

MODULE 3 • TRAINER PRESENTATION

Adaptability

Handle new rules, new words and sudden changes at work, keep who you are, and know the fair conditions you can expect.

6 hours

3 sections

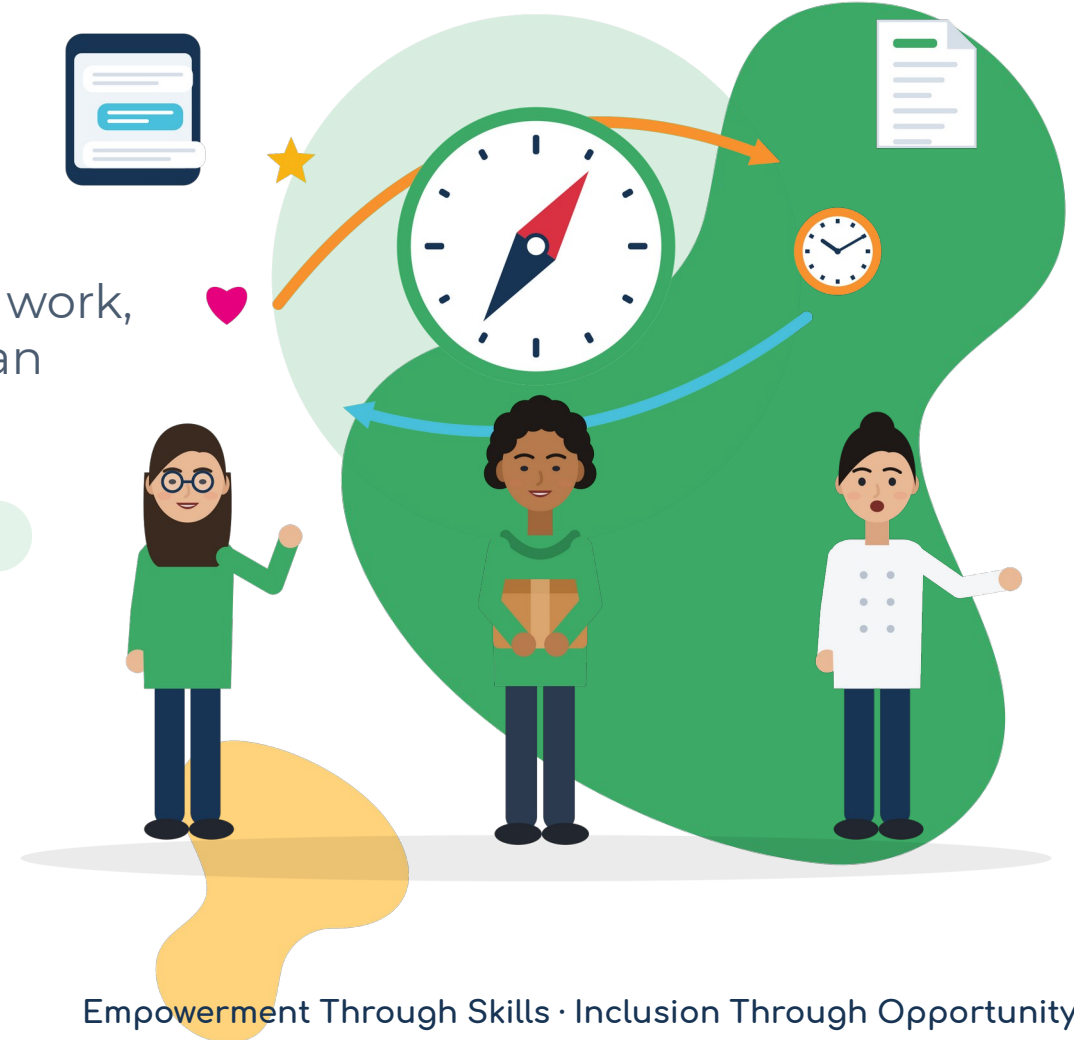
Ages 18-30

B1-B2 English

SMILE

Support Young Migrants Integration in the Labour market
in Europe

Erasmus+ KA220-YOU · 2024-1-TR01-KA220-YOU-000256357



Empowerment Through Skills · Inclusion Through Opportunity



HOW WE WORK TOGETHER

Our agreement for this module



Any English is good English

We listen to ideas, not grammar. Nobody corrects your language here. Mix words from other languages if it helps.



Your story belongs to you

You never have to share your migration story. Our examples use invented characters.



Listen to understand

One voice at a time. Every question is a good question.



“Pass” is always OK

You can skip any activity or question. Take a break when you need one.

MODULE MAP

Three sections, from understanding to action

01

Section 1: Understanding Adaptability

What adapting is and is not, a learnable skill, flexibility, openness and resilience, common misconceptions.

≈ 80 min

02

Section 2: Adaptation in the Reality of Young Migrants

Culture and norms, language, work culture, stress and uncertainty, rights and fair working conditions.

≈ 100 min

03

Section 3: Practical Strategies and Good Practices

Asking, language repair, change, feedback, networks, well-being. Case study, role-play and reflection.

≈ 150 min

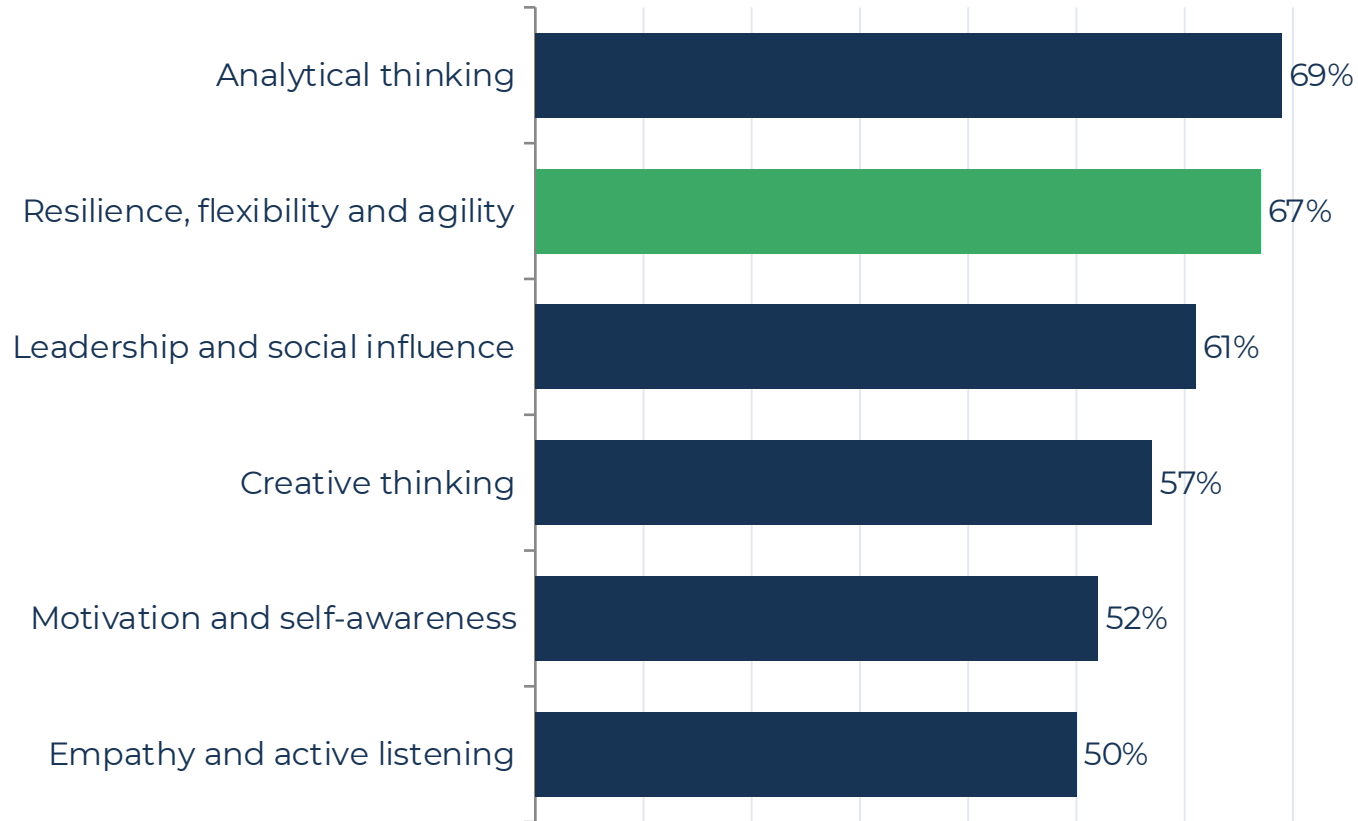
LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this module, you will be able to

- 1 Explain the concept of adaptability and its importance in the employment/workplace context.
- 2 Identify the key skills and attitudes related to adaptability in the context of migration.
- 3 Recognise the common challenges (language, culture, etc.) that young migrants face in work environments.
- 4 Apply practical strategies to manage change, uncertainty and feedback in the workplace.
- 5 Demonstrate adaptability skills (in practice) through role-play and real-life scenarios.
- 6 Reflect on your own adaptability strengths and areas for development in relation to employment (carry out a self-assessment).

WHY THIS MATTERS

Employers need people who can adapt



- **67%** of employers call “resilience, flexibility and agility” a core skill. Only analytical thinking scores higher (69%).
- **Net +66:** one of the five fastest-rising skills to 2030.
- **90 studies:** career adaptability goes with employability, job satisfaction, income and less job stress.

Source: World Economic Forum (2025), Future of Jobs Report 2025, Fig. 3.3 and 3.4, pp. 34-36 · Rudolph, Lavigne & Zacher (2017), meta-analysis of 90 studies

WHY THIS MATTERS

A new country brings many changes at once

2×

Non-EU employees are twice as likely to have a temporary contract as nationals (22.1% vs 10.7%).

+10 points

If refugees spoke the host language as well as natives, their employment rate would be about 10 percentage points higher.

20 years

Refugees in the EU needed up to 20 years to reach the employment rate of people born in the country. A slow start is normal, not a personal failure.

Short contracts, a new language and a slow start are normal. Adapting helps, and so do support and fair rules.

Source: Eurostat Ifsa_etpgan, 2025 · European Commission & OECD, Working Paper 1/2016, 2014 data · European Commission & OECD, 2016, 2014 data

01

SECTION 1 · ≈ 80 min

Understanding Adaptability

Adapting is a skill you can learn, and it never means giving up who you are.

Definition

A learnable skill

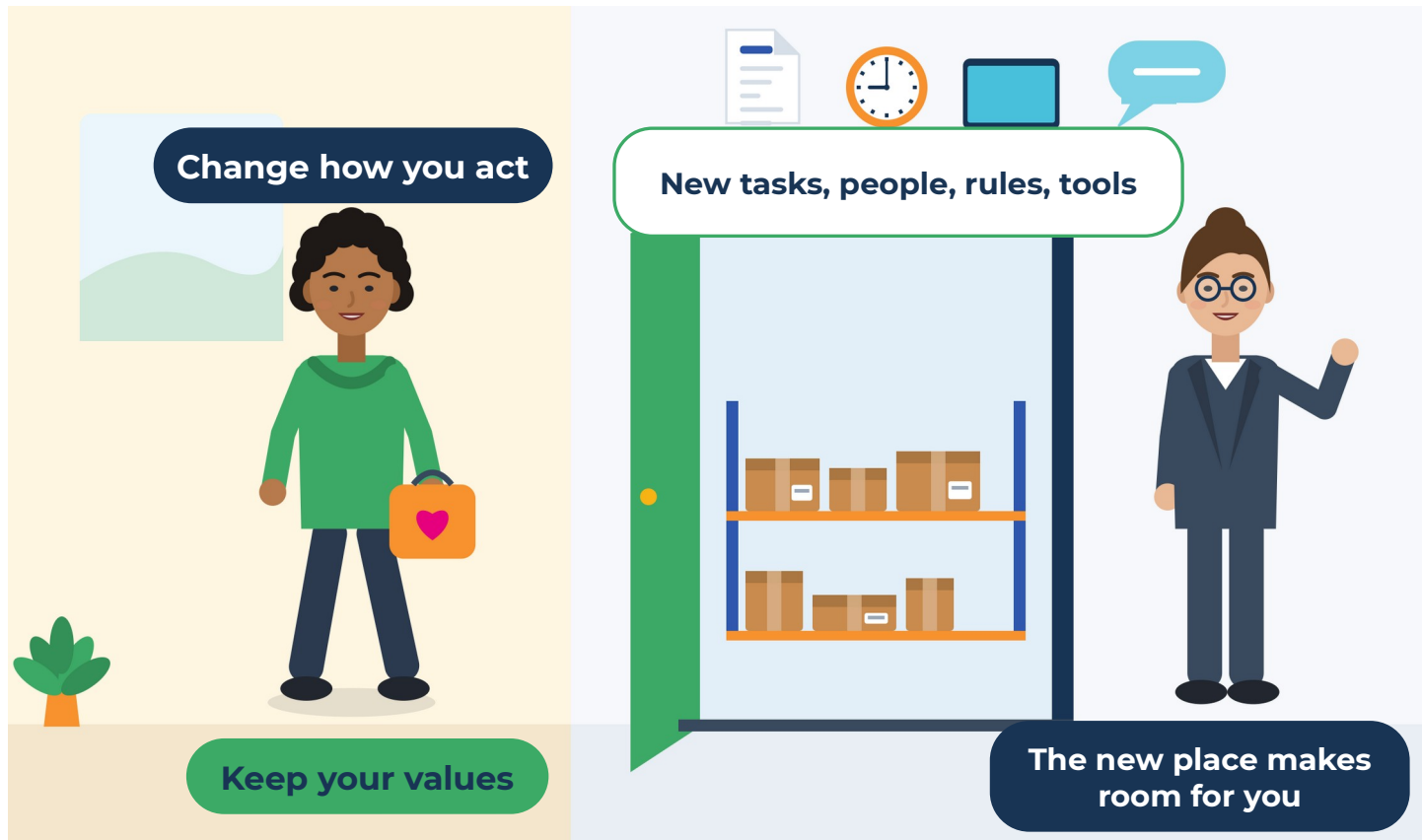
Skills and attitudes

Misconceptions



DEFINITION OF ADAPTABILITY

What is adaptation, and what is it not?



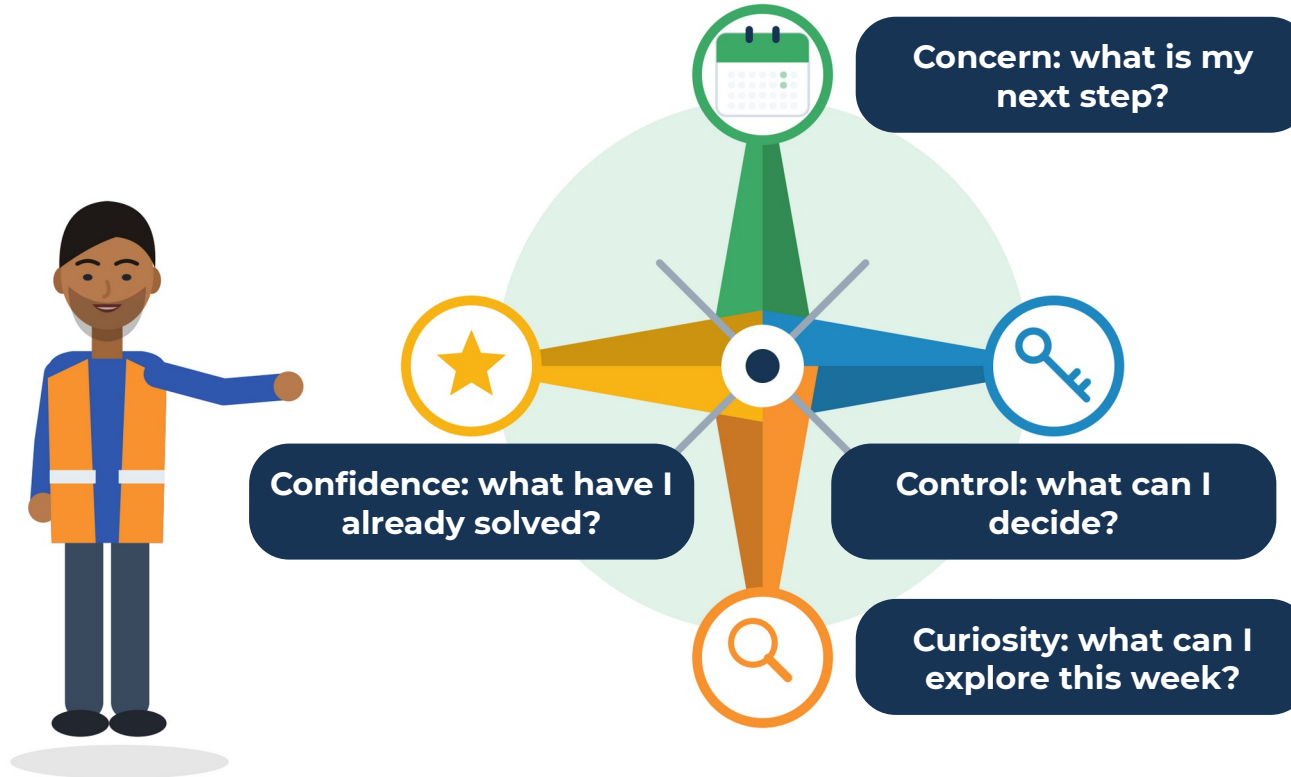
In short

- **Adapting** means changing how you think, feel or act when things change.
- **At work:** new tasks, people, rules and tools, and getting back on track after a mistake.
- **Principled and two-way:** you choose how and keep your values; the new place makes room for you.
- **Adapting is NOT** giving up who you are, accepting unfair, unsafe or unpaid work, doing everything alone, or staying silent.

Source: Council of Europe (2018), RFCD Vol. 1, pp. 44-50 · ESCO transversal skill “adapt to change” · European Commission (2020), Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion, COM(2020) 758

ADAPTABILITY AS A LEARNABLE SKILL

Career adaptability: four Cs you can build



Example: Yusuf, 20, warehouse

- **Concern:** a 12-month plan: B1, then a forklift licence.
- **Control:** he books the language exam himself.
- **Curiosity:** he asks two colleagues how they got their jobs.
- **Confidence:** he lists three problems he already solved.
- **Context counts:** it can block or boost your 4 Cs.

Source: Savickas & Porfeli (2012), Career Adapt-Abilities Scale, 13 countries · Rudolph, Lavigne & Zacher (2017), 90 studies · Wehrle, Kira & Klehe (2019)

ADAPTABILITY AS A LEARNABLE SKILL

“Not yet”: a helpful idea, not a magic switch

- **The idea:** abilities can grow with effort, good strategies and help from others.
- **Say “not yet”:** “I don't speak work-German yet. This month I will learn 20 words used on my line.”
- **Honest evidence:** short mindset courses had very small effects on school grades ($d = 0.08$; after bias correction $d = 0.05$, not significant).
- **What makes the difference:** practice, feedback, support from peers and a fair chance to learn.



You can grow it

The resources and skills behind resilience “can be cultivated and practiced” (American Psychological Association).

Source: Dweck (2006) · Sisk et al. (2018), 43 studies · Macnamara & Burgoyne (2023), 63 studies · Yeager et al. (2019) · APA (n.d.), Resilience

SKILLS AND ATTITUDES RELATED TO ADAPTABILITY

Flexibility, openness and resilience

Skill or attitude	What it means	In official words	At work, for example
Flexibility	Changing your plan or way of working when things change.	LifeComp: “the ability to manage transitions and uncertainty, and to face challenges”	A new shift plan: you ask what changes, then plan your week again.
Openness	Being curious about new ways, and OK with not knowing everything yet.	RFCDC: “willingness to tolerate uncertainty and to deal with it constructively”	“Can you show me how you do it here?”
Resilience	Getting back on your feet after a hard time, with help from other people.	APA: adapting well to difficult experiences; it depends on social resources and “can be cultivated and practiced”	After a bad first week, you talk to a mentor and try again.

All three can be trained. None of them means “accept everything”.

Source: Sala et al. (2020), LifeComp, P2 Flexibility · Council of Europe (2018), RFCDC, tolerance of ambiguity · APA (n.d.), Resilience

RESILIENCE: YOU DO NOT HAVE TO BE TOUGH ALONE

Pack your resilience backpack



- **Hope:** a goal and more than one way to reach it.
- **Efficacy:** I can do this task, step by step.
- **Resilience:** when I fall, I can get up again, maybe slowly.
- **Optimism:** good things can happen, and I work for them.
- **My people, the outside pocket:** a cousin who explains payslips, a mentor, a youth worker.

Source: Luthans, Avolio, Avey & Norman (2007), psychological capital · Avey et al. (2011), 51 samples, N = 12,567 · APA (n.d.), Resilience

MYTH OR FACT?

Common misconceptions about adaptability

✗ **“Adapting means becoming like them and forgetting my culture.”**

✓ Keeping both cultures goes with the best adjustment: 83 studies with 23,197 people.

✗ **“A good newcomer accepts everything without questions.”**

✓ In the EU: key terms in writing by day 7, probation max. 6 months, changes in writing. Adapting is not submitting.

✗ **“Some people are just born adaptable.”**

✓ The resources behind resilience “can be cultivated and practiced” (APA). Practice and support matter more than mindset alone.

✗ **“If I adapt enough, success is guaranteed.”**

✓ Structures matter too. A meta-analysis of 97 field experiments found hiring discrimination in all 9 countries studied.

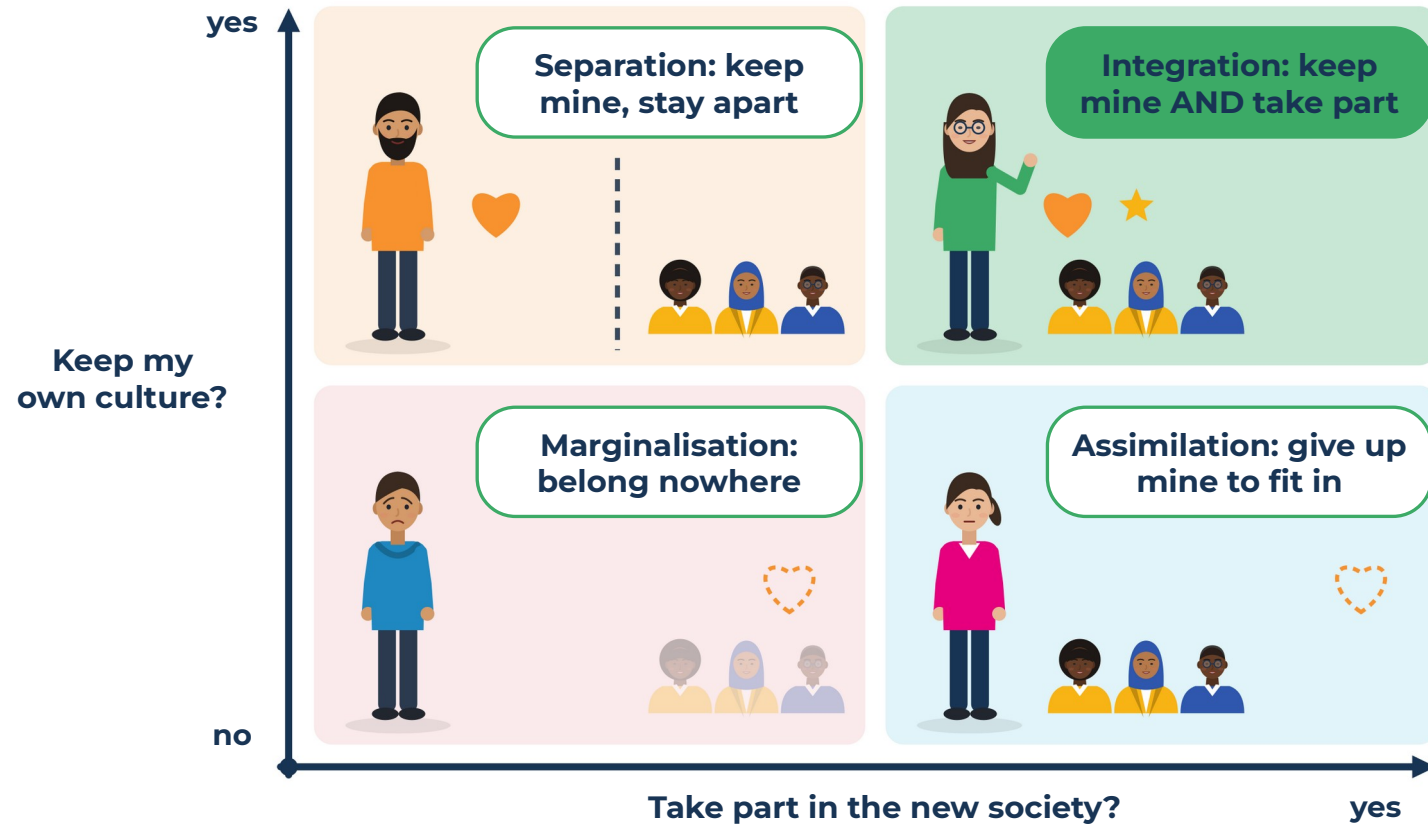
✗ **“Feeling stressed means I am weak or not adapting.”**

✓ Stress is a normal reaction to big change. WHO asks employers to act first on workload and schedules.

Source: Nguyen & Benet-Martínez (2013) · Directive (EU) 2019/1152, Art. 5, 6, 8 · APA (n.d.) · Quillian et al. (2019) · WHO (2022), Guidelines on mental health at work

BERRY'S ACCULTURATION STRATEGIES

Two questions, four ways to adapt



What research shows

- **Young people:** 5,366 immigrant youth in 13 countries. Integration had the best well-being and everyday adaptation. Belonging nowhere had the worst.
- **83 studies:** keeping both cultures is strongly linked to better adjustment.
- **But:** what you can choose also depends on how the new society responds.

Source: Berry (1997), *Applied Psychology* 46(1) · Berry, Phinney, Sam & Vedder (2006), 5,366 youth aged 13-18 · Nguyen & Benet-Martínez (2013), 23,197 people

ADAPTING IS NOT SUBMITTING

Principled, opportunistic or coerced?



Principled

You choose to adjust and keep your values. Example: you learn how clients here like to be greeted.



Opportunistic

You change only for an advantage, against your values. Example: you tell each person what they want to hear.



Coerced

Someone forces you. Example: you must sign a contract you cannot read, or give up prayer in your legal break. Get advice.

ILLUSTRATIVE SCENARIO

After-work drinks

**Zeynep, 20**

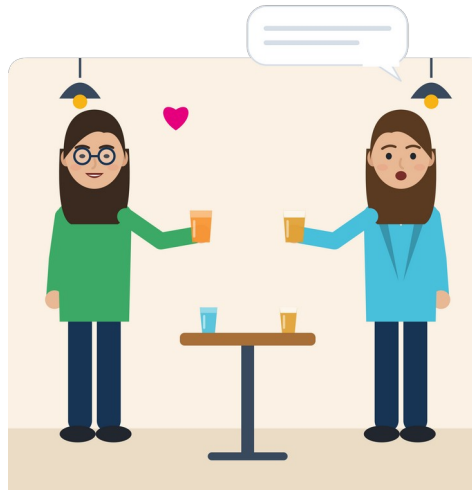
Intern in an office team in Utrecht, month 1

Internship

Netherlands

Belonging

Zeynep doesn't drink alcohol. On Friday the whole team goes to the pub after work and invites her. She likes the team, but she is afraid that saying no will make her an outsider. She also doesn't want to act against her values.



DISCUSS

1. What does Zeynep want to keep? What does she want to join?
2. Find three options that keep both.
3. Which friendly sentence could she say to the team?

Grounded in: keeping your own culture while taking part goes with the best adaptation (Berry et al., 2006); bridging ties were linked to jobs and income for migrants in the Netherlands (Lancee, 2010).

02

SECTION 2 · ≈ 100 min

Adaptation in the Reality of Young Migrants

Culture, language, work culture and stress: real challenges, and the fair conditions that make adaptation healthy.

Culture, language

Work culture

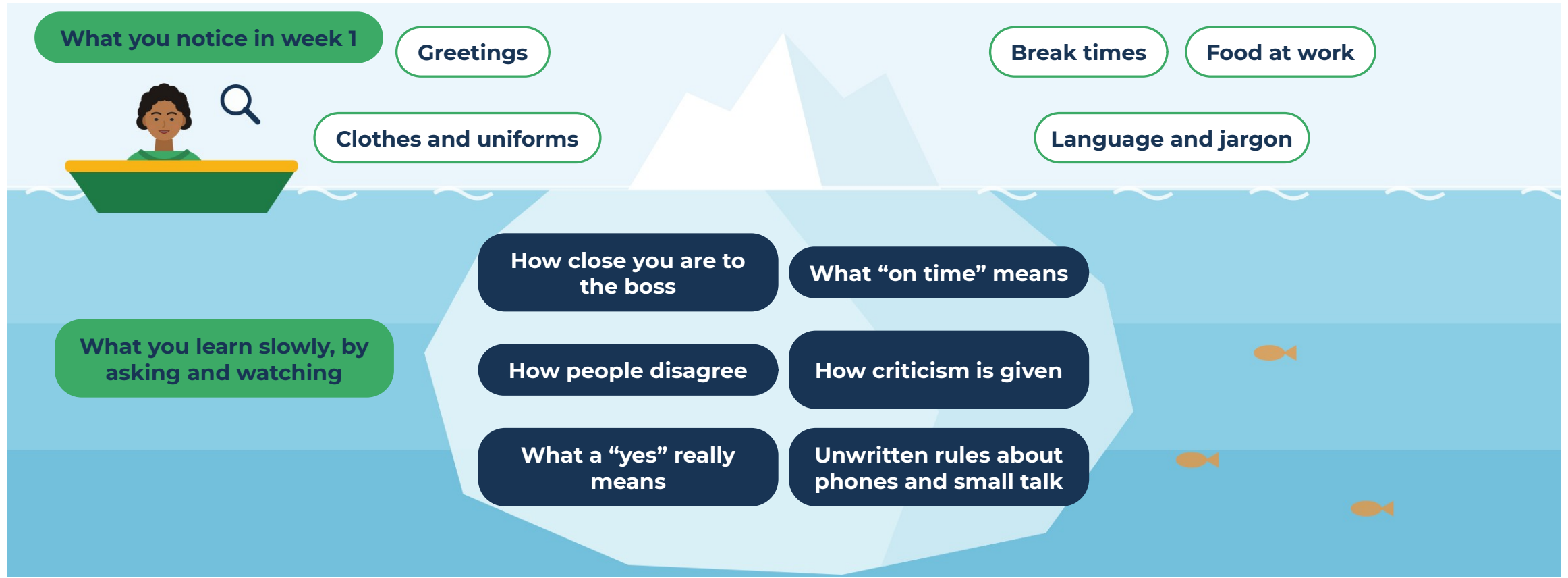
Stress

Rights and fair work



CULTURAL DIFFERENCES AND SOCIAL NORMS

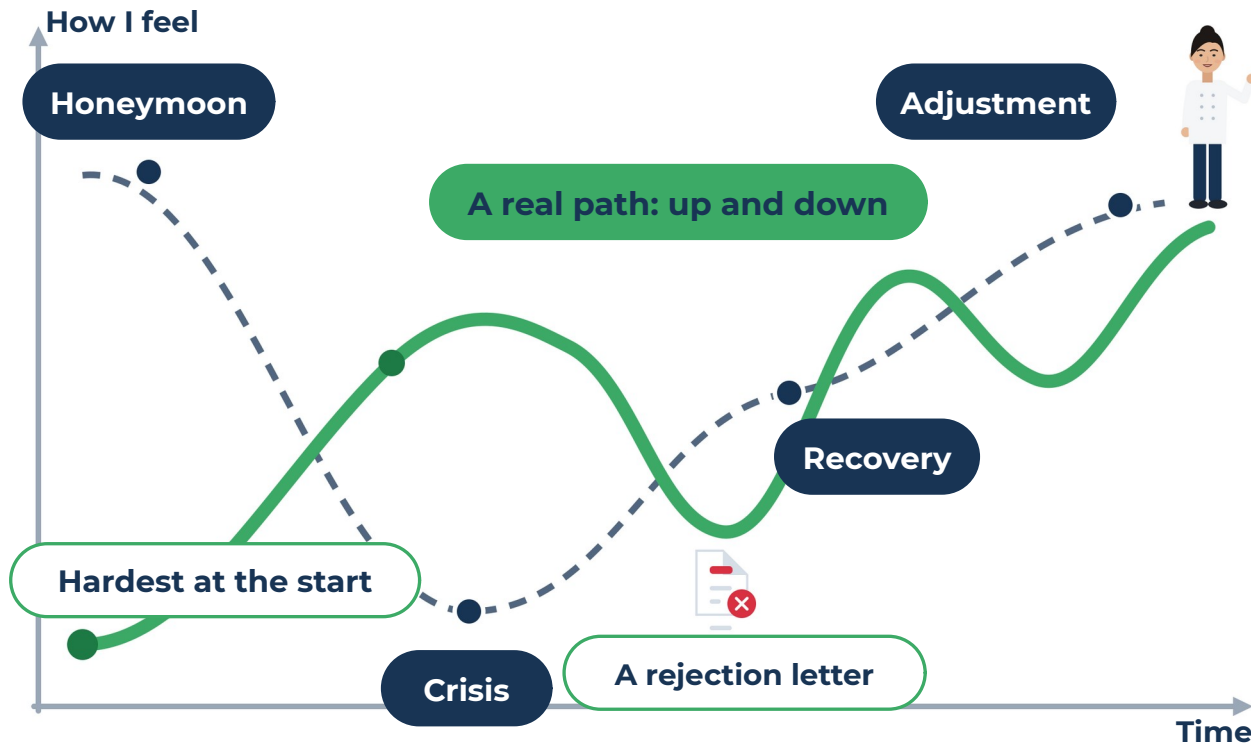
New place, new norms: most of them are hidden



Source: Hofstede (2015), dimension data, used only as a conversation starter: national averages, not descriptions of individuals or companies

CULTURE SHOCK: TEACH IT, THEN QUESTION IT

Culture shock has no fixed timetable



Your path is yours. Ask: what helped at the low points?

- **The classic story (U-curve):** honeymoon, crisis, recovery, adjustment.
- **Research:** students in New Zealand had the most problems at the start, easing after about 4 months. No honeymoon.
- **Reviews:** the curves “have not withstood critical empirical testing”.
- **Many people** go up and down many times, e.g. after a rejection letter.

Source: Oberg (1960) · La Brack (2010), NAFA, incl. Ward et al. (1998) as reported there · Ward, Bochner & Furnham (2001)

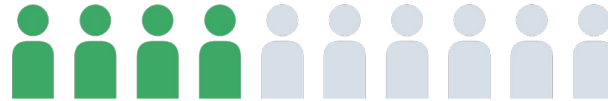
LANGUAGE BARRIERS AND COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES

Language: the most named obstacle, and it can be learned

1st

Lack of language skills was the most often named specific obstacle to a suitable job: 930,000 non-EU citizens in 2021.

43.8%



of foreign-born non-EU citizens speak the host language as a mother tongue or at a proficient level (2021).

+4 points

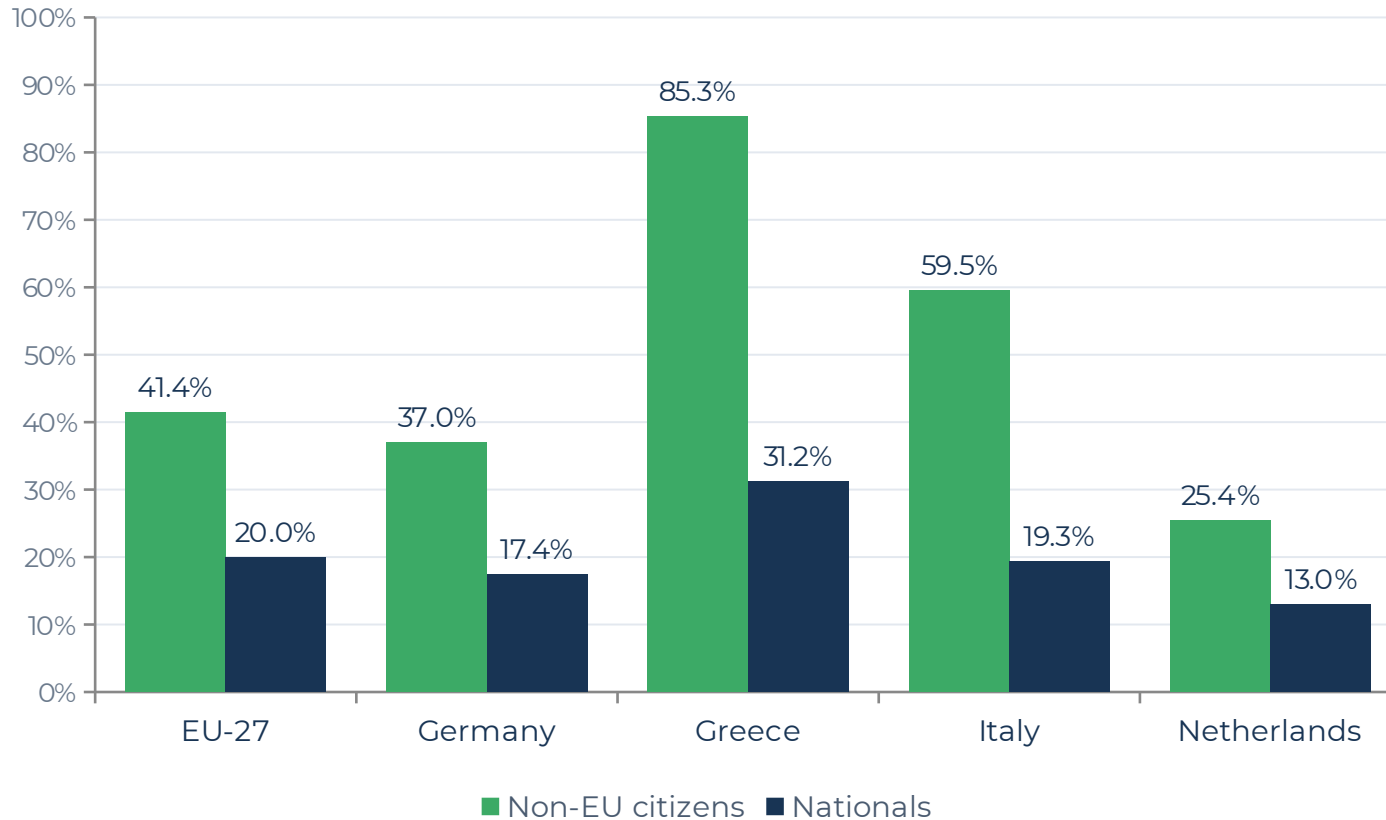
Denmark: more early language classes for refugees meant higher employment, still visible 18 years later.

Every worker should get the basic terms of the contract in a language they understand. That is the employer's job.

Source: Eurostat Ifso_21obst02 and Ifso_21lang03 (2021 LFS module) · Arendt, Bolvig, Foged, Hasager & Peri (2020), NBER WP 26834 · FRA (2019)

WORKPLACE EXPECTATIONS AND WORK CULTURE

Many start in jobs below their education level

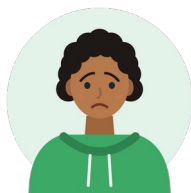


- **What it means:** an engineer packing parcels, a teacher working in a kitchen.
- **It does not measure your value.** Recognition, language and contacts take time.
- **Plan the bridge:** EU Skills Profile Tool, recognition centres (ENIC-NARIC), one contact in your field.

Source: Eurostat Ifsa_eoqgan, 2025: employed university graduates aged 20-64 working in low- or medium-skilled jobs (over-qualification rate)

ILLUSTRATIVE SCENARIO

The first week: nobody told me the rules

**Samir, 20**

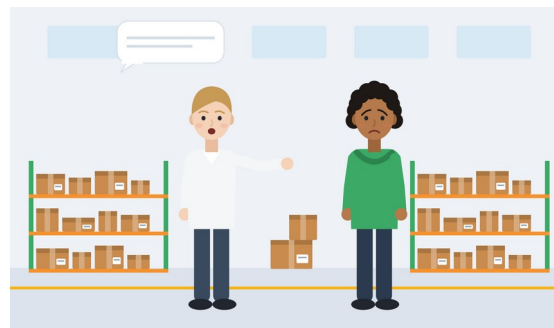
Order picker in a warehouse near Rotterdam, week 1

Logistics

Netherlands

Unwritten rules

On day 2 the team leader tells Samir off: he took his break “at the wrong time”. He went at 10:00 because he saw others go then. Nobody told him the break schedule, and he has nothing in writing yet. He feels embarrassed and decides to stay invisible.



DISCUSS

1. What does Samir need to know, and from whom?
2. Write 3 questions he can ask his team leader.
3. Which document should he receive this week?

Grounded in: newcomers adjust through role clarity, and asking speeds it up (Bauer et al., 2007, 70 samples); key job information, incl. working time, in writing by day 7 (Directive (EU) 2019/1152, Art. 5).

EMOTIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS

Stress and uncertainty are normal reactions to change

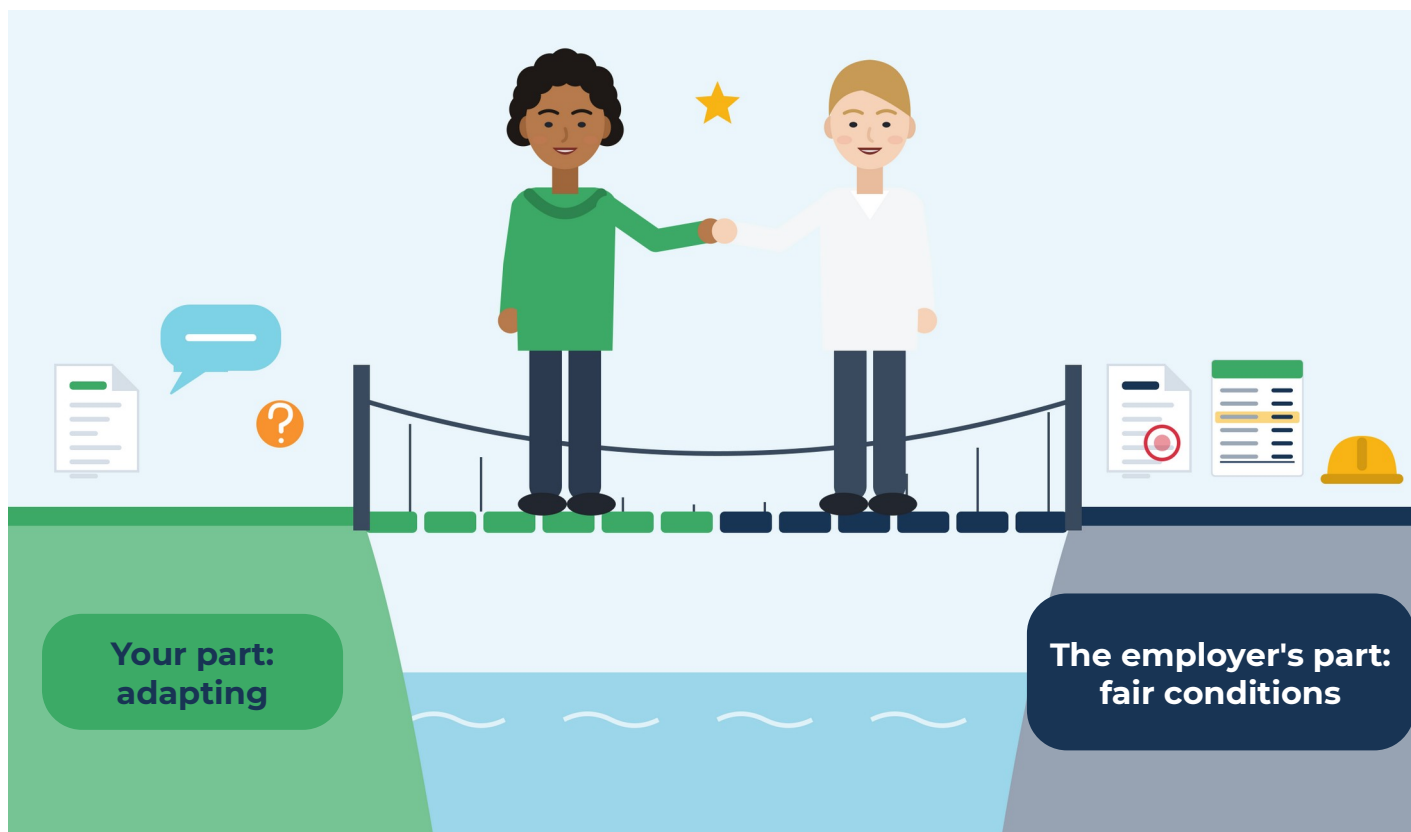


- **After arrival, new stress starts:** waiting for papers, long stays in shelters and insecure status can harm health and slow down work.
- **Waiting is heavy:** each extra year of waiting for an asylum decision cut later employment by 4-5 points (Switzerland).
- **A decision helps:** in Germany, a decision, whatever it was, sped up the first job and language course.
- **Homesickness is common** after a move: a real feeling, not a weakness.

Source: Bakker, Dagevos & Engbersen (2014) · Hainmueller, Hangartner & Lawrence (2016) · Kosyakova & Brenzel (2020) · Stroebe, Schut & Nauta (2015)

ADAPTABILITY, RIGHTS AND FAIR WORKING CONDITIONS

Healthy adaptation is a two-way deal



- **Your part:** learn routines, tools and words. Ask, also for feedback. Adjust greetings, small talk and pace. Record hours, pay and messages.
- **The employer's part:** key information in writing by day 7. Pay for all hours, also on probation. Changes in writing, with notice. Training, safety, respect, no discrimination.
- **Red flags are not “adapting”:** pressure to sign now, handing over your passport, paying for a job, unpaid hours. Stop and get advice.

Source: European Commission (2020), COM(2020) 758 · Directive (EU) 2019/1152, Art. 5, 6, 8, 13 · Faire Integration (2026), FAQ and warning signs

KNOW YOUR BASICS

Six things every worker in the EU should know



Job information in writing

Your employer must give you the main information about your job in writing within 7 days: place, pay, hours, notice.



Probation has a limit

A probation period can last at most 6 months in general.



Required training is free

Training the employer requires is free for you and counts as working time.



Working time has limits

On average no more than 48 hours a week, 11 hours rest every day, at least 4 weeks paid holiday a year.



Unpaid wages can be claimed

Even without papers, workers can claim unpaid wages, also through a union or another organisation.



Keep your own record

Write down your hours, breaks and payments every day. Photos of rotas and messages help too.

ILLUSTRATIVE SCENARIO

Three unpaid trial days

**Dawit, 23**

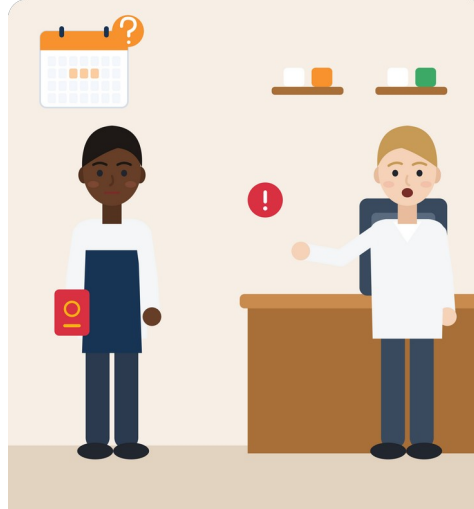
Looking for his first café job in Berlin

Hospitality

Germany

Rights

A café owner likes Dawit and says he can “show what he can do” with three unpaid trial days. He also asks for Dawit's passport “for the paperwork”. Dawit really wants this job. A friend says: “That's how it works here. Just adapt.”



DISCUSS

1. Which parts are normal adapting? Which are warning signs?
2. Write 2 polite questions Dawit can ask the owner.
3. Where can he get free advice in Germany?

Grounded in: Faire Integration lists handing over your passport as a warning sign and says “You will be paid normally during the probationary period”; FRA (2019) documents unpaid work in exchange for contracts.

WHERE TO GET HELP

Official help points in the SMILE countries

	Country	Jobs and training	Diplomas and recognition	Unfair or unsafe work
	Türkiye	İŞKUR (iskur.gov.tr), Public Education Centres	YÖK denklik, MEB e-Denklik	Ministry of Labour (csgb.gov.tr), YİMER 157 helpline
	Greece	DYPA (dypa.gov.gr)	DOATAP (doatap.gr)	Labour Inspectorate, phone 1555
	Italy	Centri per l'Impiego, SIISL	CIMEA (free for protection holders)	Ispettorato Nazionale del Lavoro
	Germany	Agentur für Arbeit, Jobcenter, Jugendmigrationsdienste (12-27)	Anerkennung in Deutschland, IQ Netzwerk	Faire Integration (free, multilingual)
	Netherlands	UWV, werk.nl, your municipality	IDW (idw.nl)	Nederlandse Arbeidsinspectie, Juridisch Loket

Save the number or website of one help point in your phone today.

Source: Official websites, checked 1 October 2026 (SMILE research note, labour market)

03

SECTION 3 · ≈ 150 min

Practical Strategies and Good Practices (Taking Action)

Tools you can use tomorrow: ask, repair, plan, use feedback, build bridges, look after yourself.



Ask and repair

Change and feedback

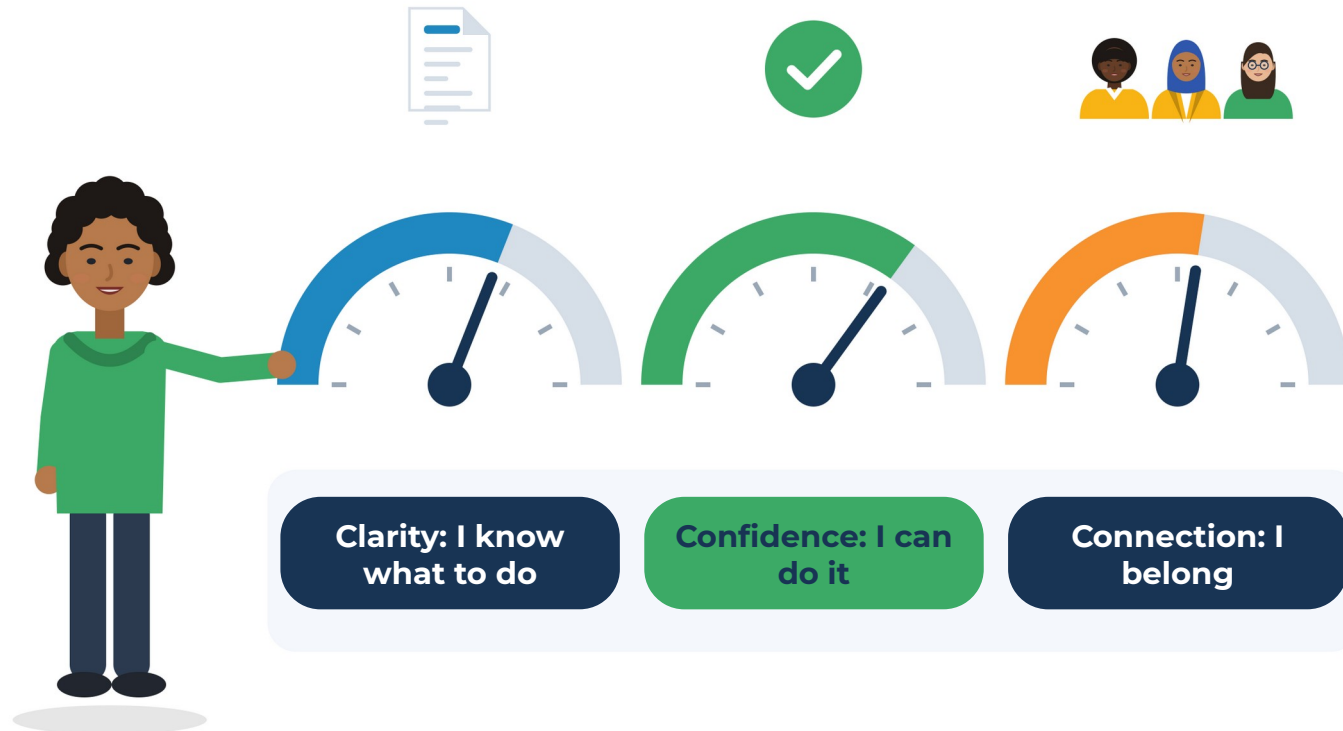
Networks and well-being

Practice



LEARNING AND ASKING QUESTIONS IN THE WORKPLACE

Three dials for your first month



Turn them up

- **Clarity:** ask one clarifying question a day in your first weeks. Write down new words and steps.
- **Confidence:** ask for feedback at agreed moments, e.g. after week 1 and week 4.
- **Connection:** learn three names. Join one break or one lunch. Ask a colleague how they started.

TAKING INITIATIVE WITHOUT FEAR OF MISTAKES

From silent worry to a small brave step

INSTEAD OF

"I nod and hope I understood."

"I made a mistake. Better to hide it."

"If I ask, they will think I am slow."

"I can't do this."

TRY

"Just to check: do you mean X or Y?"

"I think I made a mistake here. Can you show me how to fix it?"

"New people are expected to ask. The first weeks are the best time."

"I can't do this yet. Next step: watch a colleague do it once."

Source: Bauer et al. (2007) · Anseel, Beatty, Shen, Lievens & Sackett (2015), feedback seeking declines with tenure · Dweck (2006), "not yet"

USEFUL PHRASES

Phrases for asking, repairing and changing plans

Asking and learning

"Could you show me once more? I want to do it right."

"Just to check: do you mean X or Y?"

"What's the most important thing to get right in this task?"

"Who should I ask when you're not here?"

Repairing a language accident

"Sorry, I said that wrong. What I meant was: the delivery has arrived."

"Let me try that another way."

"Can you say that more slowly, please?"

"I don't know the word. It's the thing you use to open boxes."

Change and uncertainty

"What exactly changes, and from when?"

"Could I get that in writing, please?"

"Tomorrow is hard because of my language course. Could I swap with someone?"

"Can I come back to you in an hour?"

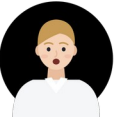
MANAGING LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES

A language accident, repaired in 20 seconds



Mariam The delivery from this morning is finished.

Manager Finished? OK, then I'll reorder everything today.



Mariam Sorry, I said that wrong. What I meant was: the delivery has arrived. It's all in the back room.

Manager Ah, it's here! Then we don't need to reorder.



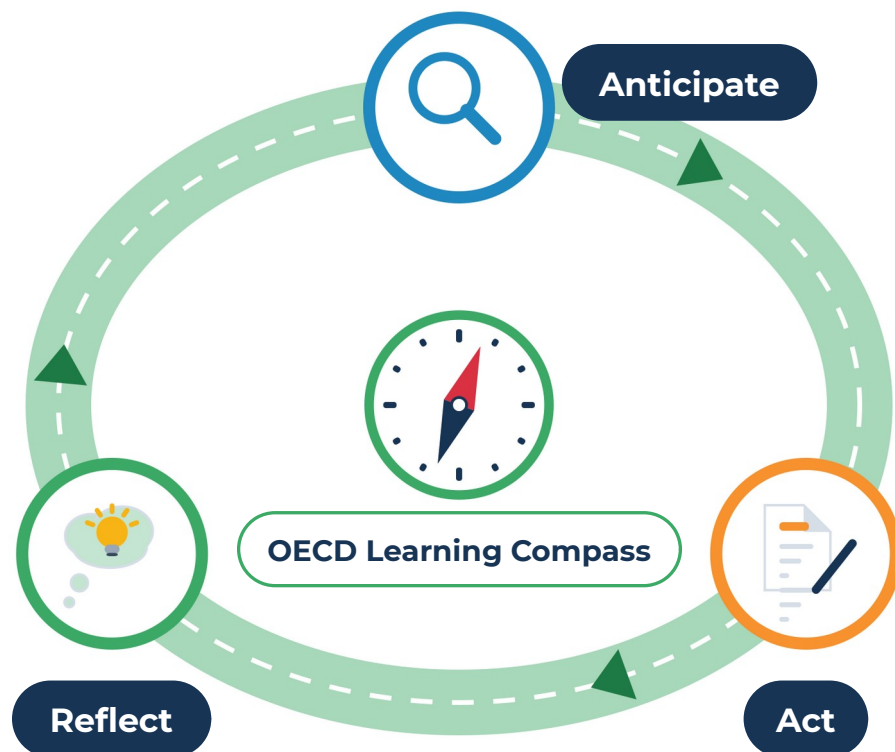
Mariam Just to check: no reorder today, and I put the boxes on the shelves now?



Invented scenario. Three steps: notice, correct, confirm. At B1 the CEFR says you “can start again using a different tactic when communication breaks down”.

COPING WITH CHANGE AND UNCERTAINTY

Anticipate, act, reflect: a loop for every change



For every change

- **Anticipate:** What will change? What will be hard? What do I need?
- **Act:** ask, plan and try one small step. Get key changes in writing.
- **Reflect:** What worked? What will I do differently next time?

Source: OECD (2019), OECD Learning Compass 2030 concept notes: “a cycle of anticipation, action and reflection” · OECD (2018), Education 2030

ILLUSTRATIVE SCENARIO

Your shift changes tomorrow

**Elif, 22**

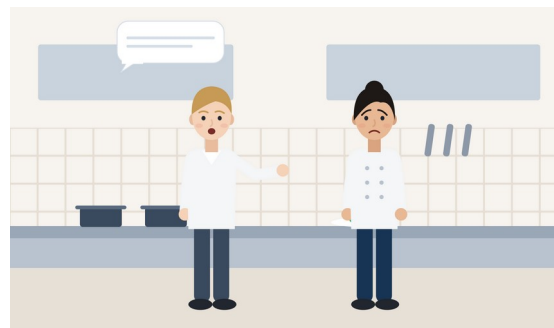
Kitchen assistant in a hotel in Milan

Hospitality

Italy

Shift change

On Monday afternoon the chef tells Elif: “From tomorrow you work the evening shift.” Her Italian class is on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Elif feels panic. She wants to keep the job and the class. She has a temporary contract and is afraid to say anything.



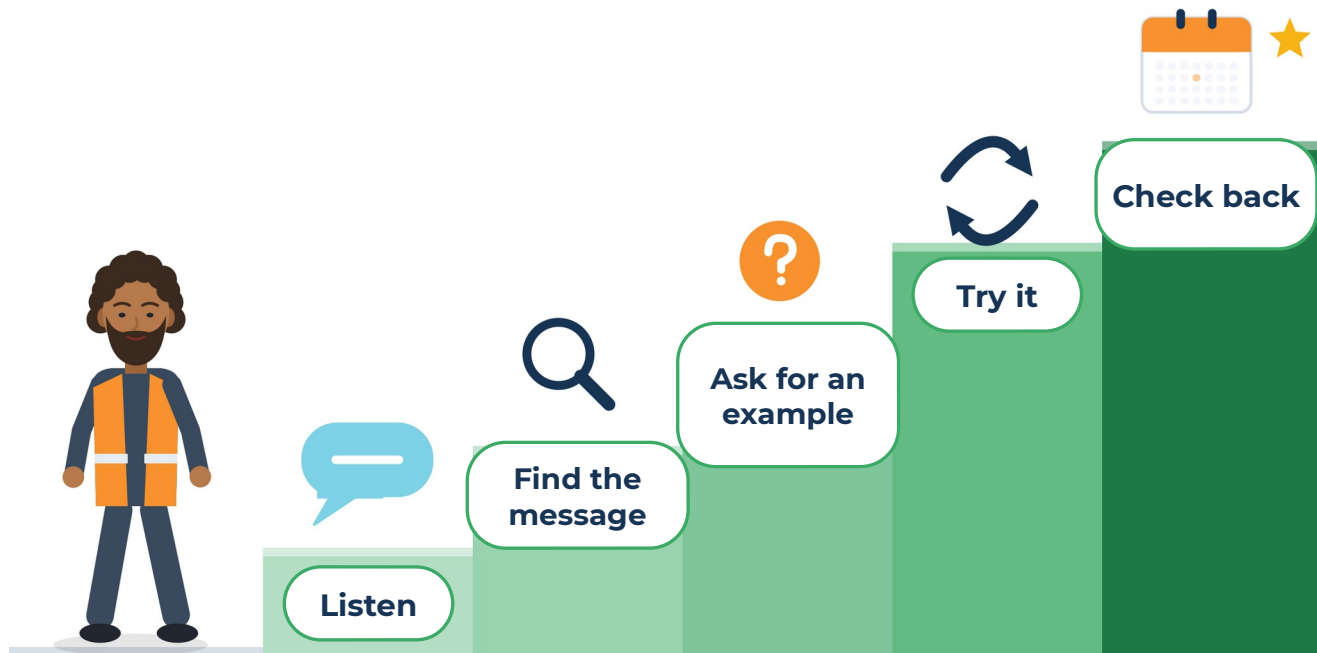
DISCUSS

1. What can Elif influence, and what not?
2. What exactly should she ask, and what in writing?
3. Role-play: a calm request for a swap or another solution.

Grounded in: changes must be given in writing at the latest on the day they take effect (Directive (EU) 2019/1152, Art. 6); temporary contracts: 22.1% of non-EU employees vs 10.7% of nationals (Eurostat, 2025).

RECEIVING AND USING FEEDBACK

Use feedback without taking it personally



Feedback is information you can ask for.

- **Listen:** breathe, let the person finish.
- **Find the message:** what exactly should change? Separate it from the tone.
- **Ask:** “Can you give me an example, so I understand?”
- **Try it:** do it the new way, notice what is different.
- **Check back:** “I’ll try that and check with you on Friday.”
- **Not feedback:** shouting, insults or humiliation. Talk to someone you trust or get advice.

Source: Ashford & Cummings (1983), feedback as an individual resource · Anseel et al. (2015), meta-analysis of feedback-seeking behaviour

ILLUSTRATIVE SCENARIO

Feedback that feels harsh

**Ahmad, 25**

Logistics worker in Rotterdam, month 2

Logistics

Netherlands

Feedback

In front of three colleagues, the team leader looks at Ahmad's pallet and says: "This is wrong. Do it again." Then she walks away. Ahmad's face is hot. Where he grew up, criticism in public meant shame. He thinks about saying nothing for the rest of the week, or quitting.



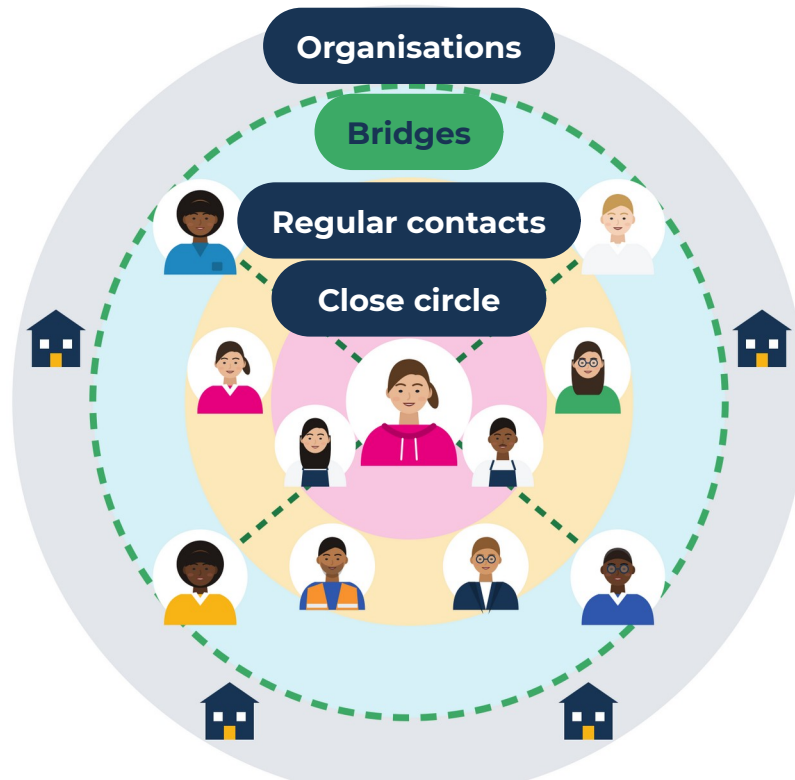
DISCUSS

1. What is the message? What is the tone?
2. What could Ahmad ask to understand what to fix?
3. How could he ask to talk in private next time?
4. When does tone become bullying, a reason to get help?

Grounded in: feedback is a resource you can seek (Ashford & Cummings, 1983; Anseel et al., 2015); norms about hierarchy and direct talk differ between workplaces (Hofstede, national averages only).

BUILDING WORKPLACE RELATIONSHIPS

Your network: keep your circle, build bridges



- **Close circle:** family and close friends: support, language and identity. Keep them close.
- **Regular contacts:** colleagues, classmates, your language teacher, neighbours.
- **Occasional contacts, your bridges:** a coach, a former trainer, a teammate's uncle. They often hear about jobs you don't hear about.
- **Organisations:** youth services, the job centre, NGOs and unions: bridges whose job is to help.

Source: Granovetter (1973) · Rajkumar et al. (2022), Science: LinkedIn experiments with 20+ million people · Lancee (2010), migrants in the Netherlands

DOCUMENTED CASES AND PROGRAMMES

Real evidence: bridges and information help

DE · trial



A bridge to employers

Munich: an NGO sent refugees' CVs to matching employers. After 12 months: about 12 points more in work, almost 20 for people still without a status.

TR · ILO



Information centres

Free information on work permits and social security in Türkiye. The ILO reports 30,100 workers counselled and 967 businesses formalised.

DE · survey



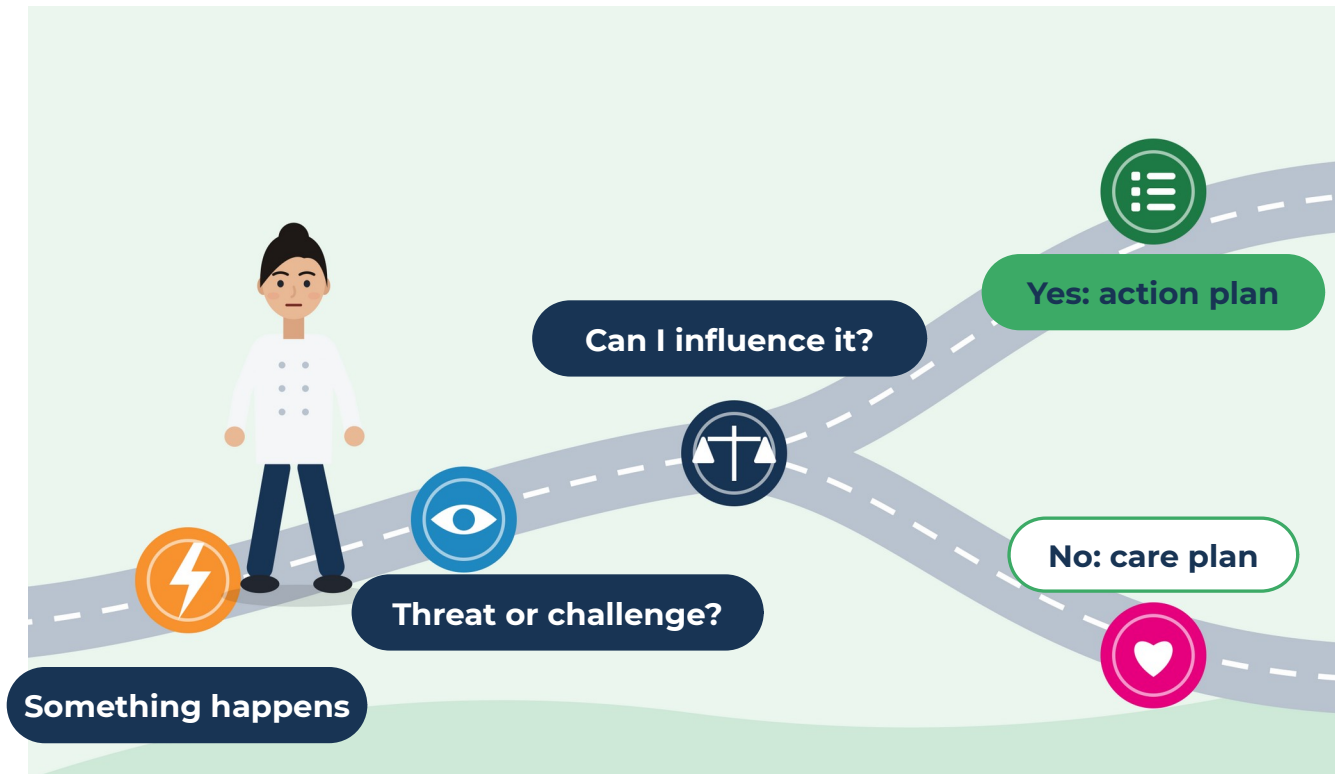
Language and counselling

Refugees' employment in Germany reached 68% after 8 years. Finished language courses and job-centre counselling went with higher employment.

Source: Battisti, Giesing & Laurentsyeve (2019), *Labour Economics* 61, field experiment · ILO (2026), knowledge brief, data to May 2026 · Brücker et al. (2024), IAB-Kurzbericht 10/2024

MANAGING STRESS AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

Stress check: how you see it changes what you can do



Stress is a normal reaction, not a weakness.

- **Something happens:** “From tomorrow you work nights.”
- **Threat or challenge?** A danger, a loss, or a challenge I can face?
- **Can I influence it?** What can I do? Which people and resources do I have?
- **Yes, action plan:** ask, propose a swap, get it in writing, get advice if rules are broken.
- **No, care plan:** calm your body, keep small routines, talk to someone you trust.

ACTIVITY

Case study: adapting or a rights issue?

 **TIME**
45 min **GROUP**
Groups of 3-4 **MATERIALS**
Case study texts, flipchart, markers **GOAL**
Separate what I can do from what the employer must do**STEPS**

1. Each group gets one case text: Samir, Elif, Dawit, Oksana or Hasan. Read it aloud; icons help low-literacy groups.
2. Answer: What is happening? What is in my control? What is the employer's responsibility? What is my next step?
3. Draw two columns on the flipchart: "I can" and "They must".
4. Add one phrase the person could really use.
5. Each group reports in 2 minutes. Others add one idea.

**DEBRIEF**

- Which part was adaptation, and which part was a rights issue?
- What would a fair employer have done?
- Which phrase would you really use?

USEFUL PHRASES

Phrases for feedback, boundaries, rights and people



Receiving feedback

"Thanks for telling me. What should I do differently next time?"

"Can you give me an example, so I understand?"

"I'd prefer to talk about this in private, if that's OK."



Boundaries, staying connected

"I don't drink, but I'd love to come for a soft drink."

"I can't join this time. How about lunch next week?"

"I need my break at prayer time. Is there a quiet place I can use?"



Rights, polite but clear

"When will I receive my contract in writing?"

"Is the trial period paid?"

"I prefer to keep my passport. I can give you a copy."



Network and stress

"Hi, I'm new here. I work on the packing line. How long have you been here?"

"If you hear about any jobs in logistics, I'd be really interested."

"I'm finding this week stressful. Can we talk for five minutes?"

ACTIVITY

Role-play: three workplace moments

 **TIME**
60 min

 **GROUP**
Trios: speaker, other person, observer

 **MATERIALS**
Role-play scenario cards, phrase cards, observer card

 **GOAL**
Practise repair, feedback and change in a safe space

STEPS

1. Round 1, language accident: Mariam and the delivery. Use notice, correct, confirm.
2. Round 2, feedback: Ahmad in front of the team, or Kofi: "We don't do it like that here."
3. Round 3, change: Elif's new shift. Ask for details, a swap and the change in writing.
4. Each round: 3 min prepare, 3 min play, 3 min feedback. Rotate roles.
5. Observer checks: a clear question, a calm tone, a confirmation at the end.
6. De-role: say your real name and one thing you liked.



DEBRIEF

- Anticipate: what did you expect?
- Act: what did you say?
- Reflect: what would you change next time?

BE FAIR TO YOURSELF

Skills open doors, but they are not the whole story

What this skill can change



- Learn new routines, words and tools faster.
- Ask, check and repair misunderstandings.
- Cope better with change, stress and feedback.
- Build bridges to people who hear about jobs.

What it cannot fix alone



- Identical CV, different name: 55 of 100 got a positive answer with a Dutch name, 40 of 100 with a Turkish name.
- Recognition of diplomas, residence permits and the right to work depend on laws and offices, not on you.
- Discrimination is not your fault. It can be reported to an equality body, a union or an NGO.

Adapt AND know your rights. Adapting never means accepting unfair work.

Source: Thijssen et al., 2021, JEMS (correspondence test, NL, applicants aged 23-25)

SELF-CHECK

Employment-focused adaptability checklist (1/2)

	I do this	Sometimes	Not yet
I have, or asked for, written information on my job, pay, hours, breaks and probation by day 7.	☐	☐	☐
I know how long my probation is, and that it is paid work.	☐	☐	☐
I keep my passport and ID myself, and I keep copies of everything I sign.	☐	☐	☐
I know one place to get free advice on work rights in my country.	☐	☐	☐
In my first weeks, I ask at least one clarifying question a day.	☐	☐	☐
I ask for feedback at agreed moments, for example after week 1 and week 4.	☐	☐	☐
I can separate the message of feedback from its tone.	☐	☐	☐

SELF-CHECK

Employment-focused adaptability checklist (2/2)

	I do this	Sometimes	Not yet
I can say when I don't understand and ask for repetition or an explanation.	☐	☐	☐
I can fix a misunderstanding and check that it is fixed.	☐	☐	☐
When something changes, I ask what changes, from when, and if I will get it in writing.	☐	☐	☐
I can name one example of when I adapted well, for job interviews.	☐	☐	☐
I have at least one “bridge” contact outside my close circle.	☐	☐	☐
I keep what matters to me (language, faith, food, family contact) while I learn new workplace norms.	☐	☐	☐
I know what helps me under stress and who I can talk to.	☐	☐	☐

REFLECTION

One change, one step, this month

When did I adapt without losing myself?

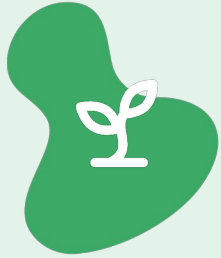
Who could be my bridge person?

What will I ask at work or in training this month?

What is my first small step, and when?



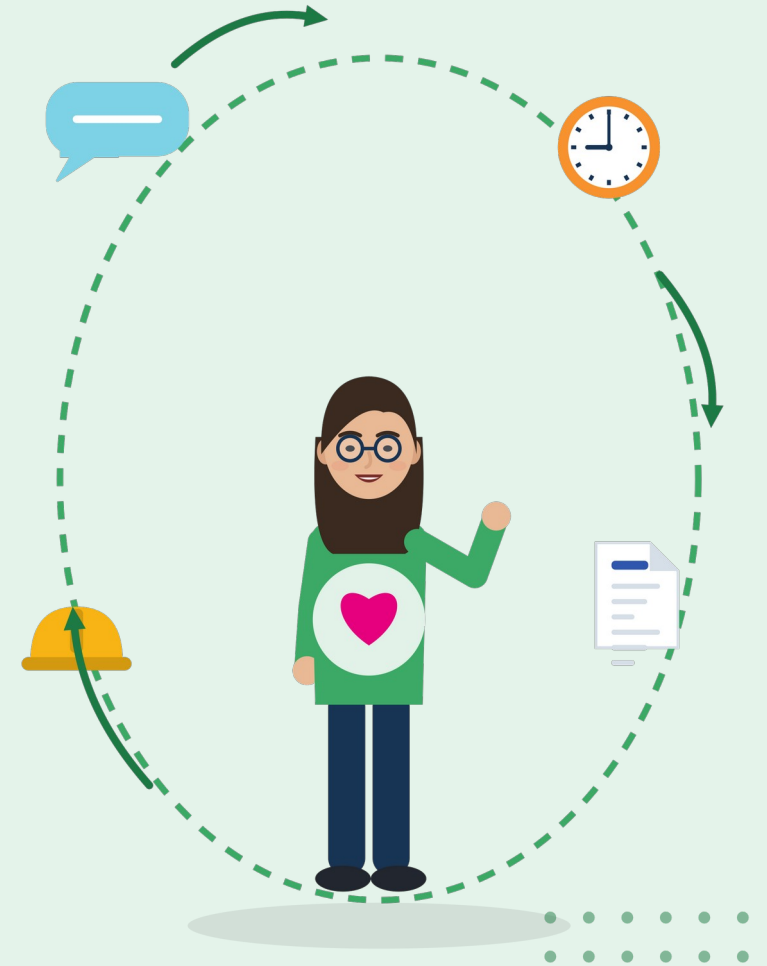
*Write in any language.
Sharing is optional.*



KEY MESSAGES

Adapt your actions, not your identity.

Adapting is a skill you can learn: ask, repair, plan, use feedback, build bridges. It is two-way: fair, clear and lawful conditions are the employer's part. When something feels wrong, get advice.



REFERENCES

Sources used in this presentation (1/2)

1. American Psychological Association. (n.d.). Resilience. Retrieved October 1, 2026, from apa.org/topics/resilience
2. Anseel, F., Beatty, A. S., Shen, W., Lievens, F., & Sackett, P. R. (2015). How are we doing after 30 years? A meta-analytic review of feedback-seeking behavior. *Journal of Management*, 41(1), 318-348.
3. Arendt, J. N., Bolvig, I., Foged, M., Hasager, L., & Peri, G. (2020). Integrating refugees: Language training or work-first incentives? (NBER WP 26834).
4. Battisti, M., Giesing, Y., & Laurensyeva, N. (2019). Can job search assistance improve the labour market integration of refugees? *Labour Economics*, 61, 101745.
5. Bauer, T. N., Bodner, T., Erdoğan, B., Truxillo, D. M., & Tucker, J. S. (2007). Newcomer adjustment during organizational socialization. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 92(3), 707-721.
6. Berry, J. W., Phinney, J. S., Sam, D. L., & Vedder, P. (2006). Immigrant youth: Acculturation, identity, and adaptation. *Applied Psychology*, 55(3), 303-332.
7. Brücker, H., Ehab, M., Jaschke, P., & Kosyakova, Y. (2024). Arbeitsmarktintegration von Geflüchteten (IAB-Kurzbericht 10/2024). IAB.
8. Council of Europe. (2018). Reference framework of competences for democratic culture: Vol. 1. Context, concepts and model.
9. Council of Europe. (2020). Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Companion volume.
10. Directive (EU) 2019/1152 on transparent and predictable working conditions in the European Union.
11. European Commission. (2020). Action plan on integration and inclusion 2021-2027 (COM(2020) 758 final).
12. European Commission & OECD. (2016). How are refugees faring on the labour market in Europe? (Working Paper 1/2016).
13. Eurostat. (2026). Ifsa_eoqgan, Ifsa_etpgan, Ifso_21obst02, Ifso_21lang03 [Data sets]. Accessed October 1, 2026.
14. Faire Integration. (2026). FAQ: Employment contract, minimum wage, exploitation. faire-integration.de/en
15. FRA. (2019). Protecting migrant workers from exploitation in the EU: Workers' perspectives. Publications Office of the EU.

REFERENCES

Sources used in this presentation (2/2)

1. Hainmueller, J., Hangartner, D., & Lawrence, D. (2016). When lives are put on hold: Lengthy asylum processes decrease employment among refugees. *Science Advances*, 2(8), e1600432.
2. International Labour Organization. (2026). Türkiye: Information Centres for stronger equality of opportunity and treatment [Knowledge brief].
3. La Brack, B. (2010). Theory reflections: Cultural adaptations, culture shock and the “curves of adjustment”. *NAFSA*.
4. Lancee, B. (2010). The economic returns of immigrants' bonding and bridging social capital: The case of the Netherlands. *International Migration Review*, 44(1), 202-226.
5. Lazarus, R. S., & Folkman, S. (1984). *Stress, appraisal, and coping*. Springer.
6. Nguyen, A.-M. D., & Benet-Martínez, V. (2013). Biculturalism and adjustment: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 44(1), 122-159.
7. OECD. (2019). *OECD Learning Compass 2030: A series of concept notes*. OECD.
8. Rajkumar, K., Saint-Jacques, G., Bojinov, I., Brynjolfsson, E., & Aral, S. (2022). A causal test of the strength of weak ties. *Science*, 377(6612), 1304-1310.
9. Rudolph, C. W., Lavigne, K. N., & Zacher, H. (2017). Career adaptability: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 98, 17-34.
10. Sala, A., Punie, Y., Garkov, V., & Cabrera, M. (2020). *LifeComp: The European framework for personal, social and learning to learn key competence* (EUR 30246 EN).
11. Savickas, M. L., & Porfeli, E. J. (2012). Career Adapt-Abilities Scale. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 80(3), 661-673.
12. Sisk, V. F., Burgoyne, A. P., Sun, J., Butler, J. L., & Macnamara, B. N. (2018). To what extent and under which circumstances are growth mind-sets important to academic achievement? *Psychological Science*, 29(4), 549-571.
13. Thijssen, L., Lancee, B., Veit, S., & Yemane, R. (2021). Discrimination against Turkish minorities in Germany and the Netherlands. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 47(6), 1222-1239.
14. World Economic Forum. (2025). *The future of jobs report 2025*. WEF.
15. World Health Organization. (2022). *WHO guidelines on mental health at work*. WHO.

Thank you

Questions, ideas, stories: the floor is yours.

KEEP LEARNING

smile-lms.smartleap.eu

MODULE

3 • Adaptability

PROJECT

SMILE • Erasmus+ KA220-YOU

PROJECT NO.

2024-1-TR01-KA220-YOU-000256357



Scan to join the SMILE learning platform

Free online course: lessons, activities, quiz and certificate.

Co-funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the Turkish National Agency. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

THE SMILE PARTNERSHIP

- Göç Sanat ve Spor Derneği (MIGARTS) (Türkiye, coordinator)
- KYTTARO ENALLAKTIKON ANAZITISEON NEON (KEAN) (Greece)
- Work in Progress APS (WiP) (Italy)
- Smart Leap Education Research Consultancy GmbH (Germany)
- Association of Entrepreneurship School (AES) (Türkiye)
- BİR-İZ (Türkiye)
- Stichting Unity Sphere Europe (SUSE) (Netherlands)



SKILLS = Opportunity

Empowerment Through Skills · Inclusion Through Opportunity