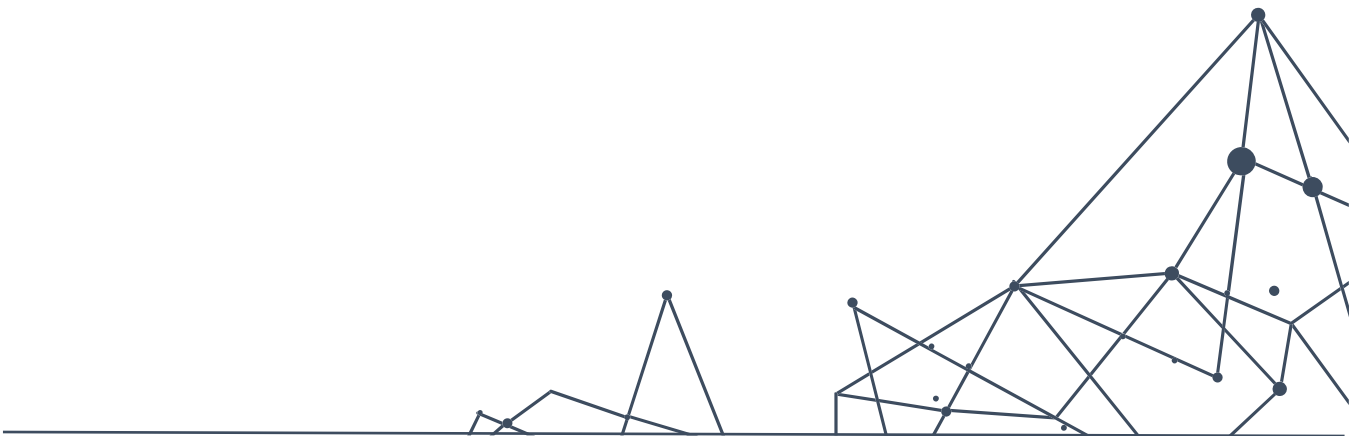


Case Example “Julia”

Case example for the application of the CGC Roundabout for Digital Transformation as learning material for the preparatory webinar session 4 “Exemplary Application of CGC Roundabout for Digital Transformation”



1. Introduction

This case study forms the basis for the group work in the 4th unit "Exemplary application of CGC roundabouts for digital transformation" of the preparatory webinar on the application of CGC roundabouts for digital transformation. In this scenario, a learner's search for a career guidance service is the starting point of the multi-stakeholder guidance process.

2. Task

Read the case study at your leisure and then discuss the questions on the worksheet with your group partners.

3. Case description "Julia"

Julia is 51 years old and a university graduate. After graduating, she worked very successfully in library management in a public library for over 10 years. However, after the birth of her first child, she and her husband decided to give up her job so that she could devote herself entirely to childcare. It was not an easy decision for her, but times were different, and she felt it was her duty as a mother to be there for her child, at least in the early years. Three years later, however, another child was born. In total, she was out of the labour market for over 15 years.

When she wanted to return to work, she found it was not so easy. Her former employer - the public library in the city - no longer exists. As she had previously had an office job with a lot of administrative tasks, she first tried to find another office job in an administrative role. But she was unsuccessful. During the few interviews she was invited to, it became clear that office work had changed a lot. Whereas she used to occasionally use a PC to write emails, create simple Word documents or edit Excel spreadsheets, now everything is done digitally. Employers, for example, asked her about her experience with specialised office software that she had never heard of before. This experience was a real blow to her confidence. She used to see digital skills as one of her strengths. She also received a lot of admiration for her digital competences as part of the volunteer work, she did during her time as a stay-at-home mum.

After her own job search proved unsuccessful, Julia decided to contact the local PES office for advice. However, she was disillusioned to find that the counselling was very impersonal and strictly protocol based. In addition, the PES only offered online counselling at the time, which was not ideal for Julia. She had little experience of online meetings, was unsure of how to use the meeting software and therefore felt uncomfortable in the counselling situation. The counsellor then offered to put her in touch with a staffing company that would guarantee her a job. Julia was not enthusiastic about the idea. But she had been looking for work for some time without success. And since her husband had recently lost his job, they could really use the money.

Julia was told by the temporary employment agency that although she had a high level of formal qualifications, her training was no longer up to date. She could therefore be offered jobs that required only low qualifications. Because of her winning attitude in interviews, it was not difficult for the temporary

employment agency to place Julia. She got a job in retail, stocking shelves and occasionally working at the till, and then worked in a warehouse for a large online retailer, assembling goods for despatch. She now works in a fast-food restaurant. The problem is that she has had all these jobs over the last three years and has never been employed for more than a year at a time. This was fine for a while, but now she feels that something has to change. She doesn't want to keep changing employers and jobs until she retires, she wants to find a longer-term job.

A friend she talks to about the situation suggests she go to a local careers service instead of the PES. She has heard that there is a new subsidised and therefore free advice service for people over 50. This might be the support Julia needs. Julia does some research and finds out from the website that the counselling service does not have a branch in her town. However, there is the option of using online counselling. Julia is not very happy about this at first because of her negative experience with online counselling at the PES. In this case, however, things are a bit different. The website is very clear. The service advertises that it takes time for the client's personal situation and works with them to find the best solution for their future career or re-entry into the labour market. In addition, the consultants introduce themselves with personal profiles and there is an easy-to-understand guide with illustrations that explains step-by-step how to use the meeting software. Julia overcomes her doubts and makes an appointment online. The first meeting with the counsellor started very open and friendly. The counsellor took time to introduce her counselling and Julia was able to describe her current professional situation. Together with the counsellor, she formulated her interest in counselling: With the help of the counsellor, she wants to find out if there is any further training that would help her to get back into stable employment, where she can build on her qualifications (librarian) and experience in administrative work in companies.

Julia has indicated to the counsellor that she is very unsure whether she can successfully learn again. They agreed that during the counselling process they would look more closely at Julia's strengths and professional experience and work out potential requirements for suitable further education. The counsellor also agreed to explore current needs in the local labour market and to identify with training providers whether there are suitable training courses. At the end of this first conversation, Julia was a little more confident. She thought the counsellor was interested in her and together they had worked out some plans on how the counselling could continue.

The counsellor asks Julia to tell him about her current situation in the work context and gives an impulse to narrate her vocational and educational biography and professional career. Together they collected strengths that helped Julia so far to manage her job life and to overcome difficulties. The conversation focused also on her attitude and experience towards learning. The counsellor listens to her concerns and reservations about training. Together they discovered some criteria that make a reasonable learning situation. For Julia it is especially important that she can combine learning with her family duties. Discussed was also the need for financial support during a learning period if Julia cannot work hundred percent.

It was helpful to look at the labour market together. Julia wants to understand if she has a chance to re-enter a better qualified job (as a librarian or in an office). In the ESCO database, the client and the counsellor analysed the skills for the job field "General office and administrative tasks" in more detail. Julia has most of the necessary skills, but she wants to deepen her knowledge and skills in using IT in this context (information skills, data processing and management, using computers in an office context, using digital tools for collaboration) (<https://esco.ec.europa.eu/en/classification/skills?uri=http://data.europa>). For this field (clerical and administrative jobs) Julia with the support of the counsellor has identified three possible vacancies and looks at the job descriptions.

They agree that it might be a good idea for Julia to contact one of the employers she knows from a previous job. The counsellor will contact two other employers to find out exactly what IT skills are required and if the employer supports training or can recommend a specific training that Julia could use to catch up. In addition, the counsellor will discuss with an expert from the Chamber of Industry and Commerce what labour market information is relevant for analysing Julia's situation.

Additionally, they planned a structured needs analysis. This is based on a manual describing different digital skills in a structured way. Julia identified with the support of the counsellors' competences where she thinks these are still well developed as well as where she might need training. The counsellor gave Julia additionally an internet-link, where Julia can undergo a self-assessment (competence self-assessment for digital skills). They made a new appointment where they will discuss the information they collected from the employers and the results from the self-assessment.

When Julia started the process her career goals were quite vague. She had the feeling that she should make more out of competences and experiences. With the process she gained more confidence that there might be a way to realize this goal to some extent. The process so far has given her more strength and positive self-belief. Practically she learned about concrete employment offers and the digital competence-gap she wants and can address.

Now she takes time to formulate her goals. Writing down that she wants to get a new employment feels very good. She sees it as a brave move. With the support of the counsellor, she set some sub goals she needs to reach in this way.

- Main goal: find a new, sustainable, and qualified employment (e.g. office clerk, team assistant, assistant in technical documentation or related).
- Sub goal 1: take part in a training regarding the following competence: technical documentation, data management
- Sub goal 2: identify possible trainings and contact providers
- Sub goal 3: clarify support (financial, employer if applicable)

The course of action will take probably more than a year – a long time. But detailed plan for the identification the right further training and the application activities make her confident. The most crucial

point seems to be the financing of the training and her living when she will reduce her current job to 70%. The counsellor showed Julia a feasible way of having a grant for the training cost and they discussed possibilities of having support from PES/JobCenter for the loss of income during the training phase. Julia found a provider for suitable training with the help of the counsellor. The times for the training were discussed with the provider. The biggest current challenge is funding. Julia can reduce her current working hours, but this will reduce her income. The counsellor supports Julia with possible financing for this intermediate phase.

The training could thus begin. Julia has some doubts at the beginning and also some practical difficulties to organise the learning besides work and family. The counsellor was able to support Julia again and encourage her to take some of the pressure off herself, e.g. with her family, and to plan her learning time. At the same time, Julia started looking for a new employer. Her training will last a total of 6 months, after which she would like to find a new job as quickly as possible. Through the counselling, Julia has learned new strategies for finding a job, which she can now use. She approaches different employers and applies on her own initiative. The counsellor can further support her here with his network contacts. He sends her tips on job vacancies and Julia can discuss her experiences with applications with him.

Julia met with the counsellor again after completing her training. Together they discussed the learning outcomes and the counsellor helped Julia to complete her application documents to improve Julia's chances of finding a new job.

In the same session (see phase 5), the counsellor and Julia take time to discuss and reflect the process (evaluation). On the one hand, it is about finding out how Julia experienced the support, what was helpful and supportive and how the counselling could have been even more effective. On the other hand, the counsellor wants to show Julia again what development she has gone through and how she has used and developed her resources. Julia has not only recognised her competences and needs, but she has also built up more self-confidence to assert herself on the labour market with her skills.



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