **Solve problems related to work activities** - solve problems in the workplace, including the application of problem-solving techniques, and to determine and resolve the root cause of problems.
13. **Use mathematical concepts and techniques** - application of mathematical concepts and techniques.
14. **Use relevant technologies** - selecting, sourcing and applying appropriate and affordable technologies in the workplace.
15. **Utilize specialized communication skills** - use specialized communication

skills to meet specific needs of external and internal clients, conduct interviews, facilitate group discussions, and contribute to the development of communication strategies.

16. **Develop teams and individuals** - determine individual and team development needs and facilitate the development of the workgroup.
17. **Apply problem** - solving techniques in the workplace - apply the process of problem-solving and other problems beyond those associated directly with the process unit. Includes the application of structured processes and improvement tools.
18. **Collect, analyze and organize information** - process, analyze, interpret and organize workplace information and other relevant data.
19. **Plan and organize work** - outcomes required in planning and organizing work. May be applied to a small independent operation or to a section of a large organization.
20. **Promote environmental protection** - adhering to environmental protection principles, strategies and guidelines.

These competencies are in no way limited to managerial or supervisory levels. They apply equally to rank and file and blue-collared jobs. Are not the caregiver, forklift operator, or hotel room attendant just like the president of the company, expected to work with others (skill #2), demonstrate work values (skill #3), plan and organize work (skill #19) and promote environmental protection (skill #20)?

“It is important to emphasize the need for jobseekers to acquire these competencies as early as possible in their work life and to continue to increase proficiency through the years. Increasing one’s competency base is one of the surest ways of ensuring that one will always have a place in the job market. The meaning of the so-called security of tenure has changed significantly through the years. The concept of lifelong employment with one company is no longer true in many cases.” (Taken from *Guiding Youth Careers: A handbook for those who help young jobseekers*, ILO, 2007.)

Another useful way of looking at skills is to categorize them into four types (Taken from *Guiding Youth Careers*):

- People skills - those that have to do with working with people, including serving, helping, influencing thinking and action, entertaining
- Data skills - those that have to do with facts, records, files, numbers, details, systems and procedures
- Thing skills - those that have to do with building, maintaining, processing, handling equipment or machinery, physical, biological or chemical functions
- Idea skills - those that have to do with abstractions, ideas, creative expression, problem solving

Examples:

People skills	Data skills	Thing skills	Idea skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • selling • teaching • helping • serving • speaking • counseling • training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • computing • tabulating • analyzing • planning • posing • researching • testing • checking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • repairing • driving • inspecting • producing • warehousing • building • machine work • inspecting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interpreting • theorizing • speculating • predicting • innovating • anticipating • discovering • creating • synthesizing ideas

What skills do you have that you can offer to the market? The list above can help you identify those skills and abilities, rate yourself according to your proficiency, and hone them so that you can continue to increase your basket of skills.

Lifelong employability

It is no longer wise these days to wish to stay in one company forever. Business realities dictate downsizing, retrenchment, and restructuring, and these are quite outside the control of the workforce. It is best to be ready for the implications of these trends.

And what are these implications? Among other things, this means that people should always be ready to change companies, even shift careers. This further means that people should have a large, exciting, and useful basket of skills to offer different companies at different times, depending on the unique local and global work environment during a given period.

Workers cannot expect to be employed for a lifetime in one company. Those with an ever-increasing competency base have better chances of becoming relevant solution providers and therefore be employable at any age.

The formula looks like this: $TR + ECB = LE$



Framework designed by James S. Mante, 2008

Security of tenure as we know it now is no longer a function of loyalty, length of stay, or even value. Real security or lifelong employability is a matter of having a broad and deep competency base that will allow you to be marketable and employable at any age because you have skills that people want.

Center Skills

It is also important that you are able to identify those skills that you are most proficient in, i.e., those things that you do best. You will undoubtedly have skills in varying degrees of competency. You are good at some skills, better at others, and there are those skills that you are absolutely best at. The set of skills that you are best at is called “core of core.” These skills form the very heart of what you can do and which you can therefore confidently offer to others.

The larger your core or core, the more marketable you are.

Following is an illustrative story of a man called Onyot which best demonstrates the value of core or core.

Si Onyot: Handang-handa sa transisyon

Huwag na ninyong tanungin kung bakit Onyot ang pangalan niya. Basta. Yun ang sabi niyang pangalan niya. So yun na yun.

Nakilala ko si Onyot dahil isang araw ay kinailangan ko ng tubero. Tinawagan ko ang aking kaibigan at dali-dali niyang sinabi: “Ah, madali lang yan! Si Onyot ang sagot sa iyong problema.”

Sa sumunod na Sabado, dumating si Onyot alas siete nang umaga sa aming bahay. Sa tantya ko ay siguro mga limampung taong gulang na siya, matipuno, maayos ang pangangatawan, malinis ang pananamit. Kagalang-galang, wika nga.

Pinaliwanag ko kay Onyot ang kailangang gawin. Maya’t maya ay tinitignan ko ang trabaho niya para masigurong naintindihan niya ang aking mga sinabi. Maayos ang sagot niya sa aking mga tanong at malinaw niyang naipaliliwanag ang proseso ng kaniyang “problem-solving.”

Nang matapos si Onyot at binibigay ko na ang kabayaran niya, tinanong ko siya kung may kilala siyang electrician. “Naku, ako po ay electrician din. Ako na lang po ang gagawa. Kailan ninyo gustong bumalik ako dito?” ani niya.

Bumalik si Onyot bilang electrician, at bumalik nang ikatlong pagkakataon bilang karpentero naman. Sa madaling salita, si Onyot ay tubero, electrician, at karpentero. Ang trabahong dapat sana ay ginagawa ng tatlong tao ay isang Onyot lang ang katapat.

Nagkaroon ako ng interest sa karir ni Onyot kaya’t nang binabayaran ko siya sa pangatlo niyang balik sa aming bahay, pinaupo ko siya para makipagkuwentuhan sandali.

Ito ang kaniyang salaysay.

Si Onyot ay isang janitor at messenger sa isang bus company. (Kaya pala Sabado lang ang puwede niyang ibigay na araw sa kanyang mga part-time na trabaho.) Mahigit dalawampung taon na siya sa kumpanyang iyon. Sa ikalabing-walong taon niya, nahalata niya na unti-unting nababawasan ang mga units ng kumpanya. Ang mga nasisirang bus ay parang hindi na pinapalitan o pinagagawa. Kung ano lang ang mga natitira pang mga bus na maayos ang kondisyon, doon na lang umiikot ang negosyo.

Nagsimulang mangamba si Onyot na baka magsara ang kumpanya. Kapag nangyari iyon ay siguradong mawawalan siya ng trabaho. Sa katunayan,

isa-isa nang nawawala ang kaniyang mga kaibigang driver at iba pang mga empleyado. Ang sabi ng may-ari ay malayo daw siyang matanggal dahil maayos ang trabaho niya. Wala daw siyang dapat ikatakot.

Nguni’t hindi maiwasan ni Onyot na matakot. May asawa at tatlong anak siya. Hindi siya pwedeng mawalan ng trabaho.

Sa halip na magmukmok sa nakikita niyang mapanganib na sitwasyon niya sa kumpanya, si Onyot ay nagsimulang magplano ng kanyang kinabukasan sa labas ng kumpanya. Sinimulan niyang paghandaan ang mga magaganap sa kaniyang buhay.

Naisip niya na hindi malawak ang kanyang mga kaalaman. Bukod sa pagiging janitor at messenger ay wala siyang tunay na mga kakayahang maipagmamalaki. Bumuo si Onyot ng isang game plan para dagdagan ang kanyang kaalaman. Isa-isa niyang kinausap ang mga driver, mekaniko, tubero, electrician at karpentero ng kumpanya. Nakiusap siya na kung maaari ay payagan siyang manood sa kanilang pagtatrabaho. Sa kanyang pagmamasid ay pilit na inaral ni Onyot ang lahat ng puwedeng aralin. Nagpaturo siya ng mga bagay-bagay tungkol sa mga trabahong iyon. Kalaunan ay pinayagan siyang magpalit ng fuse, magdikit ng dalawang plywood, maghigpit ng gripo. Dahil hindi niya masyadong type ang pagmamaneho at pagmeme-kaniko, hindi na niya ito masyadong binigyan ng panahon. Wala din kasi siyang mapagpapraktisan na sasakyan.

Nanatili si Onyot sa isipan naming mag-asawa sa marami pang araw at buwan mula nang makilala namin siya. Pagkalipas ng ilang buwan, kinailangan ko na naman ng tubero.

“Ay, malabo na makapunta dyan si Onyot,” ang sabi ng kaibigan ko nang tumawag ako ulit sa kanya. “Nagpaparemodel ako ng masters bedroom at si Onyot ang aking kontratista. May mga tao na siya. Alam mo namang napakaselan ng aking enhinyerong asawa at si Onyot lang ang tangi niyang mapapagkatiwalaan. Sorry ha.”

Oo nga, sorry nga. Maghahanap na naman ako ng ibang tubero. Pero bagama’t sorry ako para sa aking sarili, labis naman akong natutuwa para kay Onyot, isang taong kailanman ay hindi matitinag ng pagbabago dahil marunong siyang magdesenyo ng kanyang kinabukasan.

Sinulat ni Loree Cruz-Mante, 2008

Your competencies go where you go

Competencies are portable, transferable, and mobile. They go where you go. They stay with you.

When you change employer or shift careers, your competencies remain. While it is true that your competencies were applied to specific tasks in a previous job, they have unique application in your new work environment.

Here is an illustration. Let us say that Carmen, a machine operator in a semiconductor company, decides to become a caregiver. As a machine operator, one of her skills is troubleshooting and doing minor repairs on a particular machine. She is also part of the Safety Committee and is known for her perfect attendance record. She is hailed as industrious, willing to work long hours, and very meticulous about details.

Certainly, Carmen's track record of working with machines has no direct application to caregiving. But all her skills are usable both in a manufacturing and caregiving situation. As in a manufacturing setting, caregiving requires long hours of work. Carmen's capacity for extended work hours in the plant will be put to good use as she takes care of an elderly ward who has needs even in the middle of the night.

A caregiver must also be very conscious of safety when administering the right medicine at the right time or ensuring that there are no water spills on the floor which can cause the patient to slip. Carmen's aptitude for minor troubleshooting on her machines will be very useful when fixing a loose sphygmomanometer tube or regulating an oxygen tank.

Work settings may differ but the competencies you have may be applied in different ways. Competencies are portable, transferable and mobile. They go with you wherever you go.

Interests and Values as motivators

It must be pointed out that skills are not all that should be considered in finding the next job. Skills are what you can do, but they may not necessarily mean that you want to do them. There are many skills that you may be good at, but for some reason do not enjoy using them. It may be that you have become somewhat tired of them because you have doing them for years. It may be that you have become proficient at a skill which you never really enjoyed but had to do as part of your job.

Interest and values actually drive your motivation to perform at peak levels. It is therefore important also that you have a clear picture of what are important to you (such as values) and which excite you (such as interests). Just as you want to identify your skills, you must also identify your values and interests.

Skills and values, in addition to your personal traits and preferences, will then help you determine which types of work and workplaces would best fit you. Remember that you want to achieve satisfaction in your work, too, and not just make a living.

Note:

In the preceding chapter, a useful way of assessing oneself was presented thus:

- **Alam** - *What do you know? What can you do well? (knowledge, skills)*
- **Gusto** - *What do you like or enjoy doing? What gives you delight? (interests, motivations)*
- **Bagay** - *Does the work fit you? Do you fit the work or organization? Is the work you are doing consistent with who you are? (beliefs, values, preferences)*

In the context of adding to your basket of skills, the knowledge and skills part (*alam*) are actually your competencies. The "gusto" plays a big part in competency-building because the tendency is that you have an easier time building a competency which you also delight in. The "bagay" is easy to assess after you have determined what you are good at and what you enjoy. The fit with the work and the organization happens when you would have determined that work that you are not good at and that you don't enjoy will not fit you. Additionally, work that goes against your beliefs, values and preferences will not fit because they are not aligned with who you are.

Skills recognition is crucial if you want your basket of skills to be full. You must be aware of what you can do well and where the gaps toward reaching your full potential lie.

Theme No. 3

Always know what's going on in the world of work

Changes and trends in the work environment

Things are changing so fast in the world as we know it that it is important to be constantly updated about what's going on. This looks like an impossible task for those who are not into technology because computers and the internet are the primary vehicles for keeping informed. But even as you are still not into these things and even as you may still be upskilling in this area, there are still many things that can be done through sheer observation and open-mindedness.

How, then, are those who are outside this technological realm able to keep themselves informed? This is a continuing and increasingly problematic area for the vast majority of jobseekers who do not have access to technology. That is why it is important, whenever possible, to encourage people to learn how to use computers so that they will have better chances in getting the jobs they want.

In the absence of computer know-how, however, there is a wide variety of other means to keep updated. Keeping informed is not solely dependent on computers. The important thing is that people keep their eyes and ears open for changes that may affect them and the jobs they seek or keep.

Researching the market

One of the unique characteristics of the Philippine job scenario is that so many people believe what they want to believe. Very few actually research about the jobs they want and often end up in difficult situations, including trafficking situations.

Researching does not have to be complicated or high-tech. It begins with an inquisitive, even suspicious, mindset that wants to understand whatever it is one is planning to enter or pursue. It can begin with seeking out people who can help with career advice, primarily people who have been working in the same industry or would have experiences similar to what jobseekers are looking at.

Talking, interviewing and asking people remain some of the easiest and most efficient ways of gaining information. Inquisitiveness is a virtue and people should be encouraged to find out all they can by listening to others.

Print media plays a vital role. Newspapers, magazines and other printed materials are excellent sources of information that can give clear images of business and employment trends. Television gives updates even if only through newscasts and reports.

What to research

To many people, things are as simple as this. "I want to be a seaman because my brother is a seaman. He told me it is easy to place me even if I have no experience." "My cousin is a nurse and she makes a lot of money. I want to go to Chicago and try my luck there, too." "I want to be a caregiver in the U.K. They say it is easy to go as tourist or student and then find a job when I get there." "I will apply in a call center.

The pay is good and I can easily learn to speak with an accent.” “Never mind the loneliness of being so far away from home. I need the dollars for my family.”

All of these statements have to be validated by sound research. It is not enough to go on hearsay, rumor, or worse, merely dream of the possibility without checking the reality.

A brief look at the classified ads will give a wealth of information about what industries are currently looking for.

It is important to research the following:

- The job market - What industries are hiring? What companies are closing down and in what industries are they? What skills are companies looking for? What age limits do they specify? What positions are most advertised?
- Your field and industry - Are there new trends affecting the industry? Are there new skills requirements?
- The company - Is it legally registered with the Bureau of Trade and Industry and the Securities and Exchange Commission? Is it a multinational or a family-owned corporation? What other businesses does it own? Is it known to be fair in treating and compensating employees? Does it have a pending case on sexual harassment or underpayment of wages?
- The job - Is it what you are looking for? Does it fit you, i.e., is it something you can really do and enjoy doing as well? Will it make good use of what you know and what you trained for?

Keen observation is a critical factor in research. You should be observant about what 's going on, such as new establishments that have an ad for crew on the shop window or a new building in the vicinity that will most likely rent out to businesses that will eventually need people.

Accessing help

There is a lot of help around but if people don't know how to find them, then they miss out on very important partners in their job search. Again, many jobseekers choose to believe what they hear and very often base their decisions on hearsay or stories told out of context.

One government facility that is grossly underused by its target market is the Public Employment Service Office (PESO). They are everywhere and people only need to check with their local government or the PESO website in order to locate the one in their area. The PESO has job listings that can help direct jobseekers to jobs.

The Bureau of Local Employment (BLE) of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) runs a user-friendly website with all kinds of useful data on employment, both here and abroad. They regularly feature “hot jobs” which include the top in-demand occupations and job openings for particular periods. There are interesting articles about relevant information that jobseekers need to know and helpful tips on various related subjects.

The Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) is the first place to go for checking whether a particular recruitment agency is legally registered or not, whether it has a job order for positions it advertises, and whether the fees it charges are within those stipulated by law. Like the BLE website, it also features many useful articles about working abroad.

Many newspapers not only carry paid job advertisements but also feature work-related sections that contain useful information. Online jobsites are all over,

and if some people are not savvy about accessing them, they can always get help from others who are.

The important thing is that people approach their job search with an open and inquisitive mind so that they are able, at the minimum, to establish certain facts to be true before proceeding with any decision to apply in a certain company.

(For more a more detailed listing of useful jobsites and career guidance, please see three other previously-mentioned ILO publications: The Catalogue of Skills and Livelihood Training Programmes and other Support Services; Guiding Youth Careers: A handbook for those who help young jobseekers; and Minute Guide for Young Jobseekers.)

Preparing your biodata

A biodata or resume is a critical tool that jobseekers should always have on hand. Very often, jobseekers get stressed out about crafting a biodata which should actually not be too difficult if they get good advice. You should seek out the help of someone who knows how to make one and who can help you organize your work experience into a presentable biodata.

After you have written a biodata, you will just need to add or revise it a little to suit your application requirements. You do not have to reinvent it each time.

Your biodata is your advertisement. It should let people see what you have done and where you have worked. It should show dates of employment. An added interest is if you are able to include some achievements at work, awards received, or special training attended.

Even though it may not apply to specific situations of people, keeping updated means you understand that there are now such things as scannable resume, video resume, and online applications. These may seem distant and remote developments, but if you really want to keep abreast of new work trends, you should at least know that they exist. Then, as your job search takes you to the point where you have to learn them, you can begin to study how to do them at that time.

Preparing for interviews

Even in the most basic of application processes, one can hardly get away with the interview. Keeping updated in this area primarily means being ready for questions that would most likely be asked.

Probably the most frequently asked question-and something which would be very difficult if one is not prepared-is: "Tell me about yourself."

People don't think about this question very much and so they do not prepare an answer. It should be a very simple question because you are the expert in who you are and no one is better equipped to tell people who you are except yourself. And yet, so many people fail to answer this one simple question in a way that would impress the interviewer. The answer must be prepared in advance, not on the spot. Otherwise, you may miss out on important things about yourself that could be good selling points for marketing you..

An interview is usually a way of checking whether your biodata is truthful. You must, therefore, master your biodata so you can tell the story behind each item with confidence and integrity.

Here is a list of common questions you should be ready with when preparing for an interview:

- Tell me about yourself.
- Why do you want to work here?
- Why should we hire you?
- What are your strengths? Your weaknesses?
- Why did you leave your former job?
- Tell me about your experience of working abroad.
- What kind of job are you looking for? Why?
- What are your skills? Interests?
- What salary do you expect?

What are employers looking for?

There are usually three things that employers are looking for:

- Can this applicant do the job? - skills, abilities, competencies
- Will the applicant be motivated to do the job? - values, interests, hobbies
- Is the applicant someone who will fit this company? - get along with others, cope with the stresses, fit the culture and climate of the organization

Employers generally look for these things and your task is to present yourself in such a way that you are able to show them that you have what they are looking for. This means preparation and practice. Rehearse how you will tell people about what your skills and interests are, and why you think you can fit well.

You must always be in the know, as far as you are able, about what's going on around you. Listen to the news that talks about a particular country opening its doors to Filipino applicants or one that has put a freeze on the hiring of foreign workers. Be keen to find out what requirements companies are asking for: English proficiency? Technical training? Minimum work experience? Age limit?

Most of all, be critical, rational and objective. Assess the implications of global and local news on you, the jobseeker. What do these trends mean to you and your ability to find the job you want, or find a job, period?

Because of the multiple tasks women have to perform on a daily basis, they often have little time to sit down to read, listen to the radio or do self-introspection and reflection. Keeping abreast of latest world developments could be a chore for many women. That is why it is important that they must deliberately make space for personal time, no matter how difficult that may be. Women must be extra sharp about picking up whatever bits and pieces of news they get their hands on in the midst of performing their multiple tasks.

If you are in the dark, it will be quite difficult to find your way. The same is true even in the world of work.

Theme No. 4

Build, nurture and maintain your networks

What is a network? What is networking?

A network is simply the web of people around you who have some role and influence in your life. It functions much like a spider's web that radiates outward, those at the center being at the strongest point of connection with you. This network is usually composed of your family, friends, colleagues, sports buddies, churchmates, including the friends of your children, the family of your daughter-in-law, the bank teller and building guard who have become nodding acquaintances.

Networking is a very simple concept primarily because everyone has a network whether or not it is recognized as such. It operates on the very basic framework that "no man is an island" and so logically, everyone has a network. Even a hermit or recluse has a network because he/she does not cease to be a member of a family or community. The only difference is that a hermit's network is not an active one because he/she has chosen not to activate it.

Networking is simply making use of your networks for whatever you may need. In the context of this discussion, it means making use of your networks for purposes of career guidance and help.

The myth about networking

The term "networking" is usually associated with people whom you know. Especially in the Philippine context, it is common to hear that someone got a job because of a sponsor or "padrino," defined as someone in a position of influence who is able to get someone a job with an entity over which he/she has clout. The belief that one needs a padrino in order to land a good job continues to be a common cop-out to explain why non-talents usually get the better jobs ahead of the real good achievers.

This kind of reliance on whom you know is true only to a certain, limited extent. People with good work experience and qualifications get into plum companies and positions simply on the basis of who they are and what they have done. In many instances, using a padrino is unnecessary if one is reputed to have a good track record.

A better definition of networking and one that weakens belief in the padrino system is this:

"Networking is not about whom you know but about who knows you."

Many people learn about job openings from friends and family members who tip them about a particular company looking for workers. Businesses thrive on referrals, as do doctors, lawyers, plumbers, family drivers, videographers, gardeners, caregivers, wedding coordinators. How many contractors get their projects because former clients recommended them to others? How many of the utility people you employed were referred to you by your friends? You may have asked for referrals and they gave you names. The persons you eventually hired to do your odd jobs didn't know you; it was you, through your friends, who knew them!

The point here is that if people know you, what you do, how good you are, and how excellent your track record is, they will remember you when they hear of an opportunity. If people know you're looking for a job, and if they have a reasonable amount of knowledge about your background, they will think of you and keep you in mind. Having a lot of people remember you is far more expansive than you knowing people who may have a job to offer.

Building networks

People have many built-in networks that exist simply because of natural connections. Families, for example, form a natural network by virtue of blood relations and consanguinity. Work networks of bosses, peers, associates and clients are also natural to a certain extent since they are not of your own choice but are necessary for doing your job.

There must be a deliberate effort to build networks outside of the natural networks. Friendship networks are critical aspects of your life and it is important that they are also built through the years. Many new networks present themselves year in and year out as you experience different places and situations. Those you meet on these journeys are additional items in your network.

Building networks also means adding to your existing networks. Your family network naturally increases as family members marry, have children and grandchildren, adding to your existing natural network. With other networks, it is important that you build on them. Work outwards. Get to know friends of your friends and add them to your network. Get to know friends of your family and add them to your network. Soon you will have large networks that include friends of friends of friends.

Nurturing and maintaining networks

Like most things in life, networks need to be nurtured and maintained. You need to be in touch somehow, even if only during Christmas, birthdays, or special occasions. You need to be connected and kept abreast of what's going on in your separate lives.

Women seem to have a natural gift for networking, and they must learn to use this to the maximum. They must make their network connections constantly and consistently.

It is you who must determine how closely you want the connections to your networks should be, but you must never lose the connection, no matter how infrequent or brief. Those closest to the core of your "spider's web" get more of your time and attention. These people form your primary network and are the first ones you go to for many things, like advice, celebrations, and help.

Those farther away from the core must nevertheless be nurtured with occasional calls, catching up dates, reunions, email. The important thing is that you stay in the loop about what's happening to each one, even if only on a yearly update or visit.

Networks that are not nurtured eventually die as the links disappear. This is sad because then you lose important bridges to future interactions, whatever they may be.

Networking and careers

Your networks are important sources of information, especially when you are out looking for a job or starting a business. If you have not maintained your

networks properly, you will feel very awkward about suddenly resurrecting the connection because you need help from them.

It is also important that you know how to use your networks. People often think that their networks will not be able to help in their job search because there are no big names in the list, such as political figures, company owners, or VIPs. In truth, not too many networks have such bigshots and yet their networks are able to help them out in times when they need career breaks.

The idea is to keep your network updated as to where you are in your career at any given time. Thank your ninong, former boss, or teacher who first called you about an opening they heard or read about. Through the years, drop a line or two every Christmas about how you are doing and if you plan any career moves in the future. By keeping the connection alive, these people will be able to follow your career and remember you when opportunities arise.

This is also true of your friends, your barkada, your drinking buddies. How many of them know how you are doing at work? How many of them know you have been retrenched or planning to shift jobs? How many of them know you want to work abroad? Well, maybe they do because you see them quite often. But do they know the items in your biodata or that you are currently enrolled in computer repair or gas welding? Friends are a great source of information but they must be empowered to help you. If they don't have the slightest idea of what you're doing and where you're going, it will be hard to think of you, even if you just partied with them last week.

Likewise, you must also keep tab on how your networks are so that you, too, can remember them when you stumble upon an opportunity which you think they may be interested in. Networking is about give and take. Your roles as the helper and the helped change quickly, and you must be ready to play one or both parts at any time.

Most effective tool

Networking has been found by some companies to be the most effective tool for recruitment and by jobseekers to be the most effective job search tool. About 80% of quality jobs are not advertised and can be known only through networking. Why do companies prefer this to advertising? Aside from huge advertising costs, many companies do not want the hassle and cost of leafing through hundreds of applications to be able to single out a good find to recruit.

In the networking process, each time people recommend others for the job, they are also able to give a brief background of the person they are recommending. They can even enthusiastically endorse the candidate and put in a good deal of sales talk on his/her behalf. Even when they give names without endorsements, there is still that connection somehow. On the other hand, applicants who merely send in their biodata in response to an advertisement must be screened more thoroughly since there is no one known to the company who can say anything about their background.

Many networks are good sources of career advice and market information. You will gain a lot of insight by talking with people in your networks who are in a position to help you in your career. This is particularly true when seeking work abroad. A vital part of researching job opportunities abroad is talking with people who have worked abroad or are currently working there. There is much to learn about the emotional, psychological, cultural, and spiritual aspects of overseas work which cannot be found in any book or write-up. Listening to people's experiences can be very instructive.

In the same vein, networks can also tell you much about companies you are applying to. Aspects such as organizational climate, corporate social responsibility, and gender sensitivity and responsiveness are best learned from people who have experienced working in an environment you are trying to enter.

A network resource that is a must for returned victims/survivors of trafficking is the referral system developed by the Social Technology Bureau of the Department of Social Welfare and Development with ILO assistance. Detailed in the Guidelines on a Referral System on the Recovery and Reintegration of Trafficked Persons, the referral system is designed to “provide guidance to service providers to effectively deliver a full range of assistance and protection to trafficked persons. The Guidelines cover the return phase of the trafficking spectrum and a referral system for the provision of pre-return, return and post-return services to ensure the recovery and reintegration of the trafficked persons.”

Be a vital part of your coachees’ networks

Even as you help your trafficked coachees, you have to make sure that you also model to them the good networking practices that you are teaching. Connect them to available help, such as the resources mentioned in this Manual. Show them how to access government entities and NGOs that can help. Share your networks with them by thinking of those people in your own network who can help with jobs or advice.

The sad thing is that resources are limited, and the few that are available are not maximized simply because they are not widely circulated in the appropriate networks. You must show that you also know how to use the network of help available to you.

Exercise 1
Listing your network contacts

NAME OF CONTACT	CATEGORY (family, friend, churchmate, etc.)	CONTACT DETAILS (mobile, landline, email address, office/home address)	REMARKS (industry, how can this person help, who can this person contact on your behalf, etc.)

Exercise 2

Listing your network of helpful resources

NAME OF RESOURCE	CATEGORY (website, print, private library, etc.)	RESOURCE DETAILS (where to find, how to access)	HELP NEEDED FROM WHOM? (who can help you with these resources - accessing, understanding, etc.)

Theme No. 5

Keep improving your communication skills

Communication skills: No. 1 on most employers' lists

Most employers consider communication skills as one of the first things they look for in jobseekers. This is because hardly anyone can succeed anywhere, in any endeavor without the skill to express his/her thoughts adequately to others.

Particularly in this day and age, communication plays a vital role in almost everything. A messenger with poor communication skills will inevitably face problems if he/she cannot repeat his delivery instructions to the recipients. A salesperson will get into a lot of trouble if he/she cannot explain to a customer how a washing machine works. A manager will be constantly misunderstood if he/she does not know the right words to use when explaining management decisions.

Many of the challenges to teamwork in an organization are brought about by communication problems that have to do with people not knowing how to craft their messages clearly and succinctly.

Not just about language

Effective communication is not limited to proficiency in a particular language, say English or Filipino. Language is one important part of communication skills but it is not the only thing. Real communication proficiency has to do with organizing thoughts into words and transferring them to someone else in a manner that what is meant is what is understood.

One of the most misunderstood concepts about communication skills is the way in which call center agents mistake accent and pronunciation with correct language usage. Communication is not just about accent, although accent is a key ingredient in being understood by the receiver of the message. More critical is how meaning is transmitted from person to person, via a medium such as the telephone, halfway around the globe, to message recipients with differing cultural and linguistic orientations.

In whatever level of the organization, you should seek to achieve excellence in communication. The requirements for speaking and writing are definitely critical for people high up in the organizational ladder, but they are equally important for the janitor, driver, secretary, or guard.

Because English is largely used for transacting business, you should constantly improve on its use. Domestic helpers in Hongkong will probably be able to get by with a minimum of proficiency in English, but think of the limitless possibilities if they can say that they can tutor their wards in the language! That additional skill would certainly be a bargaining chip for additional compensation. Drivers who speak good English are more attractive to ex-patriate executives of international organizations, IT companies and call centers than those who cannot.

Acquiring communication skills

There are countless ways of improving communication skills that can be obtained from attending formal classes (for which you may have to pay) to sheer individual effort.

For example, you can try reading aloud from an English newspaper for an hour a day, look up words that are new to you, and make note of new vocabulary that is added to your stock knowledge. Reading from a reputable and popular newspaper would certainly be more challenging than a tabloid and will redound to greater benefit to you if you persist in making it through your difficulties. Children's books are particularly helpful for adult beginners.

What is important is that you look for opportunities where you can practice reading and comprehension. Then progress into explaining aloud what you just read to yourself or to an imagined listener -in your preferred language or dialect, broken as it is.

You cannot get away from reading if you want to improve your communication skills. You cannot get away from trying to speak better and better each day if you eventually want to be proficient.

Learning aids

There are excellent learning aids that are available to people who want to improve themselves. There are inexpensive English lessons that look like maps that are easily available in the bookstore. These can be hung on the wall so it is easy to look at them everyday on the way to the bathroom or kitchen. In this sense they are more accessible than books because they are less expensive, easy to carry anywhere, or hung in strategic places in the house.

You can think up creative ways of vocabulary-building. You can use a variety of materials like small pieces of paper, index cards, and notebooks.

Ask the help of others

Learning to communicate well is a matter of practice. Ask your boss to help you out by speaking with him in English or your preferred language or dialect. Look at your kid's elementary school books and learn along. Let your employers know that you are trying to improve your communication skills, co-opt them, and get feedback about your progress.

If people around you see the seriousness of your effort, they will be more than willing to cooperate. There are many stories of people who have worked their way to the top on sheer resolve and determination to improve themselves. Poverty and lack of education are never excuses because there are countless poor and uneducated people who succeed because they take their personal development in their own hands. In most instances, they begin with good communication skills.

Good communication and better opportunities

Remember what was said about adding to your basket of skills? Communication skills should occupy a large part of that basket. And those skills should be getting better and better through time.

Consider this: In the hospitality industry (hotel personnel, tourist guide, translator, etc.), who would have more opportunities: the one who speaks one language or the one who speaks several languages or dialects? If a manufacturing plant were to open in China, wouldn't someone who speaks Mandarin be a better candidate for the foreign assignment? If a post were to be available in Japan, wouldn't the Japanese-speaking worker be considered ahead of the others?

Good communication skills will take you far, as far as the effort you put in to be a better communicator slowly but surely.

Exercise

Assessing your communication skills

A. What areas of communicating am I good at? Why?

I am good at ... (Example: telling people about news I heard on TV)	Because... (I am good at remembering facts and stick only to what I heard.)

B. Where should I improve? How?

I should improve ... (Example: organizing my thoughts)	Because... (I tend to jump from idea to idea and this confuses my audience.)	I will improve by ... (organizing my thoughts before speaking, if possible on paper)

Theme No. 6

Practice good human relations

Getting along with others

Even the most intelligent, most brilliant and most efficient workers cannot hope to be cherished members of a work organization if they do not possess the right human relations skills to make them get along with others. Being accepted, liked or even loved by co-workers is a critical requirement for staying long in any one workplace or in continuing to get projects.

So many people miss the unchanging truth that you must get along well with people if you want to move on in your career. You must be equally respected by subordinates, peers and superiors if you are to be thought of as a valuable contributor to the organization.

The fact is that so many brilliant workers with promising futures ahead spoil the chance to be recognized for the value they bring into their organizations. This is simply because of character flaws that mar even their noteworthy work performance.

People who cannot get along with others, even if they are the best in their field, cannot hope to survive for long. Whether you occupy high positions or are considered part of the rank and file, you need to exhibit behaviors that make your presence welcome in your workplace.

Behaving right

One of the most common undesirable behaviors exhibited in the workplace is uncontrolled temper, tantrums and lack of emotional control. It is difficult to justify why you should take out your problems and stresses on others, no matter how grave those burdens can be. No one is spared of trials in life and it is unfair to let others suffer because of your woes when they have their own share of problems. There is no justification for cussing, shouting and generally showing temper tantrums which disturb silence and equilibrium and may even cause fear and anxiety in those around you.

On the other end of these “noisy” misbehaviors is silence, apathy and refusal to communicate. This is perhaps as damaging as temper tantrums because they also create distances between people. They create communication barriers which prevent work from proceeding smoothly. If you recoil into a world all your own and become incommunicado whenever you are experiencing problems, then it is likely that those who work with you will avoid having you around. Your apathy is a form of rejection and it is never pleasant to work with someone who demonstrates such form of exclusion.

Another unwelcome behavior is spreading ill will in the workplace, whether aggressively (as perpetrators) or passively (as unthinking listeners). Gossips and perpetual complainers destroy workplace health and sow discontent rather promote work satisfaction. Gossip is divisive and generally polarizes people. It certainly destroys the reputations and futures of those who are victimized by false statements and accusations. Willfully destroying others' good work and reputation is unwelcome anywhere, and people will deliberately stay away from you if you spend your time doing this.

The list of undesirable behaviors is endless. You must be careful to avoid those behaviors that alienate others. Instead, practice good human relations if you want people to want having you around in their work activities. You must be sensitive to the needs of people you work with, whether they are co-workers or clients. No matter how good you are, people will generally stay away from hiring or engaging you in any capacity if you bring such unpleasantness to the workplace.

This is particularly important if you work as an independent contractor or business person. Reputation and credibility are critical in getting referrals for continued contracts or business deals, and for the general continuance of your work in the field that you have chosen. You may be regarded as being good at what you do, but if you are also known for being difficult to work with, then you can easily lose your place to someone with the same skills and better human relations.

In the end, a pleasant work experience with you can far outweigh the gains of working with a more recognized expert who is known to be a stressful work partner.



Module 3

A Look-See at Entrepreneurship

Module 3

A Look-See at Entrepreneurship

The option to go into entrepreneurship is not only an attractive option for many returned victims/survivors of trafficking; oftentimes, it seems to be the only viable one. Without marketable skills, the odds of finding suitable employment increase and entrepreneurship thus becomes a logical venture.

Many people go into entrepreneurship with the mindset that since they have difficulty finding a job, they will go into it as a matter of second choice or of having no choice. (“Magnenegosyo na lang ako.”) The “na lang” (just) in this statement is difficult to translate into English, but roughly it connotes a kind of helplessness that results in trying out a second option simply because there is no first or the first has not worked out well.

The problem with the “na lang” attitude is that it reduces the second choice, in this case entrepreneurship, into a venture one goes into without much resolve except for the fact that there’s nothing else. This reduces the importance of entrepreneurship as a career option by itself that requires its own set of thinking, planning, and preparation just as employment does.

The consequences of failed entrepreneurial ventures are often more pronounced and self-destructive than failure at work simply because of the financial repercussions of losing money in business. It is often argued that the stakes are higher when one puts in his/her own money into something, unlike in employment where one merely loses a paycheck when performance is unacceptable or when the company downsizes or closes. There is no monetary investment that is put at risk of being lost.

Entrepreneurship, therefore, should be as important as employment as a career choice and must be pursued just as intelligently and passionately. The mistaken notion that capital is all that is needed to start and succeed in business is a very dangerous way of thinking because it reduces the requirements of business success to sheer capital or availability of funds. There is certainly a lot more to succeeding as an entrepreneur.

Is entrepreneurship for you?

There are easily two ways of looking at how to determine whether entrepreneurship is really for you.

One school of thought advances the idea that the entrepreneurial spirit is inborn. People are thought to have some genetic predisposition to entrepreneurship right when they are born. Just as there are people thought to be born leaders, artists, politicians or scientists, there are born negosyantes who seem to possess natural business acumen. Hence, even when they are employed at jobs that seem pretty much what they have chosen as careers, they exercise their entrepreneurial leanings by having a business on the side, like selling clothes to their officemates, small-time lending, or taking orders for cakes. Others show their entrepreneurial spirit by doing their jobs with the mind of a business owner rather than a hired hand.

Another way of thinking regards the entrepreneurial spirit as influenced and developed as a result of environmental and social factors. These people may have grown in families that ran businesses which fed, clothed and sent them to school. They saw their mother manning the sari-sari store or their father going about his buy-and-sell trade of scrap metal. They heard the dinner table discussions about borrowing capital and paying back creditors. If not from their parents, they may have had experiences watching entrepreneurs at their craft and enjoying the benefits of working for oneself, and from there nurtured the dream of being like them.

The idea of this discussion is not so much to settle which of the two schools of thought is better or more accurate. It is rather to emphasize the fact that in coaching victims/survivors of trafficking on the subject, it is important to discourage the tendency to write off the career decision as simply a matter of “being born with it or not.” It is dangerous to think of entrepreneurship in this way because it reinforces the “na lang” attitude. The belief that one is a natural-born entrepreneur may make someone think success is easy because of this inborn trait. On the other hand, one may have a hard time convincing himself/herself to go into business simply because of the lack of the entrepreneurial gene.

In truth, determining whether entrepreneurship is really for you goes back to the same questions about finding the right employment:

- * *Alam* - What do you know? What can you do well? (knowledge, skills)
- * *Gusto* - What do you like or enjoy doing? What gives you delight? (interests, motivations)
- * *Bagay* - Does the work fit you? Do you fit the work or organization? Is the work you are doing consistent with who you are? (beliefs, values, preferences)

Things to consider before going into business

The first thing to consider before becoming an entrepreneur is the issue of FIT. In the earlier chapters, we have been consistently emphasizing the need to do self-assessment to check whether a next career fits you in terms of your knowledge, motivations and values. Fit is a critical criterion that can make or break a business, and it is important that this is understood early on in the decision-making process.

ILO has a whole range of resources about entrepreneurship. One of the most useful and appropriate to the situation of returned victims/survivors of trafficking is the Start Your Business Handbook (Philippine edition) and the Generate your Business Idea Training Manual for Small-Scale Entrepreneurs. The simple, easy-to-understand self-assessment tools in those two resources are handy tools that will help you out in deciding whether entrepreneurship is really for you.

Preparing to go into business

After a thorough informed decision-making process, you must then go into preparatory activities geared toward starting your business. If the self-assessment results show that you are not prepared to go into entrepreneurship, then job search should begin for suitable employment. If the results surface a “maybe” or “not sure,” then more work must be done researching to shed light on the possible gray areas at that point in time. The clearer the questions and doubts you may have, the better able you will be to search for answers so that they questions are answered and the doubts are addressed.

If the answer is a clear and resounding “yes,” then you must start preparing to engage the world of business. Failing in this new endeavor can be very costly in

real monetary terms, and in terms of psychological and emotional well-being. You must plan, and plan vigorously.

A good self-assessment process which leads to effective decision-making prepares you for taking the first steps.

The ILO publication *Start Your Business Handbook* lists the following steps in going about your new entrepreneurial venture. The steps are listed below but only to provide you with an overview of what needs to be done before you plunge in. You are highly encouraged to study the resource and follow the methodology it proposes.

The steps proposed in the *Start Your Business* program are as follows:

- Assess yourself as an entrepreneur
- Develop your business idea
- Assess your market and develop a marketing plan
- Organize your business
- Cost and price your products or services
- Estimate your start-up capital
- Make financial plans
- Know your business responsibilities and choose a legal form for your business
- Assess your information and make an action plan

From the above list, it is clear that starting a business is not as easy as acquiring capital, contrary to what is generally believed. The preparatory activities are focused on your own suitability and readiness for entrepreneurship before you even begin considering it. It is also about clarifying your so-called business model, including the products or services you wish to offer, your target market, and your projected financial picture. It is important that you start your business with a clear idea of what you are going to, what your business is going to offer its market, and what you want to achieve by going into entrepreneurship.

Finding the business that fits you

Successful entrepreneurs will repeatedly tell you how important it is to know, understand and like your business. It is often as difficult not to have start-up capital as it is to have it. Why so? Because if capital is readily available, you will normally not think very carefully about your business and would want to start right away without figuring out exactly what you want your business to do for you. Anyway, the money is standing by and ready to go.

In any circumstance, it is critical that you know the business you are going to start. This means a lot of research, talking with people, reading, observing, and synthesizing what you find out into a coherent picture or image of what you foresee. The dangers are unimaginable for those who enter a business they know little or nothing about.

A classic example would be the overseas workers who return from the Middle East after several years of working abroad. They would have put aside a substantial amount of savings representing years and years of loneliness, sacrifice, and hard work. They are now ready to return home and start anew, with a pretty good start-up capital for starting a business. Friends (supposedly well-meaning and well-intentioned) seize the opportunity and offer them a business idea: start an auto spare parts business. The capital requirements for such a business are big, but the overseas workers are

usually attracted to it because the returns are promising. Although they may know nothing about cars or of running such a shop, they put in their hard-earned money into the business which their so-called business partner is supposedly knowledgeable about.

A huge percentage of such business arrangements fail and the overseas workers are back to where they were financially when they first left the country years ago. This is because they know nothing about cars (all they may have had was a bicycle). The business is also very complicated because of having to keep a large inventory of stocks, which is why the investment runs into millions of pesos for a small shop. Then there are the numerous car makes and models that keep changing every year. Imagine how many Hondas there are, with variations for each yearly model. Add to that Nissan, Mitsubishi, Kia and Toyota, etcetera, etcetera. Developing proficiency in what headlight is for what make, model and year is almost a lifetime course for someone who has never had a car!

Even if you think of a bicycle or motorcycle shop instead of a car shop, the range of products and services remains very complicated if you do not know anything about the subject.

Knowing your subject also means being ready to deliver your products and services even if your entire staff deserts you. This simply means that your business is not dependent on people you hire to do the job, and that you can carry on by yourself temporarily if you have to.

Let's take an example of people who open a barbershop or beauty salon. A good piece of advice to these entrepreneurs would be that they themselves must know how to cut hair. There are many of such establishments that go bankrupt because the haircutter has an altercation with the owner or is pirated by the next-door parlor. Especially when the hairdressers know that the whole parlor revolves around them, they can easily think of themselves as more marketable somewhere else. If finding a replacement takes a few days, shop owners who can cut hair will not have to put a "temporarily closed" sign and lose precious business. Knowing how to do your business yourself also keeps your workers on guard since they know that you know what their jobs are all about and that you will not be crippled without them.

In the final analysis, the business that's right for you is the business that you know and enjoy. Think of it this way. If you are thin, sickly-looking and frail, do you think that a gym would be the business for you? In all likelihood, people will associate your gym with tuberculosis or anemia, more resembling a clinic or hospital rather than a fitness center. If you look sloppy and unkempt, would a business selling fashionable clothes and accessories fit you?

Enjoying your business

Liking your business and enjoying what you do cannot be overemphasized, whether you are into employment or entrepreneurship. The fun in doing something is the fuel that keeps you going even through the hard and trying times. The sacrifices demanded of you by the business are diminished if you are enjoying what you do.

The satisfaction that you exhibit as you go about your business will eventually show in the way you manage it. You will be more excited to have your customers try out your product or service simply because you want to share a new discovery. For example, if you have developed a new recipe for chicken pork adobo, you would find joy telling people to try it out. Your customers will see your excitement and would want to try it out, too. This generates business, and it is the passion you have shown which encourages your customers.

Entrepreneurship and Women

The question is again raised whether it is men or women who are more likely to succeed in business. Again, this seems like the two schools of thought about being born or made entrepreneurs.

Regardless of the answer to the above question, the ILO training package and resource kit on ***GET Ahead for Women in Enterprise*** underscores two critical issues about women in business:

“The GET Ahead training package promotes the economic and social empowerment of women alongside men in enterprises:

- Economic empowerment, because poor women engaged in income earning usually have had few opportunities for education and training. They often have a double or triple workload, combining economic activities with looking after the household and providing family care. They need management and negotiation skills to transform their survival activities into more productive and profitable businesses.

- Social empowerment, because women in many countries have a lower status as compared to men. Many women stay close to the home, lack contacts with the outside world, and face mobility and networking constraints. Women need confidence-building and networking skills, to be able to trust their own judgement and rely on their own strengths.”

While it is true, however, that women may lack the focus, mobility and wherewithals to start and build a business, it is also true that their instinctual gifts make them astute businesswomen. The maternal instinct plays a big role in their ability to “sniff” business opportunities when they come and for making decisions with far-reaching consequences.

As coaches, you must help your women coachees to recognize this mothering predisposition and to trust themselves. The important thing is that they trust in their abilities and competencies and recognize their innate strengths and gifts. Many women fail to realize how much trust is required in raising children or managing a home. These chores often go unnoticed and are not appreciated for the valuable contribution that they are. Coaching must bring out this inherent capacity to be trusted. It is the same trust that any business needs.

Is entrepreneurship for everybody?

Entrepreneurship is for anybody who has ascertained that he/she has the knowledge and skills, interests and motivations, and values and preferences for going into a business of his/her own choice.

The point of contention is not so much whether you are a born or made entrepreneur. It is rather about whether you make sure that you know and understand the business you are going into, whether that business is something you really enjoy, and whether the business fits you because it is aligned with your values and preferences.

The important thing is that you begin entrepreneurship with a clear image of what you want it to deliver for you in terms of material income. You also need to look at the psychic income which constitutes the intangible and satisfying rewards you get from running your business. If you enjoy doing your business, then others will also enjoy patronizing you.

Entrepreneurship is for those who enter it as a result of an informed decision-making process which clearly spells out why you want to become an entrepreneur in the first place. Self-knowledge and self-determination are certainly the place to start.



Module 4

Manage your Money

Module 4

Manage your Money

Your values about money

What is money to you?

Have you ever thought of this question? Have you ever stopped to think why you spend the way you do? Have you ever tried to analyze what drives you when you make buying choices?

This question may appear simple but it is a very critical one. It can actually determine how you manage your money. It can shape your spending practices and your saving habits. It can predict whether you will have savings in the bank or be deeply indebted to creditors. In the long term, your values can determine whether you will be rich or poor.

Values determine how you manage your money. At the core of all financial literacy is what you consider your values about money: what it represents, what it is for, how you think it should be used. Financial literacy is grounded on your philosophy about money.

It is important that you are clear about your values about money because it is values that drive you to spend the way you do. Your values about money determine your spending habits. They serve as the framework for all your decisions concerning money, such as what to buy, how much to save, how much you should keep or give away to others.

Once you are able to clarify your values about money, you will be better able to plan how to use your money. If your values show that it is important to you to look good to others, then you will tend to spend money on those things that will enhance your image. If your values show that sharing your money with others is important to you, then you would set aside money for sharing with others, such as helping out friends and family, giving to charitable causes, or donating to research to solve some local or global problems.

What is important is that, once you are able to clarify your values about money, you can then analyze your spending practices and identify patterns in how you handle money. You can then begin to question-in a very rational and objective way-if you like what you are discovering about yourself. For example, you may discover that the way you look is important to you. You will thus not hesitate to get a facial in an expensive salon or have a facelift. At the same time, you may find it unnecessary to give a tip to the waiter in a restaurant if you think that your money is something you earn and that the waiter should also earn his/her own.

Once you have identified and clarified your values about money, you can then start making a money management plan that takes into consideration the values you have listed. It is critical that the way you spend your money is consistent with the values that you have. You cannot believe in one thing and do another.

For example, if you believe that money is for sharing with others, then your budget should have an item for charity, tithing, and the like. You cannot say that you value helping others and yet refuse to give money away to someone in need.

Your values will also determine decisions about careers or entrepreneurship. For example, will you go into a business such as a casino, motel business or 5/6 lending if you believe that money should be used only for endeavors that are consistent with your moral values? Or, would you borrow money at an outrageously high interest rate just because you need to pay for the placement fee of an overseas job?

Whatever your values, they must have an obvious influence on your spending habits. You must continuously check on your values to see whether you are upholding them. Also, since values may change from time to time, it is important that you are aware of those changes so that you can work towards consistency in the way you spend your money in light of the change.

Exercise

Your values about money

Instructions:

Take out a paper bill or coin in whatever denomination. Put it in front of you.

Look at the money, concentrate, and then think of what that money means to you. What is money to you? What does it represent? What do you use or need money for?

Then on a clean sheet of bond paper, draw or write your answers. There is no need to have complete sentences; bullet phrases will do. If you choose to draw, simple figures will do.

Processing:

Ask your coachee to discuss what he/she has written or drawn. Probe into the values that become obvious in the explanation. Look for recurring themes that show up.

Categorize the uses for money mentioned by your coachee. They will usually fall into one or some of these categories:

- those things people need in order to live, such as food, clothing, shelter, transportation
- those things that people need to keep friendships - cellphone load, nights out with the barkada, gift-giving
- those things that people need in order to feed their minds - education, training, self-study
- those things that satisfy psychological needs, such as image enhancers (status symbols - Cross ballpen, Havaianas, designer clothes); need for acceptance (smoking, drinking)
- those things used to serve others - medicines for aging parents, school allowance for siblings, donations to charity, tithing to the church, alms to the poor

Discuss with your coachee what these values mean in terms of managing money. Repeat the clear points:

- Our values about money determine our spending practices and habits.
- Our spending habits must be consistent with our values.

Your Financial Literacy

How much do you know about managing your money?

Many people do not know that they do not know how to manage their money. This is why they do not spend properly or save properly. They probably do not even think that they should know how to manage money!

The first step towards financial literacy is knowing how much you know or do not know about money management. If you are able to identify where you are in the scheme of things, then you can then plan on how to acquire knowledge in money management and gain competence in this area.

There are four types of people according to their level of financial literacy.

DON'T KNOW, NOT AWARE	DON'T KNOW, AWARE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You DON'T KNOW how to manage money You ARE NOT AWARE that you don't know how to manage money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You DON'T KNOW how to manage money You ARE AWARE that you don't know how to manage money
KNOW, AWARE	KNOW, NOT AWARE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You KNOW how to manage money You ARE AWARE that you know how to manage money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You KNOW how to manage money You ARE NOT AWARE that you know how to manage money

ONE: People who do not know how to manage money but are not aware that they do not know. (Don't know, not aware)

Example: Juan just keeps spending without thinking. He does not know that there is something wrong with this until he loses his job, has an emergency or gets sick.

TWO: People who do not know how to manage money but know that they do not know. (Don't know, aware)

Example: Juan does not know how to manage money but he is aware of his ignorance. He can decide to read books on money management, research the Web, attend a workshop or a course so that he will learn the principles.

THREE: People who know how to manage money and consciously apply the principles that they know. (Know, aware)

Example: Juan knows the principles of managing money. Every time he is faced with a spending decision, he recalls what he knows and applies it. He consciously applies his knowledge of money management in making decisions.

FOUR: People who manage their money properly as a matter of habit, practice or lifestyle. (Know, not aware)

Example: Juan is so knowledgeable about money that he automatically applies the principles even without thinking. During a sale, Juan sees a shirt that attracts him. He knows he does not need one so he does not even consider trying it on for size.

It is important that you are able to locate yourself in one of the categories so that you can plan to acquire the money management know-how you need. Do not be sad or depressed if you find yourself in the first category: no knowledge and no awareness. It is a good thing that you get to be aware of this weakness so that you can do something about it quickly.

The fact that you are aware that you are in category one can mean that you have actually moved to category two because you have now become aware of your ignorance. Congratulations! Recognition is the first step towards educating yourself.

Why is the third level of financial literacy-know, aware-not the ideal? Why is knowing and not being aware the best level of all? If you have reached a level where you are no longer conscious of applying the principles of money management, it can be said that money management is now a habit, a practice, even a way of life.

Financial literacy is very much like how children learn to eat with a spoon and fork. At first, they are very clumsy holding the spoon, scooping the food and then bringing the spoon to their mouth. They deliberate and consciously do the stages of the process slowly and with a lot of thinking. When they learn how, they then do the stages without thinking. They have become unconsciously competent.

In much the same way, we learn financial literacy and apply the principles of money management consciously and deliberately at first. Through habitual use, we then reach a level where we do not think of conscious application but actually incorporate the principles in our lifestyle and way of living.

Your income-expense equation

What is the relationship between your income and your expense? Put simply, how much do you make and how much do you spend? In the end, it's not about how much you earn but about how much you save.

Again, this is a very important concept to learn because unless you figure out this equation, you will be unable to stretch your money to provide for present needs or save enough for the future.

Which of the four formulas describes your practice?

- **INCOME = EXPENSE**

What happens when income is equal to expense? This simply means that whatever you earn is just enough for your present needs. There is no extra to put away for emergencies, unemployment or sickness.

This also means that when income stops, then you have nothing to use for your daily expenses. There are no savings to tide you over for the rainy day.

- **INCOME < EXPENSE**

When income is less than expense, this means that there is a gap between what you earn and what you need for your expenses. What to do? Most likely, you will do your best to lessen your expenses so that your money will be enough. You will have to make do with whatever you have. Very often, however, you are not talking of luxury expenses here but of real urgent survival needs, such as food, clothing, and shelter. It is not simply a matter of cutting expenses.

In this situation, most people would borrow money just to be able to bridge the gap. If you are unable to pay back a loan quickly, this accumulates interest. Even if your creditor does not charge interest, you still suffer a setback in that you will not be able to borrow again from that person. The tendency, then, is to keep borrowing to bridge the gap until a stage is reached when a person is buried in debt. This makes the chances even harder that the loans will be paid.

- **INCOME > EXPENSE**

This sounds like good news, doesn't it? Not really. It all depends on how you spend the extra money.

In this situation, there is more money than is needed for daily needs. This is certainly better than the other two scenarios because there is extra money on hand.

You can choose to do one of two things:

One - you can spend the extra money on things you've always wanted but couldn't afford, such as a new cellphone or a first-time trip to the spa. You can spend the extra money on luxury items you've always dreamed of. If you don't think before spending, chances are you will revert to the income = expense because you would then have spent all the extra money. Worse, especially if you buy on credit, you might even slip into the income < expense because you bought things on a buy now-pay later plan. This means that the credit card company will bill you the following month and you will have to get your payment from your usual income (which is probably just equal or even less than expense).

Two - you can save or invest the extra money. If you are able to do this, then you will begin to have savings for future needs. You may even learn about investing and investment instruments so that you can get higher returns for your money.

Where are you in this scheme of things? And now that you have located yourself, what do you need to do? How will you now plan to bring yourself to the savings and investment stage as quickly as possible?

Your savings formula

The common formula people use in managing their money is this:

$$\text{income} - \text{expense} = \text{savings}$$

Most people complain that there is hardly anything left after expenses so it is almost impossible to save. This is very true. It also explains why many people do not have savings at all.

What happens if you use this formula instead?

$$\text{income} - \text{savings} = \text{expense}$$

This is still difficult for most people to do because it lessens the amount of money left for usual expenses. There is, however, one distinct advantage in using this formula. If you try really hard and are willing to sacrifice for now, you will discover that it is possible to cut down expenses. You may soon discover that there is even some extra that you can still put aside for savings on top of the savings you have

already set aside. At least, with this formula, you are sure to have savings, no matter how little.

There is also a big psychological advantage to using this formula. If you are able to set aside something for savings, no matter how small, you would at least have started something good. It may be a very small amount but it's a good start. As you see your savings grow, you would be inspired and encouraged to add some more and some more and some more.

Even from a psychological standpoint, the first formula does not allow the small success of saving even a small amount. This is because there is really hardly anything left after expenses are taken out. But if a small amount of savings is set aside immediately, it is often possible to stretch whatever is left for expenses. Even if you "cheat" and pull out a little from the amount set aside for savings, there will still be something left.

Setting your financial goals

Very few people really make a plan for financial independence, even wealth. This is especially evident in the lives of many overseas workers. They are willing to suffer loneliness, separation from family, and uprootedness from community and country just to be able to ensure their family's survival and well-being. The usual intention of securing the family's future is a very noble one, but in the absence of financial goals, this is seldom realized. So despite war and trouble in their countries of work and changes in both personal and family circumstances, many workers have to continue to stay abroad because they do not have the money they set out to earn when they first left. That is, unless circumstances force them to return to their home country empty-handed, or worse, in deep debt.

This is why financial goals are important. Many of the financial and career decisions people make must be time-bound. Otherwise, years can pass by without any clear end stage. Overseas workers will continue to count years and still return empty-handed and unable to restart on a new life. In the meantime, the intention to secure the family's future remains very much dependent on continuing work even when it is clearly no longer the best thing to do because it even jeopardizes their safety.

Financial goals may be classified into three categories:

- Short-term goals: up to 3 years
Example: saving up for your newborn child's first birthday
- Medium-term goals: 3-5 years
Example: saving up for capital to start a tricycle business in 3 years
- Long-term goals: 6-10 years
Example: saving up for the downpayment of your own house and lot

A good illustration would be for someone who decides to go overseas for a two-year contract as a welder in an oil drilling company in the Middle East. Based on how much he/she expects as monthly/yearly income, overtime work and other items included as take-home pay per the signed contract, he/she can then calculate how much can be set aside for savings and investments. It is best to use the formula: $\text{income} - \text{savings} = \text{expense}$.

The overseas worker should leave the country knowing how much he/she expects to save from the entire engagement and how long it would take to reach the figure he/she set out to achieve by the end of the contract. In more sophisticated financial goal-setting, it is even possible to set sub-goals that take into account the

family's special circumstances at a particular time, such as the youngest entering elementary by that time, the eldest graduating from college, or even an expected increase in an aging parent's medical needs during the contract period.

The idea is not so much whether the financial goal-setting process is simple or complex. The important thing is that you should know what you want or need in the future, whether for short, medium, and long-term needs and aspirations.

It is also good to remember that financial planning often involves the family since it is family members who stand to benefit from good financial planning or suffer from poor financial management. Whoever holds the money in the family usually wields the greater influence on the financial planning aspects of home management. Women who don't work are often marginalized in financial decisions if the men are primarily responsible for bringing in the income. That a woman contributes financially to the family coffers, however, does not automatically mean that she is the primary decision-maker. It all depends on how the family defines the roles of mother and father in terms of the financial aspects of family and home life.

Correcting past mistakes

Teaching returned victims/survivors of trafficking to manage money when they obviously have none at the moment may seem out of place. But it is precisely because they do not know money management that they have fallen into the financial black hole that they are in. While coaches cannot undo past mistakes, they can certainly make themselves financially literate to avoid committing the same mistakes in the future.

It thus becomes vital that they learn the ropes now so that they can build both a knowledge and financial base for safeguarding whatever better times lie ahead.

Sample Worksheet

What do I want to have or do? (financial goal)	How much do I need? (pesos)	Savings period	Specific steps	When do I review my progress?	Who will help me out?
Short-term goal Example: buy a slightly-used bicycle for going to/from work	1,000	Two months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Save P250 per week • Reduce family outings to once a month • Go to a free park instead of the mall 	Every week	My spouse and kids - by not insisting on a weekly family outing
Medium-term goal Example: raise capital to start a mini-grocery	60,000	Three years	Save 20,000 per year (1,000 per month; 8,000 from 13th month pay)	Every month	My former boss - who hires me for odd jobs during weekends
Long-term goal Example: Attend my uncle's golden wedding in Canada	100,000	Ten years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accept part-time teaching and tutoring on Saturdays • Sell my used motorcycle • Save my mid-year and Christmas bonus (____ pesos) 	Monthly for first three months, quarterly thereafter	My son - to live within his school scholarship allowance so I don't have to give extra money

Exercise

What do I want to have or do? (financial goal)	How much do I need? (pesos)	Savings period	Specific steps	When do I review my progress?	Who will help me out?
Short-term goal 1					
Short-term goal 2					
Short-term goal 3					
Medium-term goal 1					
Medium-term goal 2					
Medium-term goal 3					
Long-term goal 1					
Long-term goal 2					
Long-term goal 3					



Module 5

Understanding Micro-Finance

Module 5

Financing your way out of poverty

Financing your way out of poverty

One of the distinct setbacks of being poor is the lack of access to services that are usually available only to the monied. This highlights a contradiction in terms since it is precisely the poor who need access to funds in order to engage in meaningful endeavors to better their lot. However, they are unable to latch on to finance schemes that can help move their lives forward simply because they have no credit record and no proof of their ability to pay. It is often said that “you need money to make more money,” and this truism is nowhere pronounced more loudly than the poor’s lack of that vital resource that should bring in the funds for securing a better life.

Traditional banking practices generally exclude the poverty-stricken. Being trusted with a credit line or credit card is usually not in the purview of the poor.

Access to micro-finance is usually viewed as an issue of empowerment. To the extent that access to micro-finance creates possibilities for increased capacity to earn, it is a powerful tool for empowering women in particular to take a lead in determining their future.

Economic empowerment refers to “women’s access to savings and credit gives them a greater economic role in decision-making through their decisions about savings and credit. When women control decisions regarding credit and savings, they will optimize their own and the household’s welfare.” (Micro-finance and the empowerment of women-A review of key issues by Linda Mayou, ILO, 2000.) This interplays with increased well-being and social, political and legal empowerment, enabling women to affect their family’s home situation in a significant way.

It is important, therefore, that you help your coachees to understand how they can access to micro-finance schemes for their business ventures or job search. This is not an easy task, but with enough research and networking skills, you will be able to show the returned victims/survivors of trafficking you coach how access to funds can empower them and boost their confidence.

Returned victims/survivors of trafficking must begin to establish a good credit record. They can begin with small loans from people in the community who can afford to dish out very minimal cash. You can encourage your coachees to establish a reputation as responsible payers according to the agreed-upon terms. This will help them begin a credit standing of sorts. This reputation will quickly spread among money lenders who will then begin trusting the borrowers with larger sums in the future.

With a little success in this area, your coachees can then try to access small micro-finance possibilities such as the paluwagan system which is very popular among poor borrowers.

Stick to legal micro-finance schemes

You must be able to warn your coachees strongly enough to stay away from schemes that pass for well-intentioned poverty alleviation moves but which actually drag them further down the mire.

A popular method for getting instant cash for family needs or entrepreneurial ventures is what is known as “5/6.” This is a usurious way of lending, usually to the poor, at an outrageously high interest where a five peso loan becomes six pesos, sometimes in as little time as a day. Very often, this is what the migrant workers resort to in order to raise an equally outrageous agency placement fee for work potentials abroad.

Returned victims/survivors of trafficking, especially those who were deported or forced to return prematurely, are often deeply in debt. With the discontinuation of an income stream from working abroad, repayment of monies loaned becomes doubly difficult, if not downright impossible. In order to satisfy a creditor clamoring for payment, these returned victims/survivors of trafficking often turn to the 5/6 usurer for a bridge loan to repay the other loan.

Values education about paying up

As a coach, you must always emphasize the need to pay up a loan according to the agreed-upon terms. It is critical to educate your coachees that being able to obtain micro-financing does not end with the small victory of being trusted with a loan. First-time access is probably the best way to start a credit profile which can pave the way to greater access in the future, that is, if they live up to the terms of the agreement and show themselves to be responsible and trustworthy individuals.

Contractual obligations must be honored and you must do everything to ostill this idea in your coachees.

Helping your coachees apply for credit

Returned victims/survivors of trafficking may have great difficulty securing a loan. The stigma of a trafficking experience, particularly if aggravated by a forced return or deportation, obviously does not lend itself to a viable credit picture-painting.

This is where you can play a vital role. You can and should help your coachees in preparing their profile so it will be convincing to the micro-finance institution you are eyeing together. Begin by clarifying your coachees’ intentions and objectives. Why do they need the funds? How do they intend to use the funds? How do they intend to pay up? What are preferred terms of payment so that they can be ready to negotiate when needed? Are you convinced yourself that taking out a loan is the best way in this instance for your coachee?

It is necessary for you to seriously determine-together with your coachee-the objectives for the micro-financing move. Be sure your coachee understands what micro-finance means and how it can help. At the same time, highlight the repayment aspect of the loan, and the good or unwanted consequences of a good or bad credit record.

Being clear about the reasons for the loan is an important first step in being able to sell oneself for micro-finance access. It forms the base for building confidence. Your coachee must be able to answer the questions well during the loan interview, and this requires both physical and mental preparation. Rehearse the interview scenarios with your coachee and point out things that were done well and those that can still be better.

After real material preparation, you must also serve as your coachee’s rah-rah team. With enough rounds of simulating various interview scenarios, your coachee will be ready to face the interviewer with confidence.

Capitalize on the micro-finance experience

When the loan is granted, make sure you capitalize on the good feeling by reminding your coachee about the other side of the fund release: repayment. The euphoria attending a first-time access in particular can eclipse the real reasons for the loan and the responsibilities attached to it. Do not ever make your coachee forget that the loan must be paid up as quickly as possible according to the terms agreed upon.

Make use of the positive micro-finance experience also to build up a greater sense of worth and self-esteem for your coachee. This small success can be the beginning of a string of other successes, especially as the creditor begins to form a judgment of trustworthiness.

According to the Declaration at the Micro-credit summit in its section Micro-credit: Empowering Poor People to End their Own Poverty, “empirical evidence has shown that women, as a group, are consistently better in promptness and reliability of repayment. Targeting women as clients of micro-credit programs has also been a very effective method of ensuring that the benefits of increased income accrue to the general welfare of the family, and particularly the children. At the same time, women themselves benefit from the higher status they achieve when they are able to provide new income.” (Results, 1997, page 8.)

This is a good motivator for your coachee because it can inspire confidence in women in general and in herself in particular. The ability to provide “new income” builds confidence, as much as the thought that she has the capacity to add yet another testimony to the above-mentioned observation.

Thinking bigger

The small successes in micro-finance experiences can stimulate the desire to think up of even bigger self-help schemes that will benefit a larger segment of the community and society. As coach, you can challenge your coachees to dream bigger dreams for achieving financial independence, even wealth, not just for themselves but for those in their communities.

The model provided by the village banking ventures in Lao PDR is a very instructive and inspiring one. With the support of the ILO, the poor communities of Lao PDR implemented the concept of village banking which eventually resulted in the formation of the Lao Community Sustainable Development Promotion Association (LCSDPA), “a non-profit organization operating a village banking program in Lao PDR. It aims to alleviate poverty by supporting communities in the rural and remote areas of Lao PDR to create sustainable village banks. Since the start of its activities in 2005, it has helped to create over 100 village banks in Khammouane, Savannakhet and Champasack provinces.” (Village Banking in Lao PDR: Handbook for Village Bank Management Committees and Support Organizations, ILO, 2008)

The concept is very simply built on the idea of people building and running their own bank which serves their financial needs. No one can understand their needs better than they who have them. The village banks are able to provide access to funds in small loans where the formal banking system cannot, and manage their own banking system to ensure sustainability of the enterprise. By empowering the poor to take initiatives toward meeting their own requirements, the village banking model has provided sustainable financial help for those communities and a large dose of pride and confidence in their ability to manage their own affairs.

You can plant this little seed in the minds of your coaches and challenge them to study the Lao PDR model. Who knows where a little dream and a little encouragement can lead?

Two Local Models of Economic Empowerment

One: The DAWN Multi-Purpose Cooperative, Inc.

As part of its commitment to provide economic assistance and support to women beneficiaries of its project with the ILO on the 'Psycho-social and Economic Reintegration Program for Women Victims of Trafficking,' DAWN held several career counseling, trainings, workshops and seminars in entrepreneurial building and accounting. It sought the support of experts and built partnerships with them to ensure the continuity of the provision of these activities for the women. And all throughout the conduct of these activities, there was always a staff or two present to assist and learn together with the women.

The counseling, training and workshops were in preparation for the individual economic projects that the women will undertake. During these activities, there was plenty of sharing among the women on their economic situations. They shared their experiences in putting up small businesses, such as sari-sari store and small retailing. They were encouraged to talk about what they know and what they have learned from their ventures into doing business. They told of their failures to make their businesses grow and their apprehensions in putting up a new one. They said that part of their failure could be attributed to lack of knowledge and guidance, lack of confidence in one's self, and lack of capital. There were also some women who are not really interested in putting up a small business but would just like to augment their incomes. The women also discussed the possibility of pooling resources and doing joint projects. From these discussions, sharing, and consultation with the women came about the idea of putting up a cooperative for the women beneficiaries of the project.

In June 2008, DAWN started a series of seminars on cooperativism. The objective was to respond to the many queries of the women and to find out if it would be possible for the women to come together and pool their resources for a joint undertaking.

DAWN sought the assistance of experts from the PUP College of Cooperatives to help explain what a cooperative is all about. The whole idea and process of putting a cooperative was discussed with the women to help them decide if it is a viable option for them. Eventually, the women decided to put their own cooperative; one they can truly call their own and one which they themselves will manage and run.

From then on, there was no turning back. A series of workshops and seminars for the formation of a cooperative were held. On Saturdays, women would come to the office of DAWN to attend the seminars. There were several batches of seminars that were conducted for the women. The staff of DAWN also joined the cooperative to show the women their support and belief in them.

On August 27, 2008 the DAWN Multi-Purpose Cooperative, Inc. was officially registered with the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA). Initially, the activities and services of the cooperative included the following: commodity loan, the provision of business opportunity seminars, and the conduct of entrepreneurial seminars.

Several companies were approached to introduce their products and services to the women members of the cooperative so that the women can make a choice. There were representatives from manufacturers of soap and cleansing products, condiments, beauty products, and clothing. At present, members are able to buy commodities from the cooperative at low rates payable

within 15 days. Many women have taken this opportunity to resell the products and earn a few profit. The cooperative has likewise signed with Avon and Natasha for the sale of various products. To make the deal appealing to the women, individual sellers get 25% of the Avon products that they sell. And to make sure that the women do not forget their responsibility to pay their loans, there is continuous monitoring and guidance provided to them.

To date, some members of the cooperative who are into re-selling have already reported on how the cooperative has helped them. They have updated the group on the amount they have earned that helped augment their incomes. They also shared that the experience of mingling with people and engaging in gainful activity has helped them improve their self-confidence.

Other activities of the cooperative members included an exposure trip to New Vision, a cooperative being run by the blind, and a leadership training seminar. On October 8, 2008, the group held a general assembly and elected a new set of Board members and officers to replace the interim Board and officers. On November 10, 2008, the cooperative signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the PUP College of Cooperatives to provide continuous trainings, guidance and assistance to the cooperative. On January 31 to February 1, 2009, the DAWN Multi-Purpose Cooperative held a workshop seminar on Value Transformation and Effective Work Ethics for Cooperative Operation in Laguna. It was also during this time that they finalized the vision, mission and goals of the organization. It was also a planning session for the members of the cooperative, and they have already set their goals for the next three years. This February, the women are having their ownership seminar.

The cooperative will soon provide loan assistance to its members. The guidelines and policies regarding this service are now in the pipeline. It will also continue providing entrepreneurial and business opportunity seminars to the women, as well as other trainings that will benefit the members. Plans include the provision of training in candle-making, catering, setting up of a wellness center, and food processing.

The cooperative is a work in progress. It is something that will last even after the ILO project is over. DAWN and the College of Cooperatives will be behind the cooperative to provide them the assistance and guidance that they need to ensure its sustainability and success.

To date, the cooperative has a total of 54 members - 44 DAWN women members, 6 DAWN staff, and 4 DAWN volunteers.

Two: “Urnong Mo, Tulong Mo” Micro-Lending Project A Savings Mobilization Project of Bannuar Ti La Union (Association of OFWs and their families) - Naguilian Chapter

The Bannuar Ti La Union (Naguilian Chapter) established a partnership with the Kanlungan Centre Foundation Inc. in San Fernando City, La Union to start a micro-lending project that sought to mobilize savings of OFW families. Starting with a Php 13,000 collected cash from 27 pioneer members of the Bannuar, the lending capital has now grown to over half a million pesos in barely five years.

Envisioned to be the “model savings mobilization project,” returned OFWs sought to provide loan services for OFWs and their families for enterprise building and emergency needs. Instead of accessing the services of Micro-finance Institutions (MFIs) the group decided to develop their own because of the groups need to engage into small and medium enterprises (SMEs) as a form of economic reintegration of OFW returnees. The group believes that they can pool resources and by doing so they can save and at the same time help their fellow members - thus the name “Urnong Mo, Tulong Mo”.

Project services are categorized into two (2) main parts. The loan service and the savings mobilization program. Loans can be in the form of livelihood and personal. Savings are being mobilized through the fix savings program which is being deducted from the principal loan of every member in the amount of P100.00 irregardless of loan amount. At the end of the loan agreement the member could decide not to withdraw the said fix savings and be converted into savings deposit under the BANNUAR Savers Program wherein it will be covered by a six (6) months time deposit term with an interest of 5%.

The project started its operation in September 10, 2004 through the initiative of the Bannuar’s management council pooling P500.00 per officer and member to serve as the starting capital. A total of P13, 500.00 from the 27 pioneer project members served as the start-up lending fund. The project operation is guided by policies drafted, approved and polished by members in general assembly meetings.

At present the project is smoothly operating and doing its best to increase and mobilized more capital in order to widen its reach and provide immediate services to the needs of its members.

The project aims:

1. To provide loan services with reasonable terms, as concrete benefit of members especially those enterprising OFW and their families.
2. To generate additional fund for the organization to sustain its operation.
3. To concretize a savings mobilization scheme among OFWs and their families.

Target groups

There are two kinds of members in the project (1) Regular Bannuar members which is exclusively limited to members and (2) honorary members - which is open to all interested including those OFWs on-site. Regular members are entitled to the loan programs while honorary members are not, they will earn only dividend from their share capital.

Problems being addressed

Majority of Bannuar members are OFWs who returned home in distress. They were victims of illegal dismissal, rape, sexual and physical abuse, forced displacement (war, epidemic etc) and other forms of exploitation. They failed in their main objective of going abroad - to uplift their families from the quagmire of poverty. Overseas work is seen to be temporary; the OFW will soon return home in his homeland and will reintegrate again to his/her community. Economic factors are the number one reason why Filipinos go abroad and if they fail, the result will be devastating to them and to their families especially so if the families are totally

dependent on the remittance of the OFW. The project aims to address economic problems of OFWs who returned home unsuccessful by:

1. Additional earning from dividend as a fruit of his/her share capital.
2. Additional earning from enterprise operation which was operationalized through the loan services of the project.
3. Indirectly, income from the project is also supporting operational expenses of the organization

Expected results

With the loan and savings services of the project, members will be provided with capital to engage in small and medium enterprises (SMEs). By doing so they can earn additional income aside from their regular economic activities. In the savings concept, members will learn to value the importance of savings. In the long term objective, the project aims to present an economic alternative to overseas migration so that the community people will not look at migration as the only viable option to uplift ones economic status.

Project viability and sustainability

Financial Performance

The project started September 2004 with only P13, 000 from the 27 pioneer members of Bannuar Ti La Union (Naguilian chapter). On its first financial assessment by the start of year 2005 it has already generated a total revolving capital in the amount of P40, 000 thus the group decided to improve its systems and mechanics of operation. Improved project policies were written and systems and documentations of transactions were reviewed. On May 2006, the first project General Assembly was held and base on its financial report the project has accumulated a total capital of P132, 174.24. This practice (GA) continued, by year 2007, the project capital was recorded to P398, 604.02 and by year 2008 the total project portfolio jumped to P597, 411.79. Records show that the project is capable of continuously increasing its capital at a rate of 100% per year. For this year (2009) the project intends to reach the 1 Million mark.

Management competence, leadership and governance are designed to operationalize the values of solid micro-finance management and operation, business planning, and financial recording and bookkeeping procedures.

Promotional Activities and Capital Build-up Program

“THINK BIG” - this is the motto of the project. The project started very small but is thinking big. Project promotional activities are continuous being done. Barangay orientations are continuous and adoption of savings scheme and reward for new members is being implemented.

A unique example of the savings scheme implemented was the “BIRTHDAY GIFT SCHEME”. This thing works past in increasing project capital wherein all members are given a P10.00 gift on his/her birthday by all members but the amount will not be given to him/her but will form part of his/her share capital in the project.

Windows of recruiting new members (honorary) was also installed. Naguilianons abroad is the main target. Letters of invitations and promotional materials were already sent to them.



Module 6

Protect yourself in better ways: Legal and safe re-migration

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Ensuring legal and safe re-migration

The objective of talking about measures to ensure safe re-migration does not necessarily connote promotion of re-migration. It simply means that should returned victims/survivors of trafficking choose to work abroad again, they are provided the right information to make informed decisions and to protect themselves from a repeat of the trafficking experience.

Victims/survivors are driven to re-migration primarily because the home situations they return to are unable to provide the economic and social reintegration that should entice them to stay. The lack of employment opportunities is real for them, largely determined by their own lack of employable skills. Entrepreneurial ventures may not succeed as well, a mix of lack of business skills, knowledge about the business and lack of fit between the business and the entrepreneur.

Having had a glimpse of what employment abroad can potentially bring to migrants and their families, it is difficult for them to desire to remain in the home conditions they find upon their return. Women, in particular, are vulnerable to the shock and discomfort with the changes in family and community relationships they once cherished and which have now taken a turn towards something unrecognizable in their estimation. Unrealistic expectations about finding the home situation just as they left it drive women to seek overseas work again, preferring to risk safety rather than continue to suffer the pains of a now defaced image of family and home life.

One may expect that victims/survivors of trafficking would do everything to stay clear of any repeated danger. The reality, though, is that they must still find work, whether here or abroad. Often lacking in marketable skills and wanting in sound career guidance, they remain open to the dangers of trafficking simply because they need to work. The hope is that they will be wiser the second time around.

It is therefore important that you are able to help coachees to see the need to protect themselves from a repeat of their traumatic past. It is critical that they understand that re-migration must first be legal, but that legality is not the foolproof assurance that re-migration will be safe. There are cases of legal migration which have ended up in exploitation and abuse due to inherent risks in the place of work.

You must stress, therefore, that informed decision-making includes knowing the kind of protection various countries provide for their foreign workers. Government bodies, such as the DOLE and POEA, provide information about country laws on protecting migrants, including what to look for in these destination countries. The more knowledgeable they are about these practices, the more they are able to anticipate the risks and dangers.

An ILO resource entitled *Travel Smart - Work Smart* provides excellent help on safe migration practices which serve to ensure the safety of those who have to work abroad. (The link to this resource is found in the Useful Resources section of this manual.)

Re-entering the local labor market

“Successful reintegration into the domestic labour market is perhaps the most important aspect of return. On the part of the individual woman return migrant worker, it will determine whether she is able to stay home or has to re-migrate, whether the sacrifices she made by working abroad are eventually fruitful and whether she is able to make productive use of her migration experience and resources.” (An Information Guide: Preventing Discrimination, Exploitation and Abuse of Women Migrant Workers (Booklet 5: Back home: return and reintegration, ILO, 2008.)

What this implies is that re-migration is a function of how much the returning female migrant worker is able to appreciate a marked improvement in her situation and that of the homefront. If nothing much has been improved as a result of her working abroad, then she may feel the compulsion to continue the task of improving her family’s lot again a foreign land.

In the end, a major determinant in the decision to re-migrate is whether she is provided the appropriate services to help her reengage her society and community again. These include logistical and legal assistance, psycho-social counseling, medical services, employment and skills-related guidance and financial services. Where these are not available, the re-migration becomes an attractive option over and above local employment or entrepreneurship.

Another determinant of the re-migration decision is how the migrant returned to the country. There are generally three types of return: forced or involuntary return, deportation, or voluntary return. Situations of forced return and deportation leave a sense of something unaccomplished or incomplete which heightens the desire to go back abroad to finish what was started. Since voluntary return is assumed to be a matter of choice of the migrant worker, it seems less likely that re-migration will be desirable. However, should failure of social and economic reintegration occur, then re-migration becomes more attractive again.

The need to make informed decisions

Ending up a victim or survivor of trafficking is often the result of a poor decision arrived at through a faulty decision-making process. There are usually telltale signs of impending danger which so many people refuse to see in the excitement of a promising job prospect. There is no interest in analyzing what could go wrong because the prospects are so engaging that people would choose to dwell only on the good things.

Protecting yourself from being victimized again means that you must make decisions about your career differently this time. You cannot afford another round of trafficking experiences, knowing the painful consequences of another wrong decision. You must have a better crack at good and safe remigration practices, if that is what you want to do.

The decision-making process

How do you make decisions? Do you decide using your feelings? Do you decide on the basis of what family and friends say? Do you decide by simply going with the fad or what’s current?

One of the most effective ways of protecting yourself is by making what is called “informed decisions” using an informed decision-making process that reduces the risk of a poorly-drawn decision.

There are three things that characterize an informed decision-making process.

- **Rational**

A decision-making process is said to be rational when it is objective and logical. People need to think through a decision and not decide on something simply because it feels good. Process means a procedure to be followed step-by-step based on a logical progression.

Many people make career decisions without thinking. Family and friends exert a lot of pressure on this decision-making process because they tend to excite jobseekers to a point where they can no longer think. Very often, people just wish to see the good things that will result from a decision and no longer look at the risks. They no longer consider the down side because they are so focused on the promised rewards.

- **Disciplined**

Making decisions using a rational process requires discipline. It is usually easy to decide on gut feel or because of the influence of another person. It takes discipline to go through the process without being tempted to decide on the spur of the moment.

Discipline is also needed so you do not just believe what you choose to believe. Included in the informed decision-making process is the ability to withhold judgment and consider all the angles which should be the best guide most of the time.

- **Knowledge-based**

Making a decision should be based on knowledge gained from research. It may be a simple matter of asking around, interviewing people, observing, and talking with people who can give sound advice. It includes reading newspapers, checking websites and checking the legality of establishments or job orders with appropriate authorities or government bodies.

The informed decision-making process

There are four simple steps to be followed in making an informed decision.

Step 1: List what you are looking for and what you expect the decision to do for you.

This is called “setting your criteria.” For example: how much do you want to earn from a particular job? What are the work hours? Do you have to work on Sundays? If this is work overseas, how long before you can return for a vacation?

Step 2: List your alternatives or options.

What jobs are you considering? Where are they? List them down. Also list down the characteristics of those options. For example: caregiving job in the Middle East pays \$____, 2-year contract, etc.

Step 3: Check how well your alternatives meet your criteria.

For example, if you want to make X pesos as your income target, does Option 1 meet that criterion? Is it lower? Higher? If it is lower, why would you settle for it knowing that it does not meet your income targets? If it is higher, what additional things or hours will it require of you compared with another option that meets your criterion of “only 40 hours work each week?”

Step 4: Choose the option that best meets most of your criteria.

The decision you will eventually make will be the option that rates highest in terms of meeting your criteria.

Necessary criteria for making good decisions

It must be noted here that age is often one of the most common criteria for determining whether to stay or re-migrate. It is commonly believed that women in the above-30 years old range are less employable in this country so the logical thing is to go abroad again.

Decision-making where women are involved is also a family process. The homemaking and caregiving role of mothers in particular is not easy to fill and factors such as small children and aging parents play a big part in the decision to go abroad again. Especially where the previous experience of not having the mother around in the house has been very difficult for the family, there may be more reasons to stay than to go.

The decision-making process for women is generally more difficult because of the multiple roles that will be orphaned when they are away. There are many dimensions and parameters of the final decision that will have far-reaching consequences for the family and the migrant worker herself.

Regardless of the differing nature of the decision-making process for men and women, however, there are some criteria that must be present in all career decisions you are to make. These are basic items you must always look for in whatever career option you take.

The following should be non-negotiable items:

Fundamental principles and rights at work - You must research as far as you are able if the company employs child laborers, practices forced or compulsory labor, and upholds discriminatory policies regarding employment. You would not want to join a company that at the very outset looks like it will violate many of the items in your criteria list.

Gender equality - A very clear criterion for protecting yourself from another traumatic experience will have to do with how well your target job or company upholds gender equality between men and women. When you suspect that a particular workplace will likely violate your rights as far as gender equality is concerned, then it would probably be poor judgment on your part to pursue it.

Decent work - The ILO's Decent Work Framework for all Women and Men should be a pervading guide in terms of the employment you seek. The job you wish to have should be one that you can do as "decent and productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity." It must respect your rights, present you with income opportunities that can improve your situation, and include social protection and social dialogue.

In the end, protection from abuse and exploitation is best assured when coaches engage in retooling and upskilling efforts so that they are better able to establish their worth and make demands from their employers for safety, decent work and the like. Laws can only protect to a certain extent and cannot guarantee safety, especially when people put themselves in positions of threat or danger. That is why decisions must be based on solid information and not on hearsay, rumor or feeling.

Informed decision-making and criteria setting may seem unrealistic for an entertainer or chambermaid or gardener to think about. But if you really look closely, many of the troubles of victims/survivors of trafficking could have been prevented if they had only done more research, more listening, and more advice-seeking, and most important of all, if they had not allowed their dreams to take them away from a more realistic assessment of their options. The following article can help protect returned victims/survivors of trafficking from being victimized again.

To protect yourself from employment scams

One of the most heart-breaking bits of news to hear from jobseekers is that they have been victimized by employment scams. These scams prey on people who are probably in the lowest points of their self-esteem, career aspirations, and financial health. Many scam victims are often those who are desperate for jobs and are therefore easily attracted to questionable measures in their desperation. Instead of finding relief from their unemployment troubles, however, victims become more deeply entrenched in the mire of self-doubt and financial incapacity than when they started their job search.

Scam horror stories

There are countless variations of scam horror stories. There are jobseekers who are duped into paying outrageous sums of money to a recruiting agency which does not exist. Some recruiting agencies may be registered with the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) but have no legal job orders. There are those given fake documents, such as contracts, passports, visas and work permits. Some are prevented from leaving the country because of these fake papers. Even more unfortunate ones are held up in airports at the port of entry and sent back to where they came from. When already at their destination, jobseekers discover that their job, work hours, work conditions, and compensation are different from those in their signed contract. Worst of all, many vulnerable jobseekers find themselves trapped in human trafficking, prostitution and abject powerlessness in a foreign land.

How do you ensure that you do not become another scam victim?

Stop and think

This may seem so obvious that it is unnecessary even to mention. The sad fact, however, is that this is one of the first things that scam victims forget to do. Very often the dream of a better life is such a consuming passion that any promise of its fulfillment makes them blind to what is realistic and reasonable. People literally forget to think! They no longer stop to assess if a job offer can realistically pay what it promises for the kind of work it requires. They no longer want to assess the risks and social costs, dismissing family separation and loneliness as something they will willingly suffer. They do not dare question the outrageous “placement” fee and would gladly beg, steal or borrow just to raise it. They refuse to heed the government’s tireless warnings about illegal recruiters, unreasonable charges, and worst of all, human trafficking. They simply believe what they want to believe.

Adopt a critical stance

“All that glitters is not gold” and yet some jobseekers see the foreign salary as more than gold and think the adage does not therefore apply. Those who stay away from scams are those who look at employment offers with a critical eye. They refuse

to be blinded by the promise of big earnings or ideal work conditions. They scrutinize job descriptions and compensation packages, and read the fine print. They are not afraid to question, clarify and challenge, even though this may mean giving up the dream.

Seek information

There is no longer any excuse these days for lack of knowledge. Ignorance is often a decision rather than a failure of the environment to dispense knowledge. Technology, sound advice, and even successful people willing to share their stories are there for the taking. One only needs to access them.

Nothing can replace information-seeking as one of the most effective hedges against being duped by employment scams. The reason some people do not want to know is that they do not want to discover anything that would make them give up their dream.

Make informed decisions

Staying away from scams and landing the right job require making decisions that are based on solid information and knowledge, not on hearsay or mere impressions. Informed decision-making is rational, logical, and follows a structured process. It is disciplined because it requires jobseekers to seek the truth and to be open to accepting what they discover. This requires maturity. Many jobseekers go against sound advice and judgment because they refuse to accept that their dream job is not the ideal they have long wished for.

Pursuing the dream

Almost everyone has a dream job. Some jobseekers, however, pursue it at all costs. They will not hesitate to do anything to get it. They will not allow anything to get in the way of their dream. It does not matter that the placement fee is outrageous. It does not matter that the recruiter is not registered with the POEA. It does not matter that the agency does not have a job order. Nothing matters and nothing anybody says will make them change their mind.

And so these jobseekers refuse to seek information, disregard advice, and go their own way regardless of the obvious truths that stare them in the face.

Get real!

There is nothing wrong with jobseekers nurturing the dream of a better life and pursuing it passionately. But they must do so in the context of a critical and open mind. They must be realistic about the financial, social and psychological costs attached to realizing the dream.

In the final analysis, the best way to protect yourself from employment scams is to assess the risks you are taking to pursue your dream. Is your dream worth it? If it costs you everything that is important to you, then why do you even call it a dream?



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Some Inspiring Pieces

Some Inspiring Pieces

The Business of Giving Hope

by James and Loree Mante

On a red brick wall in our terrace, two old posters mounted on wooden frames hang side by side. They show similar pictures of small streams moving upward to join larger bodies of water, presumably seas or oceans. The caption on one poster reads: “What appears to be the end may really be a new beginning.” On the other poster, the caption reads: “Faith is knowing there is an ocean because you have seen a brook.”



Counseling the retrenched

One day, in this same terrace, we were grappling with the meaning of our careers, our life mission, our calling. Among other things, we are both involved in counseling those who have been retrenched. What is our work really all about? How do we help people to deal with the pain of losing a job, oftentimes prematurely? How do we help them prepare to engage the future with confidence? What does it really mean for us to listen to their fears and dreams (or what's left of them)? What does it mean to be a career counselor?

Ageless message

We tossed ideas back and forth. Then James caught sight of the posters. “That’s it! That’s what it’s all about!” He remarked that he had always been struck by the posters but that he never knew where they came from even though they were always up on our walls.

Loree explained that the posters were hers. She had bought them as a young girl in freshman college. Who knows how many times the posters helped her face the rigors of school, of starting a career, of charting a life course? The posters have also survived four residence moves, a lifetime commitment to take care of parents to the end, raising a family, multiple careers, diverse interests and sundry engagements. Today the posters still stand there, ageless, timeless.

Giving hope

James saw in those posters something that explained the meaning of our life career. As career counselors, we are in the business of giving hope. Not hope that is based on wishful thinking or plain positive attitude or simple rah-rah-rah. It is hope that allows people to trust that there is a beginning in every ending, to see the truth that the brook will always link up with the ocean.

It is hope that is built on faith and trust, and makes possible the willingness and ability to “see beyond.” Things are never what they seem. Job loss is only

a temporary ending, a mere chapter. The financial and emotional setbacks of being let go are mere points in time. If one is able to hope, one will always be able to see beyond the present.

It is hope that is also anchored on knowing that one has a lot to contribute. One brings along valuable skills, competencies and experiences that no retrenchment can sever. Retrenchment can never erode one's value and worth. These remain forever.

Seeing beyond

Fr. Gio Santos, SDB, spoke of seeing beyond in his homily at a recent office blessing of DBM where we work as part-time counselors. He said that one who sees beyond can appreciate the true nature of things underneath the façade. Seeing beyond allows a person to understand another's behavior at a level deeper than the obvious. It allows a person to interpret meanings hiding behind appearances.

The hopefulness of one who sees beyond may seem unfounded to others, but it is one that is solidly grounded on what lies underneath the surface. To unearth the beauty behind the ugliness or the hope behind the desperation, one needs to see beyond.

Successful counseling

And so when we counsel those who have lost their jobs, we succeed only when we are able to make them see beyond their circumstances. We succeed when they begin to see beyond their limitations and see what good they can offer. We succeed when they see the need to improve themselves and expand their competencies. We succeed when they affirm that there is a future waiting to unfold for them. We succeed when they see the present as an opportunity to rearrange their priorities and seek those that truly bring them happiness.

Choosing to see beyond

Hopefulness is a choice. Seeing beyond is a choice. And when we as career counselors choose to counsel others, we also make a choice to see beyond our counselees. Even as we cry and grieve with them, laugh and celebrate with them, we also make a choice to appreciate their innate capacity to find hope in the midst of their pains. We catch them in their fragile brokenness and yet challenge them to access the tough inner resources they have within.

There is incomparable joy in seeing beyond. There is immeasurable satisfaction in helping others to see beyond. That is why we have chosen to do what we do.

James and Loree Mante are both free-lance Human Resources and Organization Development practitioners. They are also career coaches specializing in helping retrenched clients through their career transitions. First published in *Guiding Youth Careers: A handbook for those who help young jobseekers*, ILO, 2007.

Keeping the hope (even if you have no job)

Why do we welcome the new year with a bang and not a whimper, with high hopes and not dismay and disgust? Why do we make merry instead of grieve? Or why do we try to rejoice even when we may not have too many reasons to do so?

Hope is the answer

The answer is simple: HOPE. Whether or not we believe it, hope represents the only reason there is to go on living. Without it, there is no point marching on into a new year or even into the rest of our lives.

Those who find themselves without a job as the new year comes are probably in a more challenged position than those who simply move on with their careers. This is because they must look for a job in the incoming year. They must join the ranks of jobseekers like themselves, whether retrenched, fired, resigned, just graduated from school, returning entrants to the workforce or retirees seeking new careers. Those who have to look for jobs in the new year must compete in a highly competitive marketplace and hold their own against countless others claiming their stake in the world of work just like themselves.

The mere thought of looking for a job after the heightened merry-making of the Christmas season is enough to make faint even the strong and hardy. But because of hope, there is reason to forge on confidently and engage the task of job-hunting with spirited gait.

Optimism

A key component of hope is optimism, the ability to view things in a positive light and to see the good in all things. Optimism makes it possible to bounce back after being derailed by setbacks and obstacles. To the optimists, problems are not considered hindrances but opportunities for learning and growth. In that sense, obstacles are welcomed rather than avoided.

In his book *Learned Optimism: How to change your mind and your life*, Martin Seligman notes three components which differentiate optimists from pessimists in the way they understand adversity and failure.

Permanence

Optimists see adversity as impermanent, temporary, fleeting. Pessimists, however, see failure as a forever thing. Pessimists will say: "I will never find a job" while optimists will say, "I didn't get this job. I have four more leads to pursue."

Pervasiveness

This component describes the extent to which people allow failure to affect them. "All companies are looking for younger people" is a sweeping pessimistic view of the entire employment scenario. On the other hand, optimists will say: "This particular company wants younger people but there are others who want more mature and experienced workers like me." This statement rightly limits the specific failure to its proper scope and reach.

Personalization

Pessimists consider failure to be negative and internal. They believe that there is something wrong with them as persons, making them unacceptable to employers. "I am not marketable," pessimists will say. Optimists, on the other hand, view failure as positive and welcome. "I have competencies other companies need which this particular company which has rejected me does not."

Optimism in the job search

Optimistic jobseekers stand a better chance of viewing the job-hunting process as life-giving and worthwhile. They can take rejections at face value, never allowing failure to diminish their innate goodness, capabilities, and worth as persons and workers. They allow themselves to feel upset and to mourn their loss, then use their setback to be the launch pad from which they leap forward and take control of their future. They keep things in perspective and confine the effects of adversity to their appropriate space and time.

Jobseekers who nurture their optimism and use it to propel them through the difficult and trying challenges of looking for a new job in the new year will survive and thrive. They will grow with every experience and be grateful for what they learn from each one.

And because they have the ability to convert the most dismal to the brightest of experiences, they will also be those workers that companies would love to have among their ranks. It may be a matter of time before they are "discovered" but it will come.

Starting with hope

The new year is probably the best time of year to start anew. A new optimism, a new hope and a new year go well together. And so does the tug at the heartstring that tells us that even in times when all is well, it is best for us to plan to fail and to rise again and again and again, because it is there where real success has its definition and meaning.

Written by Loree Cruz-Mante and Marivic R. Gustilo

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Achieve satisfaction via your work

How many hours do you spend working? If you're like most, you would probably say 8 hours, or 10 or 18. Some of you may even say that you think you're working all the time. You could be right!

The truth is, for the greater mass of working people, work takes up most of a normal workday. Consider, for example, that work does not only mean the actual number of hours you spend at your workplace. There are countless work-related activities that you have to do in order to be ready for work. You need to clean up and dress. You need to wait in line to get on a public transport or drive yourself to work. You need to travel around for meetings, conferences and workshops. You need to drop off the kids with your mother-in-law before proceeding to the office. You need to shop for office clothes. You need to attend the boss' birthday party or bring foreign guests for shopping. On occasion or as a matter of routine, you render overtime.

Extended work hours

It is also not so easy to relegate working to the workplace, however you define it. Many people bring home work, thus extending their work hours beyond the confines of the workplace. Modern technology, particularly the cell phone and e-mail, is one of the primary culprits in extending work hours beyond the workplace. While these modern-day inventions do increase work speed, they also remove the boundaries that confine work to the place of work. What this simply means is that the once office-tied employee who stopped working when the office closed is now available 24/7 and practically on call for anything that is even remotely connected with work.

And if the stresses at work continue to hound you, even your family dinners, vacations, and social gatherings are fraught with work woes. These stresses even encroach on your sleep and you begin to have insomnia worrying about your sales targets. And if you dream about your boss, why, that's called a nightmare!

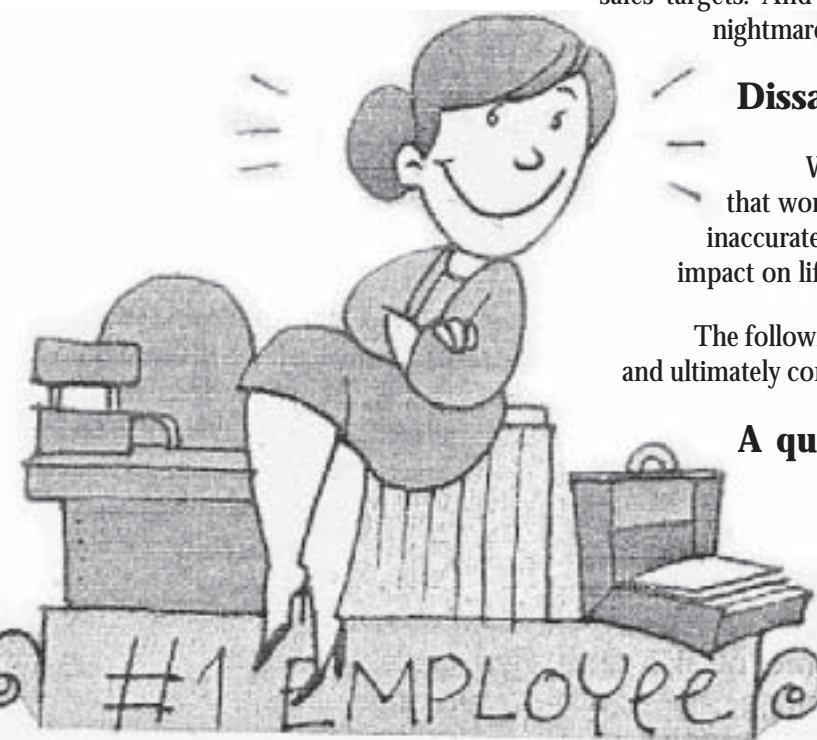
Dissatisfaction at work

What happens, then, if you are unhappy at work? Given that work occupies such a dominate space in your life, it is not inaccurate to say that an unsatisfying work life has tremendous impact on life satisfaction, as well.

The following thoughts might help you achieve satisfaction at work and ultimately contribute to life satisfaction.

A question of fit

Work satisfaction is largely a function of fit. Do you fit in your organization? Do you share its values and norms, believe in its corporate causes, define your meaning according to a company vision and mission that you partake in? Do you take pride in being a part of what the company stands for? Is its culture your own?



Grateful for the privilege

Being happy at work is also about being grateful for the privilege of being able to do the work that you do. Are you happy for the chance to be doing something worthwhile even as you provide for your daily needs? Even if your job does not fully satisfy you, do you still find it better than being out in the streets? If you still find a redeeming value in your job, then gratefully give it your best shot while you still have it!

Theologian Charles Ringma says that the only things we truly own are the things we are grateful for. Are you grateful that you have the job that you have?

Co-workers as friends

People also determine your work satisfaction to a great extent. Are your co-workers your friends, too, with whom you can share your life even outside work? Is your boss one with whom you are a subordinate, mentee and friend all at the same time? Can you laugh with your co-workers in the midst of gruelling workload and in the lighter moments around the coffeemaker or pantry?

Defining meaning

In the end, you achieve work satisfaction when you are able to see how your work helps you achieve meaning and purpose beyond yourself. Work is satisfying when it helps you fulfill your longing to contribute something of worth and value. Work is satisfying when it allows you to be who you really are.

Work as a gift

If you see work as a gift, then you will value it and perform it in the best way you can while you still have it. If it is taken away from you because you are retrenched, retired, fired, physically disabled, or for whatever other reason, would you regret not having valued your work when you still had it?

May you achieve work satisfaction, and in the process increase your chances of achieving life satisfaction as well!

Written by Loree Cruz-Mante

First published in the Job Market, Working People section of the Philippine Daily Inquirer, September 9, 2007

How to survive your work stressors

Anyone who complains about stress in the workplace must one day accept the futility of such a preoccupation. Stress at work is as real as any other item in one's job description. When one signs a work contract, one also gives his/her consent to the fine print of S-T-R-E-S-S imbedded as a hyperlink in every other line. Stress is simply part of the working life-indeed, of life itself.

Does this mean, then, that we should all stop complaining and grudgingly accept the seemingly unacceptable? I definitely say "No!" There are countless individuals who seem to breeze through the stresses of everyday and consider it such a privilege to be at work! Let me share what some happy people at work have discovered.

Stress is Natural

Stress is often defined as "the body's way of responding to change." This simply means that stress was created to be a good thing. If the body were not allowed to use this built-in response mechanism, there would surely be adverse consequences.

Stress becomes a "bad" thing when we allow it to turn against itself. Stress becomes "stressful" when we allow it to put undue pressure on us, forcing us to cope with too much, too often, or too soon. The body is forced to overtax itself in responding to change, over and beyond its natural capacity. We then begin to bite more than we can chew. We begin to feel buried deeper and deeper into a hole we cannot get out of. We gasp for air. We choke. We have allowed stress to overpower us.

The Organization as Stressor

A clear work stressor is the type of organization people work in. The nature of the business often dictates the culture, norms, pace, and relationships in the workplace. Organizations that deal with disaster relief, emergencies, money, media, health and the like have stresses inherent in the kind of work that they do. A person who decides to work in these organizations must accept the stresses as givens.

The Nature of Work

Another stressor is defined by the kind of work people do in an organization. Sales jobs are forever about targets and quotas. The medical profession is about saving lives, often demanding split-second decisions. Stock market traders, air traffic controllers, firemen, call center agents, assembly line workers, reporters, even fastfood delivery crew, all work with clocks ticking like time bombs.

Pilots, molecular biologists, surgeons, telephone linemen, snipers, computer technicians, miners and scuba diving instructors work with great precision and cannot afford even the slightest error. Many many jobs have grave life and death consequences, and this fact makes them stressful by nature. CEOs, managers and supervisors are on this list, too.

People as Stressors

Let's face it: there are stressful people all around us! Every workplace will usually have the obnoxious, the envious, the braggart, the self-righteous, the lazy, the complainer,

the gossip. The list is endless. The boss, of course, is often unfairly seen as the automatic stress icon.

Personality-Driven Stressors

Some people just seem to be more stressed out than others. Perhaps it is because some people actually enjoy being stressed, whether or not they admit it. Called stress junkies, these workers feel incomplete when the going is smooth. They miss the jagged edges, bumps and near-hits. There are also some, with masochistic tendencies perhaps, who have to play the perpetually harassed, demanding pity or praise for their hard work.

Nuisance Stressors

Some stressors are simply unnecessary. Worrying about traffic when one left the house later than usual, losing sleep over a month-old assignment that is due tomorrow, or getting irritated about an officemate's bad moods create stress that one can live without. One can prepare for predictable traffic and deadlines. Another person's moods are beyond our control so why be perpetually surprised?

Power over Stress

Overcoming stress is a decision, a choice one makes for the sake of a peaceful existence at work. A stressor is a stressor because one allows it to be so. Simply put, one can control all kinds of stresses because he/she can choose not to be stressed by them.

Attitude is the all-important factor. Those who triumph over stress are those who have decided that they will not let external factors wield their unwelcome power over them. Overcoming stress is a rational process, a willful act. One must think through stress rather than feel through it.

What to do

Three simple steps: identify, rationalize, decide. List down all the things that stress you, big and small. Then analyze each item. Why is this item a stressor? Is it within your control? What can you do about it?

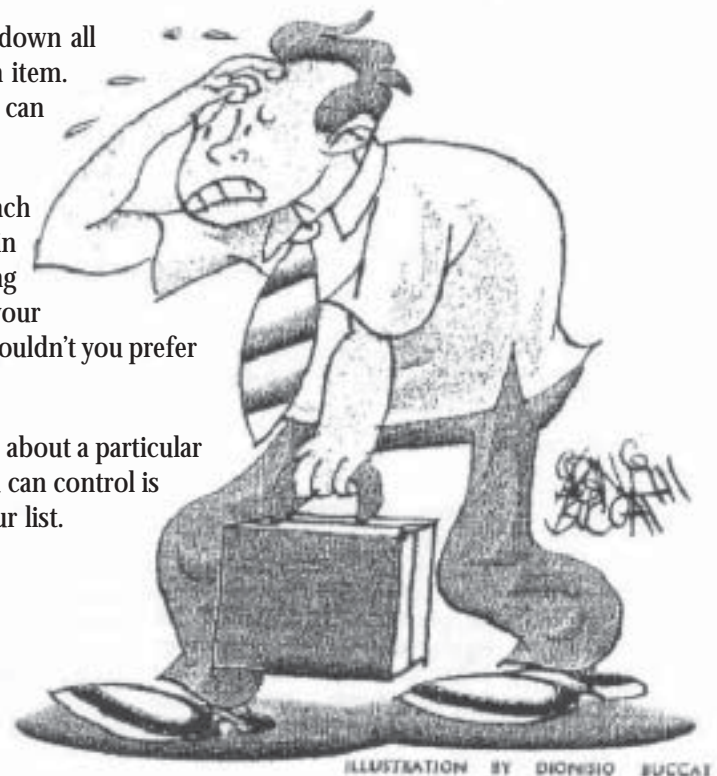
It also helps to identify the consequences that each stressor brings to you. If the jeepney driver who cuts you in traffic goes away whistling a tune while you are still cursing right through lunch, shouldn't you be kinder to yourself? If your secretary still does not take a telephone message correctly, shouldn't you prefer one more round of training to an emotional outburst?

Rationalizing helps you see what you can or cannot do about a particular stressor. If it is outside your control, then the only thing you can control is how you view it. Chances are, you can eliminate it from your list.

It's entirely up to you.

Be kind to yourself

That attitude is a key determinant of stress control may seem impractical or downright absurd. It is difficult—



extremely—sometimes. But if you decide not to be stressed about something, then it isn't a stressor anymore!

Wouldn't you rather be humming through your inbox and chatting with your boss as you would your best friend? Wouldn't you rather go home and enjoy your children's school stories rather than take out your bad day on them? Shouldn't you look forward to lunchhour as the time to relax with your officemates rather than use it to escape from them?

You can beat stress in a much more efficient, lasting, and cheaper way than a gym workout, massage, or vacation. Try adopting a no-stress attitude until it becomes a habit, and eventually a lifestyle and a way of life. Try it!

Written by Loree Cruz-Mante

First published in the Job Market, People at Work section of the Philippine Daily Inquirer, March 12, 2006. Reprinted in *Minute Guide for Young Jobseekers and Guiding Youth Careers: A handbook for those who help young jobseekers*, both ILO publications, 2007

Where to get help when looking for a job

Job search jitters usually begin-or intensify-where graduation jitters end.

Graduating students experience tremendous pressures before they earn the right to march up the stage. There are exams to pass, school requirements to complete, clearances to process, and fees to pay for diplomas, togas, sashes, and other graduation paraphernalia.

There is also the undefinable mix of emotions: of saying goodbye to friends, of missing the routines of school, of ending a life chapter that also marks one's entry into the "real" world. There is excitement about preparing to engage the world, but there is also anxiety about one's preparedness for it. There is hopefulness about entering the world of work, but there is also the fear of what it is like. There is enthusiasm about the experience of looking for a job, but there is also the insecurity about not really knowing how to go about it. Above all, there is the pressure-no, panic!-of finding a job, any job, as quickly as possible.

How do I find a job?

At the center of all this ambivalence is the all-important concern: how do I find a job? What kind of job will I look for? Where do I start looking? How long will it take for me to find a job? Will I ever find one? These are questions that nag and hound new graduates. They are very valid questions which have no easy answers. And very often, new graduates don't even know where or whom to ask.

The euphoria of finally being done with school fades quickly in the face of the realities of having to look for a job. It does not help that unemployment statistics

paint a dismal scenario. It does not help that some parents wait impatiently at the sidelines, anticipating the yet-to-come income to augment meager family coffers. It does not help that friends and former classmates seem to have found jobs quickly and that one is lagging behind. It does not help that new graduates cannot answer “What are you doing now?” without having to lie.

Unprepared for work

A major part of the anxiety is that school hardly prepares graduates for work. Career talks given to high school graduating seniors often come too late in the game and most likely have not sunk in by the time they decide on a college course. Very often, too, these talks are largely descriptive and do not delve into deeper issues of one’s aptitude and fit for a job, including values, motivations, and expectations that will drive choices.

In college, new graduates often have little help with careers and career decision-making. They are often left alone to make the leap into employment without even the most basic training on job search.

So it is that new graduates hardly know what to do or where to go after graduation fever has subsided and they must face a brave new world by themselves.

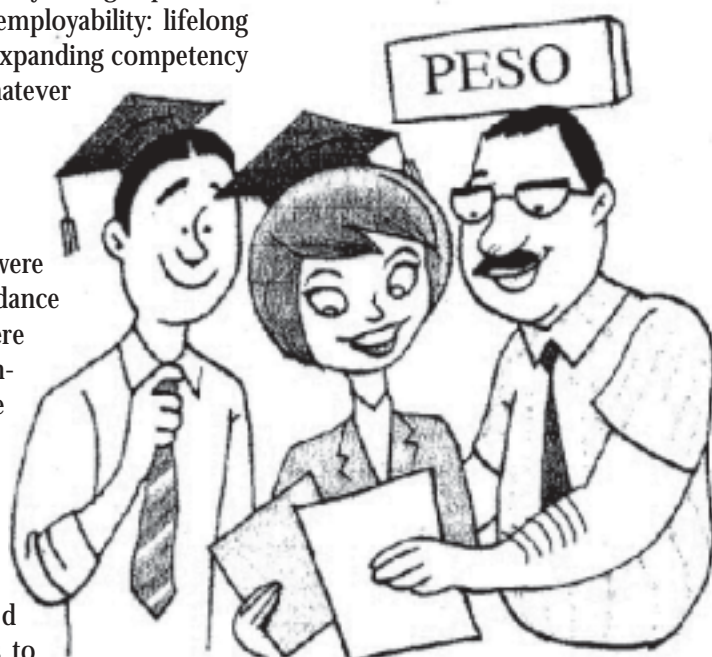
Structured process

Looking for a job is a structured process. In a sense, it has its own technology, governed by its own set of rules. The interesting thing about job search is that it has elements of both science and art. It includes scientific processes, such as research and rational decision-making. Its artistic elements include creativity, innovativeness and marketing sense. Add to that the elements of luck, fate, destiny, and as the God-fearing call it, purpose and mission.

The basics of job search CAN be learned, and new graduates would do well to learn them before they embark on job-hunting. Much stress is avoided by smart new graduates who study the rudiments before they actually take the plunge. They are usually better prepared to handle the physical and emotional rigors of looking for a job. In fact, studying how to look for a job before actually doing it provides practice for one of the most important factors of lifetime employability: lifelong learning. An insatiable passion for learning provides an ever-expanding competency base so necessary for ensuring that one is employable at whatever stage in life.

Available help

There are so many aids to job-hunting these days that were unheard of only years back. The internet, job fairs, school guidance centers, and various multimedia resources are only a few. There is also the Public Employment Service Office (PESO), a non-fee charging multi-employment service facility of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE). PESOs are maintained by local government units (key cities and municipalities), NGOs, community-based organizations, state universities and colleges. There are websites dedicated solely to helping people find jobs, in addition to providing job search advice and inspirational literature. Phil-Jobnet and mytrabaho.com are two of countless sites. Media continues to provide help, including talk show discussions, film features, and



dedicated programs. It is almost impossible to exploit the internet alone, not to mention multimedia materials that are easily available.

New graduates will benefit tremendously from training themselves (or seeking help) in the basics of job-hunting. One just has to invest time in researching, accessing, and studying these resources. Successful job search is not a hit-or-miss game; it is a planned, purposive and deliberate process which identifies its target and aims at it before it shoots away.

Two new resources

I just finished writing two career guidance books for the DOLE and the International Labor Organization. I also did the graphic design for both books which will be launched soon.

The first book is an easy-to-read, user-friendly and simple how-to-find-a-job guide for youth seeking work. Entitled *Minute Guide for Young Jobseekers*, the guide is designed to provide step-by-step help and comes in a handy size that fits jeans pockets, small handbags, and backpack compartments. It deals with all stages of the job search process, beginning with how to assess one's competencies, motivations, and appropriate work environments. It provides information on how to write a resume, do impressive interviews, research for openings in both the advertised and hidden job markets, use personal networks, and negotiate compensation packages. It also contains interesting tips, paper exercises, inspirational articles, a brief on entrepreneurship, and a listing of useful web links. An attractive and colorful graphic design makes it appealing to young adult readers.

To be released with the *Minute Guide* is *Guiding Youth Careers: A handbook for those who help young jobseekers*. This is an easy-to-use handbook for trained guidance counselors, parents and guardians, and even peers or *barkada* to whom the youth go for career advice. It is simple to understand and is an excellent companion to the *Minute Guide*.

No fear

New graduates embarking on job search need not fear. Anxiety will only erode self-confidence and hopefulness and add to the stress inherently present in job search. If new graduates will pause before they leap, study the landscape, "survey the terrain," as it were before plunging in, they will be better fit to engage the job search process with alertness, vigor, and enthusiasm.

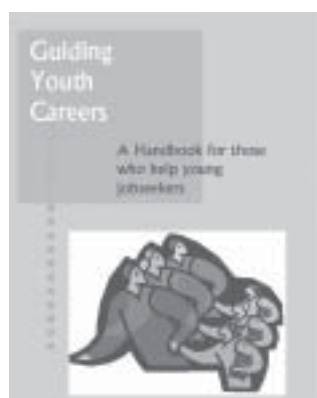
Help for job search abounds. It is there for the taking. But it won't come to you. You'll have to press that button if you want it. It's always your choice to do your job search blindly or intelligently. As one big and old enough to enter the world of work, this may well be your initiation to deserve the opportunities for gainful employment just waiting for you.

Written by Loree Cruz-Mante

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Some Parting Thoughts

The opportunity to coach returned victims/survivors of trafficking towards gainful careers is a rare privilege. It must be approached with reverence and a keen resolve to do it in the best way possible.

The enormity of any problem, whether it is trafficking, human rights, child labor, infant mortality, malnutrition or human smuggling, can always be solved on many levels, by many players, at different times. Solutions happen amidst different contexts and backdrops.

What is important is that where you find yourself is where you must act. Chipping away at your own corner of influence and doing what you must do within what you may consider your very limited area is precisely where you must make your contribution. No effort can ever be wasted. Only opportunities that you allow to pass by you.

In the coaching room, there are no big TV screens to advertise your small successes. There will be no press releases praising you for having helped a returned victim or survivor of trafficking to hope again. Even your own bosses and colleagues will probably not grasp the entire impact of your achievement.

But your coachees will. And you will. In the end, the image of a newly-energized coachee ready to engage the world again is enough for you to know:

You have made a difference. You have done your bit for your world.

Participants

Book Presentation and Training Workshop on the Use of the Manual Subic Holiday Villas, 11-13 February 2009

Batis-Association of Women in Action
For Rights and Empowerment (AWARE)

- Victorina Lloren - President
- Alona Tagami – Peer Counselor

BATIS Center for Women

- Andrea Luisa Anolin - Executive Director
- Beryl Grace Cruspero – Social Worker/ Community Organizer
- Rosalie Otero – Social Worker

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- Mirriam Orig – SSP Coordinator
- Christina Lopez – Social Service Associate
- Mary Joy Barcelona – ALP Coordinator

Department of Foreign Affairs

- Pablito Mendoza – Special Assistant

Department of Social Welfare
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- Hazel Militante – SWO IV
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Employers Confederation
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- Alma Sanqui - Administrative Assistant

Kanlungan Centre Foundation, Inc.
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- Roryvie Ilumin – Social Worker
- Maria Madioguid – Case Worker
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- Maricynne Peniero – OWWO II
- Ross Octaviano – Welfare Officer

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- Lucy Tabu – Senior TESD Specialist
- Joseph Allen Simon – Nurse II

International Labour Organization (ILO)

- Atty. Robert Larga – National Project Coordinator
- Ednelyn Gulane – Project Secretary
- Angelina Dela Cruz – Finance Assistant
- Coleen Auxemery – Intern/ Documentor
- Loree Cruz-Mante – External Collaborator
- JL Mante – Research Assistant

Useful Resources

ILO print resources

- National Referral System on the Recovery and Reintegration of Trafficked Persons, DSWD, 2009
- OWWA Case Management Manual, OWWA, 2009
- Catalogue of Skills and Livelihood Training Programmes and other Support Services, ILO, 2009
- GET Ahead for Women in Enterprise Training Package, ILO, 2004
- Generate Your Business (GYB) Manual, ILO, 2007
- Start Your Business (SYB) Manual, ILO, 2007
- Guiding Youth Careers: A handbook for those you help young jobseekers, ILO, 2007
- Minute Guide for Young Jobseekers, ILO, 2007
- Competency Standards, ILO and TESDA, 2006
- An Information Guide, Booklet No. 6, Trafficking of Women and Girls, ILO, Undated
- Combating trafficking in children for labour exploitation, ILO-IPEC, 2008

Online Resources

Trafficking

http://www.prh.org/Articles/2001_traffickinginPersonsMythsMethodsandHumanRights.aspx

This is a link to an informative article about the facts and myths of trafficking in persons. A lot of useful information is included in the article as well as links to other resources about the subject.

http://www.no-trafficking.org/content/Training_manual/training.htm

The site of the UNIAP on human trafficking in the GMS. Mainly a web resource with links to their training manuals and toolkits as well as to other publications resources.

www.childtrafficking.net

This is the site of the Trafficking in Children and Women (TICW) project of the ILO in the Mekong sub-region which includes links to resources and publications about trafficking. It also has an outline of what the project does and what the project has achieved so far.

www.humantrafficking.org

A site devoted to fighting trafficking with links to newsletters, news feeds and online resources such as publications and blogs. It also has a regional listing of countries involved in the effort to combat trafficking with a lot of useful information specific to each country.

www.ilo.org

The ILO's main index page containing links to their publications, research work, projects and various statistics as well as their advocacies. The page also includes links to their departments and regional offices and an up-to-date features section showcasing different relevant events.

www.lawphil.net

A site containing information about Philippine laws including R.A. 9208 (Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003). The full written body of this law and many others are available for viewing within this site.

www.safestate.org/index.cfm?navid=1443

A link to a paper about the effects of trafficking on children mainly from a psychological and social perspective. This paper is a very handy resource to use since it gives a detailed examination of what children may experience from trafficking.

www.state.gov

The US State Department's main page. You could easily find information regarding recent important events and a lot of links to blogs, multimedia resources and more. A search function is included in the site to navigate towards specific topics such as the Trafficking in Persons Report.

www.trafficking.org.ph

A local site containing relevant trafficking-related news and links to publications and resources. The site is focused on the Philippine situation on trafficking and provides useful information on the subject. Hotline numbers are posted on the page to provide assistance to those who may need help.

www.traumacenter.org

A website containing a lot of information ranging from their clinical services to their research and publications about dealing with trauma. This site focuses more on the clinical aspects of trauma and is very useful in discovering things about the effects of trauma, something trafficked victims often experience.

www.unodc.org

The UNODC's main page featuring links to online resources and publications and links to different topics relating to the agency as well as feature articles. Links to their field offices' pages are also present.

www.visayanforum.org

The main page of the Visayan Forum Inc. website featuring the different advocacies of the organization; links to publications and to featured news developments as well as contact information.

Safe migration/re-migration

www.antigone.gr/listpage/selected_publications/international/070603.pdf

This link corresponds to an article about gender and migration. The article is a discussion about the "genderization" of migration and its effects. It provides a multitude of information about trends, laws and other valuable things about migration and gender.

www.ilo.org/public/english/region/asro/bangkok/child/trafficking/awareness/index.htm

This page is part of the ILO site which contains direct links to resources about safe migration including proven practices and tools developed by the organization.

www.ilo.org/public/english/region/asro/bangkok/child/trafficking/downloads/final-travel-smart-work-smart-thailand.pdf

A link to a downloadable pdf file of the ILO's "Travel Smart-Work Smart" book which is essentially a guide to safe migration. This is a very good source of information as far as researching about safe migration is concerned.

www.migration4development.org/

A resource site with the goal of linking migration with development put forth by a collaborative effort of different UN agencies. Links to blogs and things like photos and videos are also in the page.

www.sariq.org/pages/focus_area_migration.aspx

This is a link to a site serving as an online resource for safe migration but also includes links to information sites regarding trafficking and violence against women. A very simple and easy to understand interface allows the user to access needed information with ease.

Micro-finance

www.adbi.org/research-paper/2003/01/01/37.microfinance.and.poverty.reduction.in.asia/

This link leads to a part of the ADBI website particularly to a part about microfinance. A short write up is available for viewing with a link to a microfinance seminar summary page. The page also has links to research papers related to microfinance.

www.goodnewspilipinas.com/wp/?p=2198

A link to an article that businessman Francisco J. Colayco wrote about micro-finance. It is written in Filipino and provides a layman explanation of micro-finance and a general outlook on what it is.

www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/finance/download/c246en.pdf

This corresponds to a document of the ILO pertaining to their policy on micro-finance for decent work. This is an official pdf document that is downloadable and provides insight on the ILO's stance to promote micro-finance. It also includes the definition and advantages of micro-financing.

www.kiva.org/about/microfinance/

This is a part of the site of Kiva which is particularly devoted to micro-finance. There are a lot of links to FAQ's which presents the topic in a question and answer format. Quite helpful to those learning about micro-finance as the page's contents address some key questions one might ask about micro-financing.

www.microfinance.com

A site providing links to numerous articles written by researchers categorized by country or region. Several other links to other topics within the general sphere of micro-finance are also in the site.

Gender

<http://cgws.upm.edu.ph/>

The official site of UP Manila's Center for Gender and Women's Studies. The site has many links to local publications and resources for issues. Links to news, contact information and other online resources are also in the site.

<http://cws.upd.edu.ph/>

The official site of the UP Center for Women's Studies. This page provides visitors with links to lectures, publications, articles and other resources concerning women's studies.

www.distel.ca/womlist/countries/philippines.html

Provides an alphabetized list of women's organizations in the Philippines. Addresses and contact information are provided in the listing.

www.ilo.org/gender/

This is the main page of the ILO's Bureau for Gender Equality. This page includes all sorts of links to a variety of web resources such as their publications and their action plan for gender equality. A good place to research about gender issues with a user-friendly interface.

www.kanlungan.ngo.ph/services.htm

A page describing the various services and programs of Kanlungan Centre Foundation, Inc. This is a very good site for migrant workers to visit since it provides clear information about what the organization offers to the public. Links to other parts of the Kanlungan website can also be found.

www.nscb.gov.ph/ru5/products/publications/wam/social.html

This page provides links to statistics about the Bicol region most importantly to statistics relating to violence against women and migration. This page presents figures on a relatively micro-scale but is helpful in the sense that ground level statistics are represented and not just countrywide figures.

www.twinside.org.sg/women.htm

This is a page relating to information about women's rights and gender issues. It has several links to papers and articles on various specific topics such as women and global institutions etc.

Partners' sites

<http://migrante.tripod.com/>

The main page of **MIGRANTE International**. The site contains links to various write-ups and information about the advocacies of the organization.

http://ph.88db.com/ph/Services/Post_Detail.page/Clubs_and_Association/Service_Organizations/?PostID=105348

A web portal for **BATIS Center for Women** containing posts from people within the group. It also features contact information and a short description of the organization.

<http://www.catw-ap.org/>

The official site of the **Coalition Against Trafficking in Women- Asia Pacific (CATW-AP)**. The site offers a lot of posts relating to trafficking in women as well as links to their programs and available resources.

<http://www.cfo.gov.ph/>

The official site of the **Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO)**. This site contains news stories, announcements and links to their programs and resources.

<http://www.dawnphil.org/>

The **Development Action for Women Network (DAWN)** site. The site provides links to their advocacies and programs pages and to online resources as well. A regular newsletter is also featured in the main page.

<http://www.dswd.gov.ph/>

This is the official site for the **Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD)**. This site includes links to their various programs, publications and downloads among others.

<http://www.kanlungan.ngo.ph/>

The main page of **Kanlungan Centre Foundation, Inc.** Contains an informative write-up about the organization with links to their various projects and advocacies.

<http://www.ncrfg.gov.ph/>

The **National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women's (NCRFW)** website. The site has information resources links and links to press releases, events calendars and several other relevant things such as statistics about Filipino women.

<http://www.scalabrini.org/eng/english.htm>

The website of the **Congregation of St. Charles Missionaries SCALABRINIANS**. This site has information about the group with links to publications and updates and events.

Combating Trafficking of Women and Children in the Philippines (Anti-Trafficking Project). A Synthesis of Project-handled TIP cases from <http://trafficking.org.ph/papers/documents/synthesis.pdf>

Kangaspunta, Kristiina. Mapping the Inhuman Trade: Preliminary Findings of the Database on Trafficking in Human Beings. Forum on Crime and Society, vol. 3, Nos. 1 and 2, (December 2003) from http://www.unodc.org/pdf/crime/forum/forum3_note1.pdf

Rafferty, Yvonne. The Impact of Trafficking on Children: Psychological and Social Policy Perspectives. Child Development Perspectives, Volume 2, Number 1, Pages 13-18 (2008) from http://safestate.org/documents/HT_Impact_on_Children_4108.pdf

Tudachore, Diana. International Organization for Migration. Psychosocial Support to Groups of Victims of Human Trafficking in Transit Situations. Psychosocial Notebook, vol.4, (Feb.2004) from http://www.forcedmigration.org/psychosocial/papers/WiderPapers/iom_notebook4.pdf

U.S. Department of State. Trafficking in Persons Report (2008) from <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/105501.pdf>

United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute and Australian Institute of Criminology. Rapid Assessment: Human Smuggling and Trafficking from the Philippines, (1999) from <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/reports/1999-11-rapid.pdf>

About the Author

Loree is a Human Resources and Organization Development Practitioner who has done consulting work with various government institutions (notably the Department of Labor and Employment), NGOs, employers' and workers' groups, faith-based and private corporations.

With the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO-IPEC), and UNICEF, she has worked on numerous projects on child labor, HIV-AIDS, employment, occupational safety and health, and labor inspection. She was co-Overall Consultant for the Philippine Time-Bound Program and the Strategic Framework of the National Program against Child Labor. She co-trained the National Training Resource Pool on Child Labor, and was Team Leader for an ILO-IPEC child labor program implementors workshop in Cambodia. She has conducted numerous capability-building workshops for multicultural audiences.

As an Accredited Consultant with Drake Beam Morin Philippines, she is a career coach and trainer specializing in career transitions and retrenchment. She is involved in promotive and preventive health care programs, particularly on asthma.

A writer, editor, and graphic designer, she has published five books for the ILO, two of them co-authored with husband James. She regularly writes on workplace issues for the Philippine Daily Inquirer, radio editorials for a leading station, and articles for various publications. She has launched *Biyaheng FX: Round Trips to Pinoy Life*, her first book in a series of forthcoming short story collections.

She pursues a passion for the issues of child labor, patient education, career guidance, youth employment, and advocacy for decent work.

Loree has an A.B. English degree, cum laude, from the University of the Philippines, taught College Freshman English both at UP and the George Washington University in Washington, D.C., and is currently finishing her Masters in Development Studies at the UP Open University.

Loree's books published by the ILO:

- * A Training Guide for Specialized Training on Child Labor for the Philippine Labor Inspectorate (co-authored with James S. Mante), 1997; also did the book and graphic design
- * Design, Management and Evaluation of Action Programs on Child Labor (Training Manual for Project Implementors) (co-authored with James S. Mante), 2001, 589 pages; also did the book and graphic design
- * Guiding Youth Careers: A handbook for those who help young jobseekers. ILO. 2007
- * Minute Guide for Young Jobseekers, ILO, 2007
- * The Muted Cry: Stories of working children, ILO, 2001

ABOUT THE MANUAL

This Manual is intended for service providers, social workers, case managers, and all who help victims/survivors of trafficking to facilitate their economic recovery and reintegration, preferably in conjunction with psychosocial processes. It contains basic principles, concepts, strategies, practical tips and tools on coaching as they are used to help victims/survivors of trafficking become economically and socially empowered.

Organized into six themes (realistic self-assessment, skills-building, updatedness, networking, communication skills, and human relations), the Manual discusses six key factors that are critical in building gainful careers. There are also exercises designed to help coaches in the various subject areas under discussion.

Insights and ideas are included on entrepreneurship, managing money, micro-finance, networking, and safe-remigration cautions. It is highly recommended that the Manual be studied and used as sequenced since the ideas build upon each other.

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