



Enhancing Employability of Youth in Cultural and Creative Industries

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Entrepreneurship Skills Manual Topic Handcraft Theory & Assessment WP2/A5

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Executive Summary

This document describes the training methodology that equips youths with the necessary knowledge and skills in handicrafts, a targeted sector of the CCI.

More specifically, is a manual that aims the understand design principles, trends, and applications in various domains such as fashion and tradition (objects, clothes, food, wood-crafted elements) in handicrafts.

It includes also Exercises and Assessment Questions that will provide youths with knowledge, creativity, and new techniques and enhance participant's design abilities.

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1. Introduction to Handicrafts

In this module you will be introduced to the beautiful world of handicrafts and how they are a unique expression of a particular culture. Handmade items that are seemingly the same are never completely identical and this is the magic of their uniqueness.

The handcrafted items always hide a story, and they are often inspired by the culture of every country. That's why it's a common phenomenon for artists to travel the world so they can be inspired by the history, culture or beautiful landscapes of every country, they can create something new and unique in every sector. Every design and every object has a story to tell of the maker that was the source of its inspiration, it has life!

In this modern era, we are facing poor-quality manufactured products, due to the economic crisis. To be more economical, there is poor assembly, poor processing, and cheap materials and this is usually what people have in mind. Nowadays, people are seeking handmade products to meet all their daily needs in an attempt at quality living. Many handcrafters use natural, even entirely indigenous and even upcycled materials that give quality to everyday products.

We must mention the importance of handicrafts in the ecological environment construction in the modern ages. The environmental problems are increasingly prominent and ecological environment construction is in full force. That's why it is necessary that handcraft artists deeply analyse the impact of materials in crafts and make them more ecological than other materials through design innovation.

When it comes to handmade crafts, many benefits come along with sourcing them. They can be better for the environment than other alternatives. Many of these items are made using sustainable production processes and materials. Additionally, handmade crafts often require fewer resources during their production process compared to mass-produced goods, making them an eco-friendly option.

In conclusion, Handicrafts are important in these modern times because they use in general natural and eco-friendly materials. This practice promotes sustainable production, reduces waste and has a lower carbon footprint.

2. Handcraft theory

In the Theory of this Module, you will explore different species of handicrafts such as:

1. Handcrafted objects
2. Wood-crafted elements
3. Handcrafted fashion
4. Handmade Food

and learn their principles, trends, and applications.

Afterwards, you will have the chance to complete some exercises, that aim to develop practical skills in visual communication, aesthetics, and problem-solving.

2.1 Handcrafted objects

Handcrafted products are produced only by hand using simple tools and a variety of decorative materials available in the market or nature. Many handcrafters use natural, even entirely indigenous materials and even upcycle industrial materials. The individual artisanship of a



handcrafted item is the paramount criterion. All over the world handicrafts are produced frequently at the small-scale level. In many communities, handicraft products are enmeshed with ethnic, local, regional and national heritage.

2.1.1 Pottery-Ceramics

Clay is a material rich in history and possibilities for art making and hand-building pottery is one of the oldest arts. Handcrafted ceramics technique allows you to create forms with clay and your hands, without using a throwing wheel. All you need to get started are your clay, your hands and a few simple tools.

Methods and Techniques: Pinching Pots, Coiled pots, Slab pots

Materials & tools: Clay, Wire Cutter, Pin tool, Score tool, Slab roller and canvas sheets, Banding wheel, Brayer, cut templates, Rubber ribs, Fetting knives, Spray Bottle, Sponge.

People nowadays, especially those who follow the “Hygge Lifestyle”, are replacing glass mugs and plates with ceramic, for more environmentally – friendly and quality everyday objects.

Useful video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ie5NdWCXK3A>

2.1.2 Wool-Craft

A variety of handcrafted objects are created from wool fibres and items, mainly knitted, crocheted and needle felt. Wool crafting is incredibly time-consuming and mostly uses natural wool fibres which produce quality crafts. The price will always reflect the time and skill levels required to make an item. Here are some facts about Wool:

1. Sheep are part of the natural carbon cycle, consuming the organic carbon stored in plants and converting it to wool.
2. Fifty per cent of the weight of wool is pure organic carbon.
3. Wool products have long lifespans, meaning they are used or worn longer than other textile fibre products Wool textile products tend to be washed less frequently at lower temperatures which has a lower impact on the environment.
4. Wool biodegrades readily on land and in water – as a protein-based fibre, wool does not contribute to microplastic pollution.

Objects that you can create from wool in everyday life: makeup removal pads, souvenirs, bags, scarves, and Christmas elements.

Useful Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O0YSf6ZeYgc>

2.1.3 Recycled fabric small pouches

This beautiful idea is very useful also in everyday life and very helpful for those who want to skip the plastic materials. You can use a variety of fabrics and sew them just to create small bags for lunch bags, makeup organisers, mini jewellery bags, toiletry bags, and lavender bags for closets. You can use different textiles, mixed etc to make your customised pouch bag.

Useful Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OsD5-qWkZZU>

2.1.4 Wood-Crafted Elements

Wood is the most environmentally friendly raw material. It's renewable and is the only building material made from sun, rain, and carbon from the air. It's infinitely replenishable and renewable. That's amazing when you think about it.

Wood is a raw material that grows and replenishes itself every year. A lot of folks wonder if it's environmental to cut down trees. Luckily, with selective harvesting—in contrast to clearcutting—it's not a problem. It's great for forest health.

2.1.5 Wooden Toys

Using wood, especially for toys, is a very environmentally friendly material. Wood comes from renewable sources such as tree farms, which are managed with sustainable forestry methods. Wooden toys have been used by children for many hundreds or even thousands of years. They date back to the Ancient Greeks and the Egyptians and wood has been used to make toys in many societies throughout history.

Another major advantage of wooden toys is that they are much safer for children to play with. It is a natural material that does not have any of the dangerous toxins that synthetic materials or plastics have. Toys that are made with PVC plastic have leaching properties, meaning that the toxins can leak out over time, but wood does not. This means that you don't have to worry about your child's toys leaching harmful chemicals through to their skin.

Another idea to consider is to make your wooden toys. This allows you to choose the wood that you would like to use to make your child's toys and craft them in any way that you choose.

Useful Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c7EvjJxE_tQ

2.1.6 Wooden Bags

The bags made from wood are made with high-quality materials and take a lot of time and skill to create. Also, they are unique and customizable and are built to last. Investing in a handmade leather bag is a smart choice, as it will save you money over time. In Greece, there are many businesses making bags from wood, inspired by tradition and Greek culture.

Useful Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WvhiLxA1xMY>

2.1.7 Wooden Utensils

By using wooden utensils in your kitchen, you are helping reduce the load of non-biodegradable and toxic plastic. The wooden utensils are renewable and environmentally friendly in all environments without any resultant effects of toxicity to both humans and the environment.

Useful Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Id7YXpk2aro>

2.1.8 Handcrafted fashion

Nowadays, handmade products have attained much more importance than machine-made items because of their quality. This is because of the raw material selection and impressive design of the handmade fashion. Most importantly, manual-made clothes or jewellery are eco-friendly and hence can also be called environmentally friendly because they do not harm the surroundings. This reason has made many nature lovers choose handmade fashion for regular usage.

2.1.9 Handmade jewellery

Jewellery made from recycled gold and silver, and recut or repurposed gems, is almost guaranteed to have a lower environmental impact than brand-new jewellery because it does not use extractive mining processes.

Here are some principles that handcrafted jewellery follows:

1. Recycled or Vintage Metals
2. Non-toxic washes and Polish
3. Prioritize Ethical Production
4. Recycled materials such as fabric, everyday items etc
5. Eco-minded packaging

Useful Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ia5fxrzzZKQ>

2.1.10 Handmade - Sustainable clothes

The fashion industry is the second largest polluter in the world just after the oil industry. And the environmental damage is increasing as the industry grows. However, there are solutions and alternatives to mitigate these problems, such as handmade clothing.

One of the biggest advantages of hand-made clothes is that they are environmentally friendly. Since they are not made with the help of machines, there are hardly any chances of water, energy, land, and other natural resources getting wasted. No toxic chemicals are released into land, air, or water.

Leftover fabrics are the fabrics which are not used. Instead of these fabrics ending up as waste, the leftover fabrics are used by design houses which make beautiful clothing out of them. There are many ways that you could make clothing out of reused fabric or a new one, finding helpful videos or handcrafters' forums online. Handmade clothes are a sustainable choice and have no negative impact on the environment and it's profitable nowadays.

Useful Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VsXkbIJ_b30

2.1.11 Silk Scarves

Silk is considered a more sustainable fibre. It is a renewable resource, can biodegrade, and uses less water, chemicals, and energy than many other fibres. Using silk, problems like chemical use, animal rights, high energy input, and labour practices can be solved.

Silk scarves are easy to make, just by cutting your favourite piece of silk fabric in the shape that you want, sewing the sides and impressing everyone.

Useful Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bQmmxDhbMsE>

2.2 Handmade Food

According to George Coumantaros (Distinguished Professor, University of Ibadan), traditional foods and traditional food processing techniques like fermentation and sun drying date back to ancient times and are part of the culture of the people. While traditional foods have been upgraded and are produced on an industrial scale in India, Japan, China, South Korea etc., traditional foods in sub-Saharan Africa and many other low-middle-income countries are still largely produced in

the home and by the unregulated informal food sector with little improvement in quality and processing techniques.

Here are some traditional techniques:

- Drying Food
- Homemade jam
- Homemade Sweets
- Compost

2.2.1 Sun-drying food

Sun drying is the evaporation of water from products by the sun or solar heat, assisted by the movement of surrounding air. To be successful, it demands a rainless season of bright sunshine and temperatures above 98° F coinciding with the period of product maturity. Sun drying requires considerable care.

A smart idea is sun-drying tomatoes, which everyone can use in salads or special recipes and bring a special flavour and tradition to your plate.

Also, drying fruits such as bananas, plums, strawberries etc. will be a good homemade solution for a quick and healthy snack.

There are many techniques and ideas online that provide a big variety of drying food and give a lot of information to start a small profitable business.

Useful Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S_HOg89Unno

2.2.2 Homemade jam

Jam-making seems to no longer be just the sweet hobby our grandmothers have. Homemade fruit jam is gaining more and more space in the business, as a healthier and more economical solution. The best part is that the jam-making business is growing steadily with no concern regarding recessions or other external factors that usually impact small businesses. More and more people take on jam-making as a small business to make some extra income for their family or make a living exclusively from selling jam directly to consumers or retailers.

Useful Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dcc4ZaRYhQc>

2.2.3 Homemade Sweets

One of the most traditional Greek products is the “spoon-sweets”, which was created thousands of years ago, due to the need of people to preserve the abundant fruits and vegetables that were left over from the harvest. One of the most classic techniques used by housewives since ancient times was the special preservation of syrup, boiling the fruit and turning it into jams.

The term 'spoon sweets' of course came centuries later, when in the time of our great grandparents, the sweets in question were served in a large bowl with many spoons or in small serving dishes, of course with a small spoon. “Spoon-sweets” were the most welcome treat for all households and the guests seemed to enjoy them very much. The sector of traditional sweet products is characterized from the earliest years to the present day by numerous small-scale home industries, which cover local areas of Greece and sell their products anonymously. In recent years, a few companies have become active, organized their distribution network and addressed the general public, promoting branded products. Fruits that you can turn to “spoon-sweets” and



create your own profitable business: wild cherry, cherry, strawberry, pear, apricot, bergamot, walnut, chestnut, tangerine, orange, grape, fig, rose.

Useful Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bZRQTuYdRVw>

2.2.4 Compost

With this traditional method, you can keep the fruit in the jar for more than a year if the process is done correctly. You will need a large pot filled more than halfway with water, where you will boil the empty glass jars you will use. From the time of boiling, allow 10 minutes. We must remove the rubber rim when sterilizing the jar because if it is not of sturdy material, it will burn. It is enough to dip it in a little hot water and set it aside. Remove the jars from the pot carefully and turn them over on a clean cotton towel to dry. Then prepare the fruit (peeling, cutting) according to its type and boil the jars of fruit in the pot. The process is somewhat time-consuming, but the result will do you justice. Nowadays this traditional method is a profitable business that everyone who loves tradition and producing healthy homemade food can start with a low budget.

Useful Video : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t08LwkNyBGs>

3. Exercises and Assessment Questions

3.1 Exercises

Exercises No. 1: After reading the “Handcrafted objects” section and watching the referenced videos, think that you want to make a gift for your best friend’s birthday. Try one of your favourite techniques from this module. Write down the process that you followed and the things that you want to make better the next time.

Exercise No2: Think that you are going to start a business with your wood-crafted items. Choose the one that you like more and make a beautiful object. Then, make an advertisement (a video, an advert on paper, or anything else that you imagine) to sell it like you already have your own business.

Exercise No. 3: “Start your own business” with your fashion interest from the sections that you read by creating 3-4 different stuff and promoting them on social media.

Exercise No4: Do your research and write down 4 different recipes, from every module from handmade food above and make nice treats for your friends and family.

3.2 Assessment Questions

True False Questions

1. True/False: Handcrafts are now inspired from culture and history of every country

Correct Answer: True

2. True/False: Handcrafts can be better for the environment than other alternatives

Correct Answer: True

3. True/False: Handcrafts increase waste of energy and has a higher carbon footprint

Correct Answer: False

4. True/False: Wool textile products tend to be washed less frequently at lower temperatures which has a lower impact on the environment

Correct Answer: True

5. True/False: Wooden utensils in kitchen are toxic like plastic

Correct Answer: False

Open Questions

1) Is woodworking good for the environment? Please explain your answer

Possible answer: Woodworking's environmental impact varies. Responsibly sourced wood from managed forests supports biodiversity and carbon sequestration, promoting sustainability. Crafted wooden items often have longer lifespans, reducing the need for replacements and minimizing waste. However, if not managed sustainably, deforestation and irresponsible logging harm the environment. Additionally, some finishes and adhesives used in woodworking can introduce harmful chemicals. To enhance sustainability, a conscientious approach to material sourcing, waste management, and the use of eco-friendly finishes is essential.

A trainer should evaluate as right answer if a learner will at least mention biodiversity, carbon reduction, and that wooden items have longer lifespans.

2) What is sustainable clothes and how you could describe a business like that?

Possible answer: sustainable clothing involves garments created with eco-friendly and socially responsible practices from material sourcing to production and beyond. Businesses in this sector prioritize materials like organic cotton or recycled fibers, aiming to minimize waste, energy use, and pollution. Ethical labor practices ensure fair wages and safe conditions. Transparency in the supply chain, providing information on origins and production processes, is a key focus. Ultimately, sustainable clothing businesses aim to reduce the environmental impact of apparel while promoting social responsibility in the fashion industry.

A trainer should evaluate as right answer if the learner mention at lease the eco-friendly, socially responsible practices from material sourcing, organic materials, minimize waste/energy use/pollution



3) What homemade food you could produce to start a business? Please explain your answer

Possible answer: Preserves and Jams: Create homemade jams, jellies, or pickles using locally sourced fruits and vegetables. These artisanal products can attract customers seeking unique flavours.

Healthy Snacks: Produce and package healthy snacks such as granola bars, energy bites, or trail mixes. With a growing emphasis on wellness and sustainability, there's a demand for nutritious snack options.

Specialty Beverages: Develop homemade beverages from fruits or vegetables

A trainer should evaluate as right answer if the learner mention homemade jams, beverages etc, and include sustainable practices and reason to build that kind of business.

4) Why might wooden toys be considered a more environmentally friendly and safer option for children compared to toys made from synthetic materials or plastics?

Possible answer: Wooden toys are often regarded as environmentally friendly because wood comes from renewable sources like tree farms managed with sustainable forestry methods. Additionally, wood has been used for toys for centuries, dating back to ancient civilizations such as the Greeks and Egyptians. One major advantage is that wood is a natural material without the harmful toxins found in synthetic materials or plastics. Unlike toys made with PVC plastic, which can leach toxins over time, wooden toys don't pose this risk. Making your own wooden toys provides the opportunity to choose the type of wood and craft the toys according to your preferences, ensuring a safer and personalized play experience for children.

A trainer should evaluate a right answer if the learner mention renewable sources, natural material, harmful toxins found in synthetic materials or plastics, safer and personalized play experience for children

5) In the context of handcrafted ceramics, discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the three main techniques—pinching pots, coiled pots, and slab pots. How does the choice of technique impact the final outcome of a ceramic piece?

Possible Answer: The three main handcrafted techniques—pinching pots, coiled pots, and slab pots—offer distinct advantages and challenges. Pinching allows for a more organic, free-form shape but may be limited in size. Coiling provides strength and structure, enabling the creation of larger vessels, but achieving uniformity can be challenging. Slab building offers precision and flat surfaces but may pose difficulties in constructing rounded forms. The choice of technique significantly influences the final ceramic piece, determining its form, scale, and texture. Each method requires mastery of specific tools and skills, showcasing the potter's creativity and ability to overcome technical constraints. Successful pieces often involve a thoughtful combination of these techniques, highlighting the versatility of handcrafting in ceramic art.

A trainer should evaluate as a right answer if the learner mention the 3 technics explanation and the combination will provide a versatility of a handcrafted ceramic.

Guidelines for Trainers

Preparation is the key:

Read the content of the module thoroughly before the training session and identify key areas where more effort or time may be required during the training.

Time management:

Allocate time wisely across the different sections of the module, focusing more on areas that are complex or require deeper understanding. Monitor time during discussions and exercises to ensure that all topics are covered within the allocated time frame.

Leadership skills:

Encourage participants to remain focused and engaged during discussions and guide participants to stay on topic and promote an inclusive environment where everyone feels comfortable sharing their thoughts and ideas.

Preparation for the discussion:

Anticipate potential discussion points and prepare prompts or questions to facilitate meaningful discussions. Be prepared to redirect discussions back to the main topic if they get off track.

Provide guidance:

Offer guidance and support to participants during exercises or activities. Be prepared to give examples or explanations to clarify concepts or instructions, especially in the assessment forms.

Provide examples or examples of how to explain or explain concepts or concepts in a practical way:

Familiarize yourself with the assessment forms, anticipate questions or areas in which participants may need guidance, and help anyone who needs it to successfully complete all questions.

Flexibility:

Remain flexible and adaptable to unexpected changes or challenges during the training session and adjust the pace or delivery of content based on the needs and dynamics of the group. The exercises and good practices are to reinforce the knowledge you have projected to the participants, be flexible if necessary about the group's capacity to reframe some of the exercises, times or materials. The aim is to motivate the trainees and keep them motivated and remain in the program with a high sense of interest.

We will be happy to receive your feedback after the training especially if there are any suggestions for corrections or re-framing.

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