
WORKSHOP REPORT

Integrating the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into teaching

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	Introduction	3
2	How can universities contribute to the implementation of SDGs?	5
3	Teaching concept	6
4	Learning objectives	7
5	Didactic implementation	8
6	Workshop procedure contents and methods	9
7	Literature – documents	11
8	Experience gained from the first implementation.....	15

1 INTRODUCTION

At a high-level summit of the United Nations (UN) from 25 to 27 September 2015, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted under the title 'Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development'. All 193 member states of the United Nations committed to working towards implementing the 2030 Agenda, with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), at regional, national and international level by 2030. The 2030 Agenda is the culmination of a long-running international debate on sustainable economic, social and environmental development. Due to their universal validity and the holistic development approach, which considers the three dimensions equally – economic, social and ecological – and also demands the protection of human rights, the rule of law, good governance, peace and security, the formulation of the 17 global sustainability goals represents an important orientation for sustainability strategies at the macro, meso and micro levels¹.

Even though the 2030 Agenda adopted by the UN places states under a particular obligation at international law level, this is also an invitation to actors at different levels (public, private, civil society) to participate in achieving the goals. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda is only possible if resources from all sectors of society are mobilised². In this sense, companies are also called upon to make their contribution. However, the economic significance of the global sustainability goals also becomes apparent, because according to a calculation by the Business and Sustainable Development Commission, the SDGs contain approximately US\$ 12 billion in potential value added³ if one considers the resulting market opportunities through innovation, new business models, job creation, etc.

But to be able to make this contribution and realise the existing market potential, companies need specialists and managers who understand this topic and also possess the necessary practical skills to develop sustainability strategies. It is therefore also necessary for business schools to see themselves as partners in the implementation of SDGs to convey these skills. The global network PRME (Principles for Responsible Management Education, www.unprme.org) unites more than 700 business schools. It also connects business schools worldwide with companies that are committed to the UN Global Compact (www.unglobalcompact.org) (see figure 1).

The PRME network promotes the systematic and overarching integration of relevant competencies on sustainability and ethics in management education – especially through interdisciplinary thinking and cooperation between different areas and institutions. Also, the PRME network has explicitly set for itself the goal of establishing the implementation of the SDGs in all member institutions⁴. The FHWien der WKW has been a member of the PRME Initiative since 2015 and has therefore also adopted the SDGs as an orientation for the further development of education in the field of sustainability and teaching.

¹ Österreichisches Bundeskanzleramt (2018), *Nachhaltige Entwicklung – Agenda 2030 / SDGs*, <https://www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at/nachhaltige-entwicklung-agenda-2030>

² United Nations (2015), *Transforming Our World*, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>, Nr. 39

³ Business and Sustainable Development Commission (2017), *Better Business, Better World report*, http://report.businesscommission.org/uploads/BetterBiz-BetterWorld_170215_012417.pdf

⁴ <http://www.unprme.org/resource-docs/SDGGuideforManagementEducationweb.pdf>

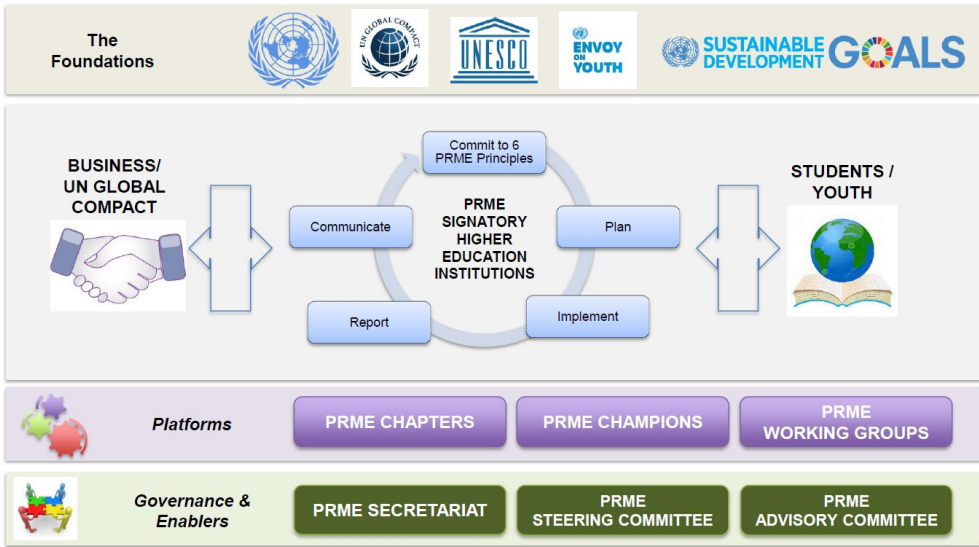


FIGURE 1: THE PRME ENGAGEMENT MODEL

2 HOW CAN UNIVERSITIES CONTRIBUTE TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SDGS?

Universities are credible educational and research institutions in society and contribute in many ways to a sustainably innovative economy. Universities of all types (universities, universities of applied sciences, pedagogical and technical colleges) with their performance areas of education, research, promotion of junior staff and transfer decisively advance the innovative power of a country⁵.

In many SDGs, education and research, as well as knowledge transfer, are explicitly listed as keys to successful implementation. It is therefore obvious that universities around the world have an important role to play in addressing the social, economic and environmental challenges made explicit by individual SDGs. They contribute in the following ways:

- Supplying specific expertise, scientific knowledge and solutions to support the implementation of the SDGs.
- Educating people in key competencies to promote the next generation of scientists and specialists and thus produce innovative experts, entrepreneurs, decision makers and citizens who are committed to implementing the SDGs in all spheres of life.
- Committing themselves to organisational governance in their structures and institutions and implementing measures for a socially, economically and ecologically responsible footprint.
- Being a neutral and trustworthy authority in society, initiating or even leading the dialogue for the implementation of SDGs locally, regionally, nationally and internationally across disciplines and sectors.

Jeffrey D. Sachs, Director of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), sums up the role of higher education institutions⁶:

'We can use the global network of universities, your university, my university, a thousand and more universities around the world, to be an active "solutions network" to help governments, businesses and civil society to chart out the pathways to successful sustainable development, and also to be the incubators for the rapid development and rapid fusion of sustainable development technologies. Universities around the world should be in the lead in helping society to find the technical solutions to achieve these goals.'

For the FHWien der WKW to be able to fulfil this challenging task and advance the implementation of the SDGs, it is necessary to inform teachers and academic staff about the contents of the SDGs and to raise awareness of their relevance. Furthermore, in the medium term, awareness should be established that the SDGs are important both for teaching activities as well as for professional development. A stakeholder engagement workshop gives the starting signal for this⁷. The template for this came from SDSN Australia/Pacific and proved to be very helpful for the development of the planned workshop at the FHWien der WKW.

⁵ Adams Becker, S., Cummins, M., Davis, A., Freeman, A., Hall Giesinger, C. and Ananthanarayanan, V. (2017). *NMC Horizon Report: 2017 Higher Education Edition*: German edition (translation: Helga Bechmann, Multimedia Kontor Hamburg). Austin, Texas: The New Media Consortium.

⁶ Sachs, J.D. (2015). Achieving the sustainable development goals. *Journal of International Business Ethics*, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 53–62 (p.61).

⁷ SDSN Australia/Pacific (2017): *Getting started with the SDGs in universities: A guide for universities, higher education institutions, and the academic sector*. Australia, New Zealand and Pacific Edition, (p.37). Sustainable Development Solutions Network – Australia/Pacific, Melbourne. Source: https://ap-unsdsn.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/University-SDG-Guide_web.pdf.

3 TEACHING CONCEPT

The teaching concept of this workshop is based on the understanding that (successful) learning in a transformation process combines three levels: Level I, Level WE and a level called ALL OF US. Carlo Giardinetti, a member of the Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative GRLI, takes this pedagogy for sustainability and responsibility further in his blog post⁸. For the present workshop, the levels applied were slightly adapted or combined differently than suggested by the author of the blog. The basic questions, however, have been taken over directly:

- On **Level I** we ask ourselves: To what extent is the topic relevant to me? What reservations do I have about the topic? What is my emotional connection to it? Do I have personal experiences?
- At the **WE level**, questions such as: Who are the main actors in the issue? What is their perspective? What do they know and how do they use their knowledge? Are there competing or collaborating views or both? How do I work with them so that in the end it's not 'them' but only 'us'?
- The **ALL OF US level** opens up questions such as: What is the systemic benefit and impact of the topic? Which scenarios arise from that topic? How does the topic or the problem influence our world in some or all four dimensions – the planet, society, economy and governance?

According to Giardinetti, people who cover all three levels in their discussion of a topic or problem develop a deeper understanding of the topic. The understanding ranges from the systemic perspective (ALL OF US) to that of personal meaning (I). It develops through the active confrontation with the given topic in a community context (WE) relevant for these people.

The proposed teaching concept offers links to the concept of theme-centred interaction according to Ruth Cohn⁹, the approach of problem-oriented learning¹⁰ or also to the perspectives of transformative learning¹¹ from adult education.

⁸ Giardinetti, C. (2017). *Three-dimensional learning – I, WE and ALL OF US, a pedagogy for sustainability and responsibility*. Source: <https://responsibility.global/three-dimensional-learning-i-we-and-all-of-us-a-pedagogy-for-sustainability-and-responsibility-379c44d66218>

⁹ Cohn, R. (1975). *Von der Psychoanalyse zur Themenzentrierten Interaktion*. Von der Behandlung einzelner zu einer Pädagogik für alle. Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta.

¹⁰ Becker, F. G., Friske, V., Meurer, C., Ostrowski, Y., Piezonka, S., & Werning, E. (2010). Einsatz des Problemorientierten Lernens in der betriebswirtschaftlichen Hochschullehre. *WiSt-Wirtschaftswissenschaftliches Studium*, 39(8), 366-371.

¹¹ Singer-Brodowski, M. (2016). Transformative Bildung durch transformatives Lernen. Zur Notwendigkeit der erziehungswissenschaftlichen Fundierung einer neuen Idee. *Zeitschrift für internationale Bildungsforschung und Entwicklungspädagogik*, 39(1), 13-17.

4 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Based on the I – WE – ALL OF US approach and a very heterogeneous group of participants, the following learning objectives can be formulated for the stakeholder engagement workshop:

The participants

1. Know the origins and content of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and can establish a link to their area of expertise.
2. Have developed an individual answer to the question: which SDGs are relevant for my teaching/research?
3. Recognise the opportunities and challenges of a personal confrontation with the SDGs and can take a position on them.
4. Identify their preferred method(s) for the practical implementation of SDGs in their teaching activities.
5. Outline an execution strategy for the implementation of the SDGs in their teaching or research activities.
6. Critically and reasonably assess the strategies of their workshop colleagues and receive initial feedback on their implementation strategy.
7. Define concrete further action measures in the form of an *Action Plan for the Future*.

5 DIDACTIC IMPLEMENTATION

The workshop aims to

- inform about the content of the SDGs and to raise awareness for its relevance
- enable participants to start implementing the SDGs both in their teaching and research activities and in their everyday academic life.

The workshop lasts one day and is divided into three phases (see Fig. 2):

- Information** (inform) contains the greeting, presentation of the daily routine as well as a short expectation query. Then an introduction to the SDGs follows. In this phase, the topic – the SDGs – will be presented, and their relevance for **ALL OF US** can be demonstrated.
- Analysis** (analyse) is the phase at which level *I* is the focal point. The participants reflect for themselves and afterwards in an exchange with the other participants on the importance of the SDGs in university teaching and on the resources they can draw on.
- Development** of personal action strategies (create) is the third phase and uses the perspective **WE**. What ideas are there, how could my/our contribution look like? How do we convince others to join us? Which steps do I/we plan? This phase concludes with a joint action plan. The workshop ends with a feedback round.

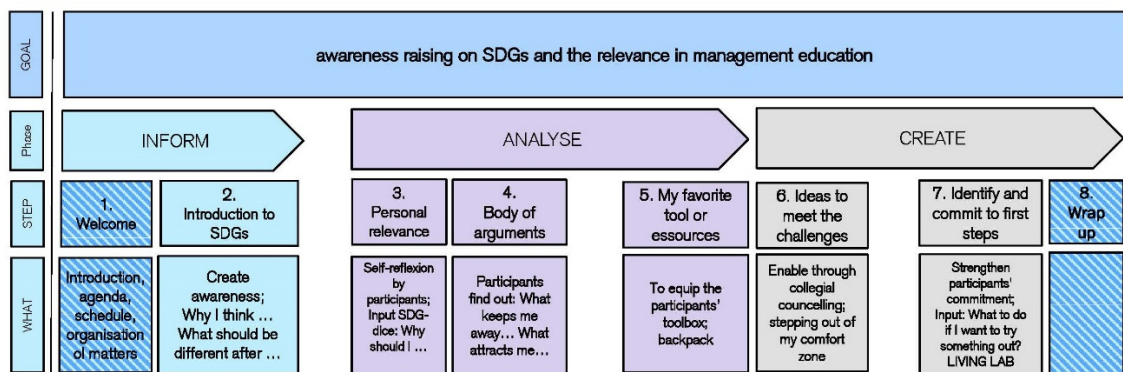


FIGURE 2: BUILDING THE STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT WORKSHOP TO RAISE AWARENESS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF SDGS IN UNIVERSITY TEACHING

6 WORKSHOP PROCEDURE, CONTENT AND METHODS

Step	Content	Methodology/Media	Duration
1	<p>WELCOME, GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER, OVERVIEW</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome and introduction of the trainers (TR), introduction of the participants (TN) FHWien WKW: Why this workshop? Objectives and expectations of the participants Organisational aspects and course of the workshop 	<p>speech, dialogue</p> <p>short PPT presentation</p> <p>speech, dialogue</p>	15 mins
2	<p>INTRODUCTION TO THE SDGs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the SDGs? Global importance and relation to Austria, content presentation of the 17 goals and sub-goals, fields of action for business and management training What does it take to implement the SDGs? For this reason, the necessary competencies of the students and teachers will be determined 	<p>talking about, PPT</p> <p>discussion in small groups</p>	75 mins
	Coffee break		15 mins
3	<p>PERSONAL RELEVANCE: GETTING TO KNOW THE GAME</p> <p>The implementation of the SDGs means change – a game whose rules you don't know, but have to know if you want to play. Mission: thinking through the different phases of change. Chance (Opportunities), Hindernisse (Obstacles), Angst (Fear), Notwendigkeit (Necessity), Gewinn (Profit), Einsatz (Commitment) → Acronym CHANGE*. Dice as an analogy to the game.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each letter of CHANGE stands for a facet and is accompanied by a corresponding question. Participants answer these questions for themselves. Afterwards, participants split into small groups for a discussion, recording commonalities and differences. Short presentation in the plenum <p>* see formulated questions and copy template in chapter 7</p>	<p>tutorial for the exercise</p> <p>individual work on a piece of paper (A4)</p> <p>group work with a flipchart; lecturing</p>	60 mins
4	BODY OF ARGUMENTS was omitted due to time restriction reasons		x
5	<p>MY FAVOURITE METHOD, MY RESOURCES</p> <p>The use of one's resources is a source of encouragement for preparing oneself for upcoming challenges or coping with them. In this step, it is a matter of opening up the already existing resources and also of recording which ones are needed to be able to meet the upcoming change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PP consider using a backpacker analogy: What's in our backpack and what else do we have to add? Who has what resources at their disposal? Short presentation in the plenum 	<p>tutorial for the exercise</p> <p>brainstorming in group work, flipchart; lecturing</p>	15 mins
	Lunch break		60 mins
6	<p>DEVELOPMENT: IDEAS EXPAND THE COMFORT ZONE</p> <p>Most people feel comfortable and secure in the comfort zone. However, there is no development. Change requires development/learning and means leaving the comfort zone. There are two ways to get into the growth zone: in small steps or by</p>	tutorial of the exercise	60 mins

	<p>jumping ('wow'). Anyone who dares too much or takes on too much will end up in the panic zone*.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PP each one of us thinks for himself/herself: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – What would be mini-steps into the growth zone? – What ideas do I have with a 'wow factor' jump? – What measures do I take if there are dangers in the growth zone (so that I don't slide into the panic zone and give up)? • PP present a concrete proposal/idea to each other in small groups, either as a mini-step or as a jump and possible measures to reduce the risk. Method: one participant introduces an idea, the other participants ask questions, give critical, well-meaning feedback (collegial counselling) • Short exchange in the plenum <p>* see a visualisation of the 3 zones and a template for individual work in chapter 7</p>	<p>individual work, A4-paper, slide with the questions</p> <p>group work, dialogue</p> <p>speech</p>	
	Coffee break		15 mins
7	<p>ACTION PLAN – NEXT STEPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The participants write a handwritten letter to themselves. In this letter, they record what their key takeaways from the workshop are and what they want to implement. The letter is addressed. FHWien sends the letter at the end of a specified period. On the one hand, this letter serves as an individual reflection of the event. On the other hand, it can be seen as a 'contract with oneself' and creates a commitment to the specified goals that are to be implemented. • In the plenum, the participants will take concrete steps together according to the motto 'We think big (SDGs!), act small and start now' – for themselves, their team, their department; the FHWien becomes a LIVING LAB. 	<p>individual work, letter and envelope</p> <p>acclamation method, TR writes on a flipchart</p>	45 mins
8	<p>EVALUATION, THANK YOU AND FAREWELL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A short round of feedback on the initial expectations of the workshop • Participants fill out a written questionnaire* to evaluate the workshop • Each participant receives an SDGs pin to plug in (possibly confirmation of participation) • Farewell and outlook by FHWien <p>* see a template for feedback in chapter 7</p>	<p>wrap up-method, plenum</p> <p>individual work</p> <p>speech</p>	30 mins

7 LITERATURE – DOCUMENTS

Step 2: INTRODUCTION TO THE SDGS

A PPT slide set was compiled and presented in the country context of Austria. The information required for this comes from the following sources:

2030 Agenda Bundeskanzleramt <https://www.bka.gv.at/nachhaltige-entwicklung-agenda-2030>

SDG Indikatoren Liste <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/>

SDG Ranking Österreich <https://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de>

All other information:

- <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>
- <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/>
- <http://www.globalgoals.org/de/#the-goals>
- <http://17goals.org/understanding-sdg-implementation/>

Step 3: PERSONAL RELEVANCE: GETTING TO KNOW THE GAME

The questions about the CHANGE dice are slightly adapted and come from the book *Micro-Inputs Veränderungscoaching*¹², as does the copy template for the visualisation of the CHANGE dice.

C=Chance (Opportunity): What is my best option if I have successfully incorporated the SDGs into my lessons?

H=Hindernisse (Obstacles): What major external, systemic obstacles do I expect to encounter?

A=Angst (Fear): What concerns do I have about this challenge?

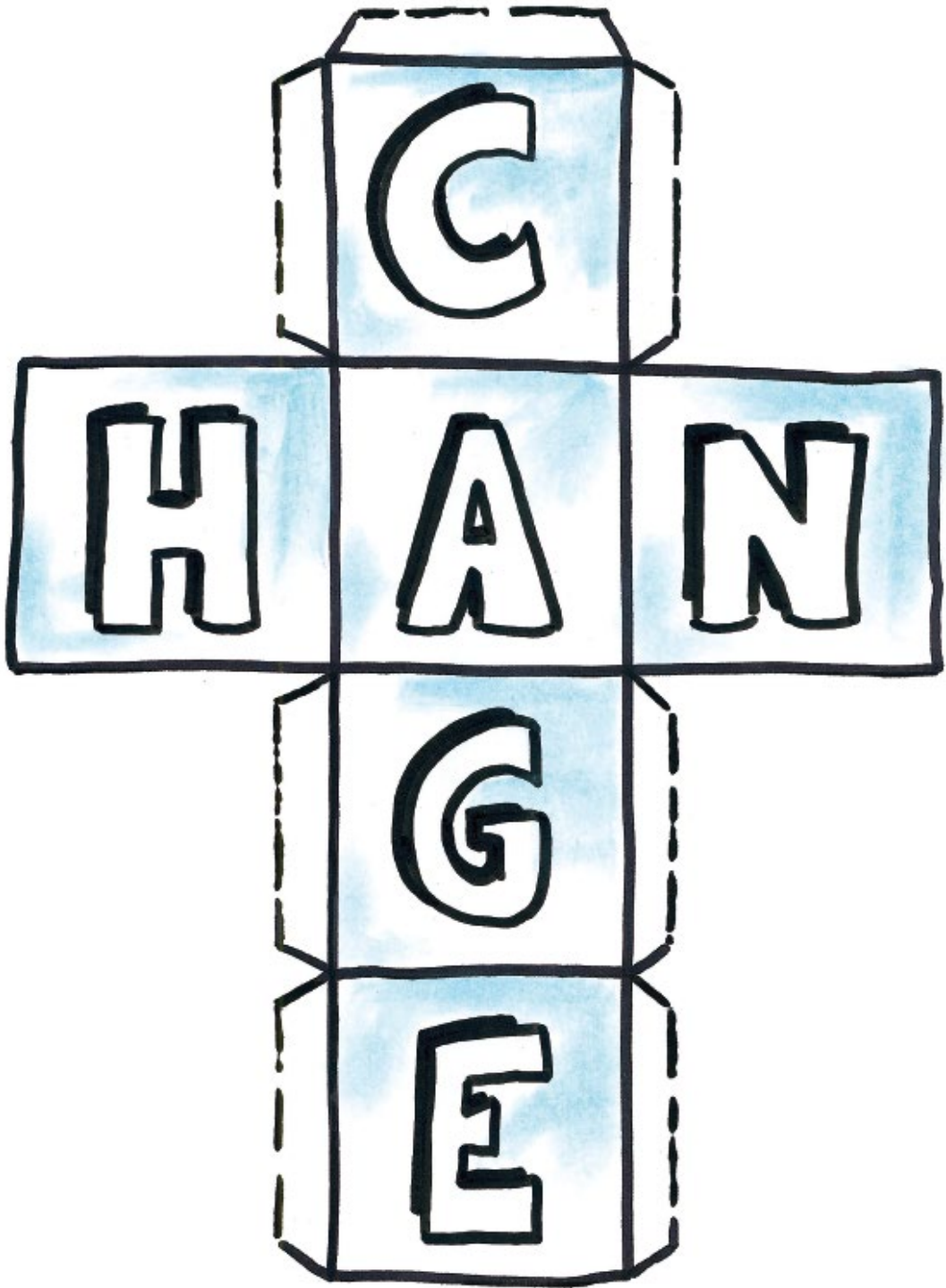
N=Notwendigkeit (Necessity): Which steps are probably necessary for me to get through well?

G=Gewinn (Profit): What have I personally gained for myself when I have mastered the challenge?

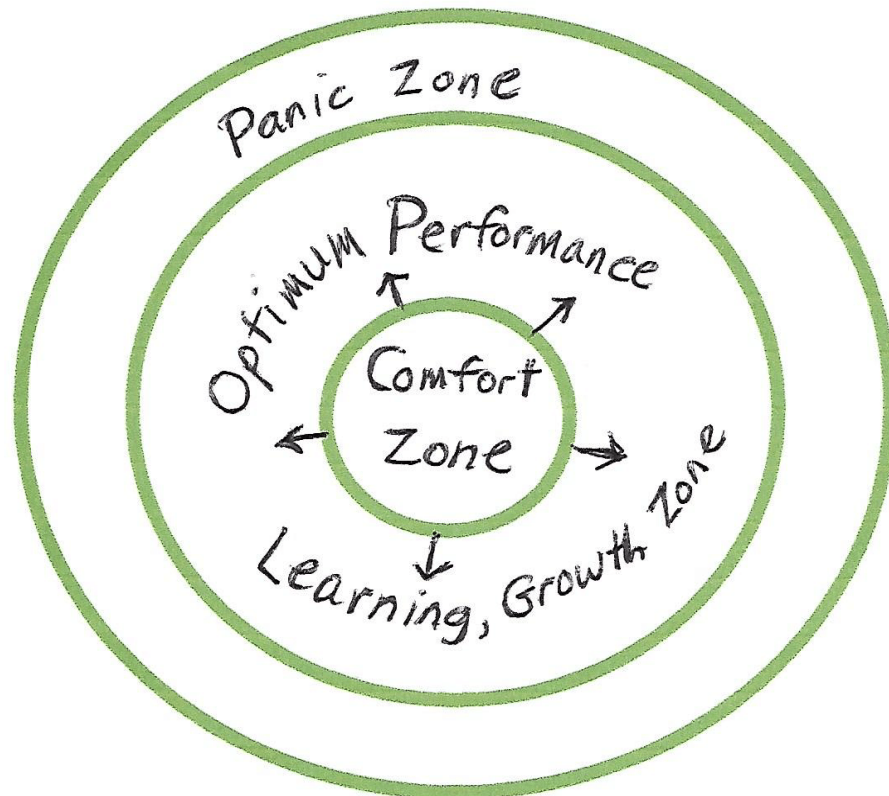
E=Einsatz (Commitment): What is probably the greatest commitment that I have to make for the project to succeed?

¹² Nohl, M. & Egger, A. (2016). *Micro-Inputs Veränderungscoaching*. Bonn: managerSeminare VerlagsGmbH.

Step 3: Template copy CHANGE – view CHANGE from all sides



Step 6: DEVELOPMENT: IDEAS EXPAND THE COMFORT ZONE



The graphic for the PPT slide was taken from https://wiseinsights.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/cropped-header-no-border-01_low-res.jpg.

The exercise instructions are taken from the book *Micro-Inputs Veränderungscoaching*, and adapted into a table or character template for the flipchart:

<i>Mini-steps through the safety zone into the growth zone</i>	<i>Ideas for steps to jump 'Wow!'</i>	<i>Measures in the event of danger in the growth zone</i>
I'm thinking about X [a little concrete project].	I surprise [myself, others] with an idea that has the 'wow factor'...	Name a danger and then formulate solution ideas
'I'll ask around ...' 'I'm sketching ...'	'I'm going to take care of ...' 'I dare ...'	'The module conversion is proving to be time-consuming and labour-intensive. I will convert a few lessons, not the whole class.'

Step 8: Evaluation of the workshop

Feedback Sheet Faculty Development workshop on the Implementation of SDGs in teaching (FHWien, 13.4.2018)

What did I like about the workshop?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What should be improved?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What are the key points I take with me?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What else would I like to say?

-
-
-

I am particularly interested in the following topics:

-
-
-

Signature:

8 EXPERIENCES GAINED FROM THE FIRST IMPLEMENTATION

I appreciated:

- The gratifying willingness of participants to deal with the SDGs either mentally or in concrete tasks.
- The participation in the evening event before the event turned out to be (unexpected) added value for some participants as well as for me.
- It was good to let the participants work in groups for exchanging knowledge between them.
- 'Spontaneous participants' and 'detailed reflection/how to continue' rounded the workshop off. The time management/workshop structure should be organised better.

I learned the following lessons:

Knowledge of the SDGs cannot be taken for granted by the participants; this was also confirmed on Friday. The range of (initial) knowledge about the SDGs is also wide: from 'I don't know anything about it' to 'I don't know what it comprises' to 'concrete knowledge about individual goals available'.

Ergo: compact, well-prepared information of SDGs is/was an important component.

'We are now a PRME member' – information was/is necessary for this as well. Showing the connection between the different initiatives at the university (Principles RME (role/task signatories, champions), UN Global Compact, 2030 Agenda/SDGs and possibly others) facilitates orientation and is a part of the 'Why?'

Ergo: provide context knowledge; possibly a short pre-reading/quiz to prepare the participants

The question why we do that must also be available for the university (not only for companies) and be explained or justified to the participants. It cannot be assumed that the 'why' is clear to all the participants.

Ergo: in/before the workshop ('purpose, licence to operate, the tone from the top' etc.). What are the communication materials/messages?

The GRLI approach 'I – WE – ALL OF US' works, offers the participants identification options.

Ergo: could the workshop structure be more strongly integrated, connected with the commitment (the 'why') of the university or be put into context?

The private 'I' (e.g. environmental awareness) does not leave the participants/university members in front of the university of applied sciences (FH) entrance door and is/will be connected with the 'FH-I' / in 'my role as ... at the FH'. That was demonstrated by the committed discussion and initiative on how to deal with 'Nespresso capsule recycling' within the university. Finding a (concrete) solution to the recycling issue (or a 'burning problem') can be:

- a 'quick win' (little effort, great impact)
- written/counted as a personal and FH success story
- a low-threshold offer for joint commitment: everyone can join in/contribute!
- generating imitation projects (or a pioneer for larger projects such as the idea of the FH WKW's ecological footprint).

Ergo: possibly a more accentuated offer in the workshop: What are you dying to do, what can/do you want to do right now?

What has the day brought us, specifically with regard to the integration of SDGs at our university?

The realisation that

- the introduction/integration of SDGs at the university is a complex, multilayered undertaking,
- the 'multi-stakeholder dialogue' is likely to be a success factor that must be conducted transparently at all levels,
- the ambassadors have to be well equipped (content and tools from the workshop, but also with optimism, motivation),
- the ambassadors (mutual and managerial) need/receive support,
- to deal with the SDGs can unleash/release enormous creative potential,
- the university/institute management must consider in advance what freedom they can/will allow the participants and their ideas, or how they want to deal with their ideas (create transformative ideas/demand 'fluidity' in organisations, 'blur' boundaries, etc.)