Value of Failure
Students Course

Module 1: Basics of failure
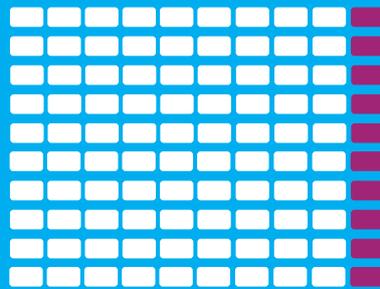
Students Workbook

Learner Name: _____

Assessor/Tutor: _____

value
of
failure

Did you know that...

...in some sectors up to
90 % of new businesses fail
in the first 5 years?

Table of Content

Did you know that...

...the value of failure makes re-starters grow faster and stronger than first-timers?

I Working with this Workbook

Learning without additional working materials does seldom lead to learning success. The Value of Failure Project therefore designed additional workbooks for tutors as well as for learners to support a fast and productive learning environment. Those workbooks follow the structure of the Value of Failure Learning Resources and give additional information and content.

The Students Workbooks for each of the modules should be seen as a helping hand for learners. They provide help, tasks and additional information. Free pages give room for your individual notes.

We also recommend to study the additional literature and online resources provided on the Value of Failure Website and the Value of Failure Pearltrees Account.

Following resources are provided on the project website:

- Tutors Workbooks
- Learners Workbooks
- Presentations

To enrich the learning experience we are looking forward to your feedback:

⊖ www.valueoffailure.com

Legend

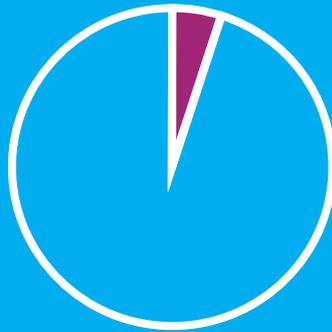|	
Presentation	
Workbook	
Example	
Remember	
Digression	
Law	
Learned	
Checklist	
Link	
Video	

Did you know that...

...only about **8 %** of failed entrepreneurs start over again?

II About the Project

Value of Failure is a European Union funded grass roots initiative to support a better framework for so called failed or second chance entrepreneurs. The idea is to implement a new positive approach to failure in general and to business failure in specific. The project is funded by the European Union within the Erasmus+ framework.

The approach of the project is to address this important topic from two different sides:

1. Regional alliances involve all important stakeholders to set up more a failing- friendly environment and funding framework. The project develops a tool-kit for other regions to develop franchises of the alliances on their own.

2. A set of learning resources addressing students as well as second chance entrepreneurs are set up to implement a seed for a new thinking about failure and providing in depth knowledge about failure and how to cope with it.

All materials produced are open source and can be used by anyone according to the rules provided in the disclaimer at the end of this publication.

More information about the project, the e-learning courses and the regional alliances can be found on the project website

⦿ www.valueoffailure.com

The project is developed, designed and implemented by an experienced international consortium of universities, business development agencies, consulting companies and SMEs (small and medium sized enterprises) coming from Germany, Northern Ireland and Poland:

1. University of Szczecin, Poland (Project Leader)
The University of Szczecin (US) is the most powerful organisation in the West Pomeranian region. Presently over 30.000 students are following full-time, evening & part-time studies in 27 subject areas at 13 faculties. One of the most important objectives of the University is education of students and their preparation for entering labour markets. International cooperation comprises an extremely important aspect of US's activity. The top priorities are joint research and student & staff mobility programs.

⦿ www.english.usz.edu.pl

2. Canice Consulting, Northern Ireland
Canice Consulting is a small yet established private company based in Northern Ireland which operates in the fields of local and regional development, enterprise education and management and technical support to EU networks and programmes.

Canice Consulting provides a broad range of modern learning services to predominantly the EU market place. Services include training solutions, e-learning content creation, learning technologies and learning strategy design and consulting. Learning technologies include learning portals, learning management systems, content development systems, performance support tools, virtual classroom tools and more.

⦿ www.caniceconsulting.com

3. Creo Mind S.C., Poland
CREO MIND (CM) is a civil partnership established from two sole traders: Wojciech Brażuk and Prestige Brand Mariusz Woźniak. The company has wide experience in consulting services in the area of marketing, business development, strategic management and skills development. The owners of CREO MIND have been closely collaborating with the Northern Chamber of Commerce, providing their services for the largest regional chamber of commerce in Poland. Therefore CREO MIND has a strong potential in networking of entrepreneurs and in building relations among various stakeholders of regional market. CREO MIND has elaborated number of analysis and expertise on business and markets. CREO MIND is also recognized on the regional market from elaborating and realizing creative and innovative marketing campaigns and events.

⦿ www.websitecreomind.com

Did you know that...

...31% of projects fail?

4. Enterprise Northern Ireland, Northern Ireland

Enterprise Northern Ireland was established in 2000 to represent the network of Local Enterprise Agencies in Northern Ireland, and is the only membership body in Northern Ireland for organisations providing enterprise support. Enterprise Northern Ireland holds national contracts with various public sector organisations which it delivers primarily though its member agencies. These contracts include the Regional Start Initiative; Social Entrepreneurship, Exploring Enterprise, Tradelinks programme and Business Bootcamp. All of these programmes are further supported by access to finance through the ENI Loan Fund and the Northern Ireland Small Business Loan Fund.

As the only membership body in Northern Ireland for organisations providing enterprise support, Enterprise Northern Ireland is at the heart of a dynamic, high profile network. Enterprise Northern Ireland also represents the interests of the wider small business sector through policy and business development, research and quality assurance, and has a strong lobbying and campaigning remit.

← www.enterpriseni.com

5. The visionworks, Germany

The Visionworks is a small company specialized on consulting, coaching, marketing and project management especially for (micro) SMEs and Start-ups. For its clients the visionworks develops investor ready business plans and financing concepts and accompanies founders until the closing of financing. The visionworks has international contacts to public and private investors and has also worked extensively with all relevant regional stakeholders and institutions which are relevant for the regional Second Chance Entrepreneurs Alliance. Despite that the visionworks has great experience in developing learning courses and learning environments for adult education as well as for students.

← www.thevisionworks.de

Did you know that...
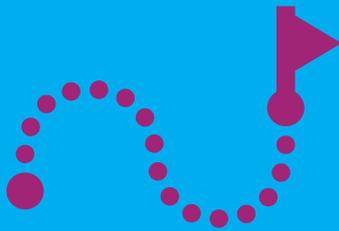
...**88%** of projects
are past the deadline?

III About this Course

Course Overview

The Value of Failure Course was designed for adult learners, including high-school teachers, undergraduates and the interested public. For teachers and tutors, the course will look at advances in psychological knowledge about failure which helps them to integrate this important topic into their teaching. For adult learners, it will help them to appreciate the positive effects of failure and their potential impact on their everyday life. The goal of the course is to make the existing positive effects of failure accessible to everybody.

The course can be used in a classroom environment as well as a self-contained distance learning course. Distributed free of charge on the Value of Failure project website.

⊖ www.valueoffailure.com

Course Components

The syllabus of the Value of Failure course is divided into seven different units called modules Each of them focussing on different aspects of failure.

Module 1: Basics of failure
Module 2: What is Failure
Module 3: Causes of Failure
Module 4: Preventing Failure
Module 5: How to detect Failure
Module 6: Cooping with Failure
Module 7: Learning from Failure

Each module is divided by sub-sections and can be used as a stand-alone learning session. Therefore each module starts with an introduction about the course which can be skipped if you have studied the previous modules already . All modules include additional resources such as videos and also provides questionnaires, examples and tests where appropriate.

Did you know that...

...the average cost overrun
of projects is 189%?

IV About this Module

Module 1: Basics of failure

Introduction

The biggest missperception people have about failure is that it is all bad - each failure can contain all sorts of helpful information. And in fact, failure does teach us much more than success usually does.

As long as things are "just" successful, they don't teach us much. Maybe they lead others to copy the same approach - but that's already most of it. Once things go wrong, we can learn a lot about the plans that worked and those that did not work. We can generalise learnings and use them in different situations and different fields.

In fact, we are still profiting from failures that happened thousands of years ago - in engineering or construction for example. Vitruvius, a Roman architect for example provides interesting and still up to date information about failure and especially on shared knowledge in his book called "De Architectura" - written in the first century B.C. Most of the brightest minds that have ever lived have made serious mistakes. Galileo for example, recognized as one of the most brilliant geniuses, made wrong assumptions in some of his theories - and people followed them for centuries even though the results where wrong.

Failure is part of our everyday life - failing is common and everywhere, but unfortunately failing is not really accepted in our society. People do not like to talk, discuss or even think about failure. But actually they should. There is nothing bad about failing. Thinking about failure in general and in specific before starting a project or especially a company helps to prevent failing and, if not preventing it - it helps coping with the effects of failing. Mankind is failing and learning from failure ever-since. Even though we are learning from failure, we still fail again now and then.

This module gives an overview about the basics of the theoretical background of failure and provides some self assessments to learn about your personal perceptions of success and failure. It gives examples of important failures and it lets people talk who where not expected to have failed.

The goal is to develop a basic understanding of failure in general and the first steps and skills necessary to identify, analyse and optimize the learning experience from failures.

You will discover how to detect the first warning signals, enabling them to explore the possibility of either modifying the original plan or moving forward, gaining the best possible experience and insights from failure.

Additional information can be found on our website and our Pearltrees-Account:

⊖ www.valueoffailure.com

⊖ www.pearltrees.com/thevalueoffailure/

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Did you know that...
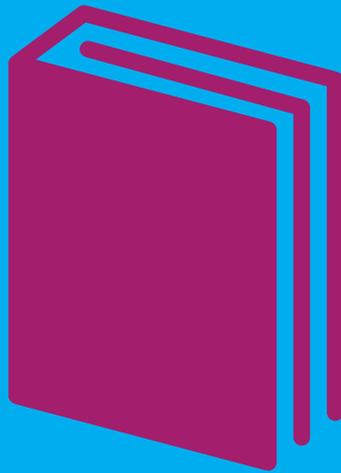
...Stephen King threw away his entire draft of "Carrie"? His wife found it in the trash and the book later launched his career with now more than 350 Million books sold.

V Learning Achievements

In this module you will learn about: Achieved   Date

1. Perceptions of success and failure
You will learn how different mindsets control your personal perception of success and failure in the context of goals, responses, effort, and different strategies.
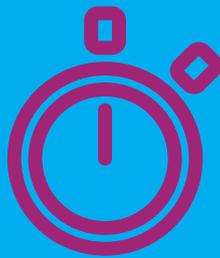
2. Hope and Fears
You will learn about the basics of hope theory and will understand that fear of failure is preventing from success, and that hope can be nurtured.

3. Achievement motivation
You will learn about the basics of motivation theory and how the "Need for Achievement" and the "Need to avoid Failure" affect your personal strategies.

Did you know that...

...the average time overrun of
projects is 222%?

Module 1: Basics about success and failuure
Chapter 1.1 Perception of success and failure

How do you feel before starting an important or difficult task? Do you think about the potential outcomes? Do you prepare yourself painstakingly or do you start just right away? Do you fear difficulties or do you just see the rewards waiting for you?

And while working on the task? Are you totally focussed on your work or do you drift away thinking about the positive or negative consequences of the results?

Imagine you do not get the results of your work right away. Do you start something new or do you remain thinking about your last performance. Do you nervously check the bulletin boards or the class website everyday to see if the grades are ready yet?

And what happens once the results are there and the consequences are obvious? Do you analyse your performance? Do you ask yourself "Why did I get this grade?" or even blame yourself "I could have done better?"

It is obvious that people do answer those questions in very different ways. Let's start the course with two easy tasks.

Task 1.1 Definitions of success, failure and related factors

Write down your own definitions for the following words. Keep your answers - we come back to them once in a while during the different modules of this course.
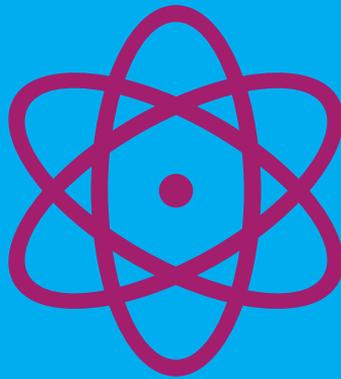
Topic	Your personal definition
Success	

Did you know that...

...that James Dyson created
5,126 failed prototypes of his
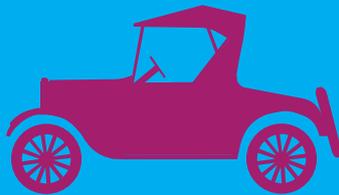vacuum cleaner before succeeding?

Failure	
Performance	

Did you know that...

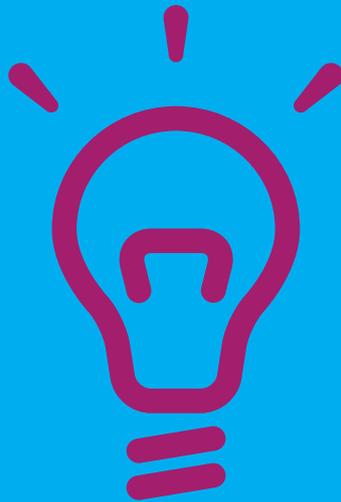...Albert Einstein had some communication and learning difficulties in school?

Motivations	
Hope	

Did you know that...

...Henry Ford failed with a couple of automobile businesses before he learned from his failures and revolutionized the automotive industry?

Fear	
Luck	
Fear	

Did you know that...

...Thomas Edison has been told
by his teachers to be "too stupid
to learn" before he invented some
world-changing gadgets and applied
for more than 1000 patents?

Ability	
Difficulty	

Did you know that...
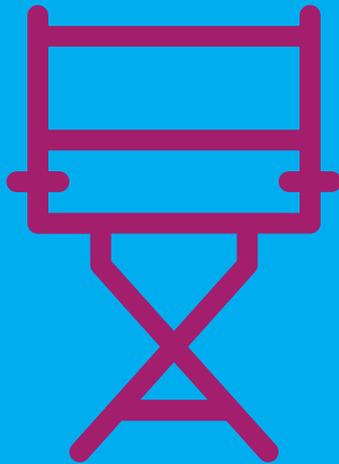
...Steven Spielberg was rejected by the University of Southern California School of Cinematic Arts multiple times before he won three Academy Awards?

Task 1.2 Success and Failure

Think about two different important personal examples: One task where you succeeded and another one, where you failed badly. Now analyse those situations with regards to the circumstances, the level of your preparation, your performance while fulfilling the tasks and the outcomes.

	Example of Success	Example of Failure
Describe your Example (What was the task, what where the circumstances, how did you feel when fulfilling it, etc.)		
Describe why the task was important to you		

Did you know that...

...R.H. Macy failed with a couple of businesses before he started Macy's and became Americas No.1 retailer with about 800 stores?

|		
Describe how you prepared yourself		
How did you feel while fulfilling the task?		

Did you know that...

...Colonel Harland David Sanders
was fired from dozens of jobs before
founding KFC - one of the worlds best
known franchise brands?

What where the results?		
What where the reasons for success or failure? (Name at least 4 different reasons for the results of each of your examples)		

Did you know that...
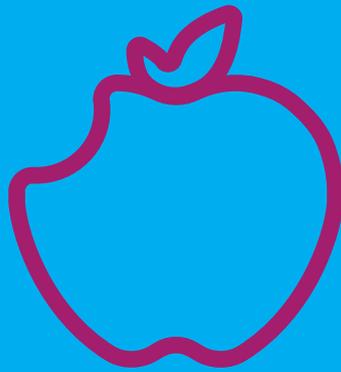
...Sir Isaac Newton failed miserably running the family farm after being pulled out of school by his mother? Later she realized that he was not a farmer at all and she let him finish his education.

If you are working in a group, pair up with a partner or in a small group and discuss

Usually the reactions on the outcomes of a certain tasks are complex. They combine emotional ones characterized by strong affective content as well as cognitive inferences about the causes of the outcomes. And as the reactions on outcomes are complex, the personal perceptions for success and failure are as well. Some people even deny that they failed.

Heider (1958), in his initial analysis of reactions on tasks, identified four phenomenologically prominent causes for success and failure:

- Ability
- Effort
- Luck
- Difficulty

Other researchers later augmented this list, finding that causal interpretations are often motivated by the personal need to sustain the self-image and therefore tend to be extensive. The interesting thing is that there are different types of people who interpret the causes of success and failure in a total different, even opposite way. While some people internalise success ("This results of my hard work and my profound knowledge of the topic") and externalise failure ("I did not have a chance due to the circumstances") others don't even realize the impact of their efforts on specific results ("I was just lucky" or "I always have bad luck").

But why is this the case? Why do have some people other perceptions of failure then the rest? This is what we try to analyse in the next chapter.

Did you know that...
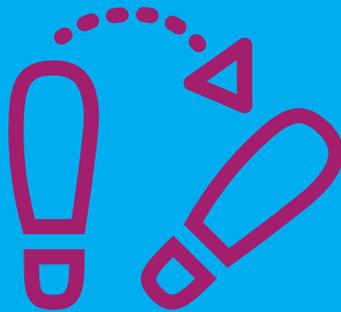
...Fred Astair has been judged as
follows after his first screen tests:
"Can't sing. Can't act. Slightly balding.
Can dance a little."

Chapter 1.2 Hopes and Fears

Different perceptions of success and failure and their causes are closely related to our hopes and fears.

We try to analyse this with an example:

⊙ Erik Weihenmayer

You may have heard about Erik Weihenmayer. He certainly knows a lot about failure and success. In 2001, Erik Weihenmayer became the first and only blind man in history who has reached the summit of Mount Everest (and by the way he also climbed the "Seven Summits" - the tallest peaks on each of the Earth's continents). Besides that, he is an accomplished paraglider, ice-climber, skier, and social entrepreneur. All this besides the fact that Erik lost his sight when he was 13 due to a hereditary disease called rethinoschisis. How is this man able to reach all those goals? He calls his willingness to fail one of the secrets to his success - failing helps him learning from the experience in ways that move him forward. But is he without fear of failure? No, he is not: "(...) often those fears they are overwhelming, the fair of flopping on our face, of looking stupid in front of our friends, of making a mistake in front of our colleagues, in front of our team, the fear that we are not as good at something as we wanted to be (...)." Erik is aware of the fact that fears can paralyse and stop us from reaching our goals.

▷ Watch the video of Erik Weihenmayer: http://bit.ly/1lAp9Ke

Task 1.3 Hopes and Fears

The following exercise gives you the opportunity to explore how your own hopes and fears affect you in success and failure. Take your time to think of as many different hopes and fears you had while succeeding or failing in the two different examples you listed above and list them in the table below. If you are working in a group, pair up with a partner or in a small group and discuss your hopes and fears and how they affected success and failure.

	Example of Success	Example of Failure
Hopes (List the hopes you had when starting the specific tasks)		

Did you know that...
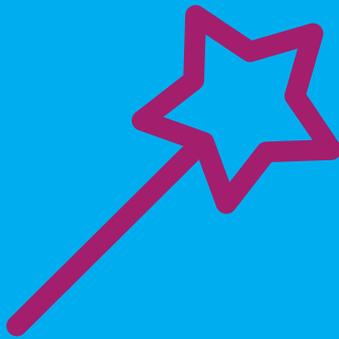
...J.K. Rowling was a single mom living off welfare when she began writing the first "Harry Potter" novel?

Fears (List the fears you had when starting the specific tasks)		

In contrast with theories of motivation based on biological and behavioral determinants are theories of motivation based on cognitive and social cognitive perspectives. Hopes and fears influence on our motivation and how we perform, and therefore if we succeed or fail. Recent findings demonstrate that fear of experiencing shame and embarrassment is central in the relationship between perfectionism and fear of failure, and that perfectionistic concern about mistakes and perceived pressure predict fear of experiencing shame and embarrassment and negative affect after failure (Sagar, Stoeber 2009).

Did you know that...

...Theodor Seuss Geisel (known as Dr. Seuss) has been rejected by 27 publishers before he became world famous for classics like "The Cat in the Hat" and "Green Eggs and Ham"? His books have now sold over 600 million copies.

Chapter 1.3 Achievement Motivation

We now understand that hopes and fears affect our motivation and our performance - and therefore if we succeed or fail. In literature this is referred to as "Achievement Motivation" or "Need for Achievement", the individual desire for accomplishment, mastering of skills or high standards.

According to developmental psychology the Need for Achievement is influenced by intrinsic motivation and expectations of others (extrinsic motivation). People with different levels of Need for Achievement choose different strategies to cope with tasks. Usually, the lower the Need for Achievement of a person in a situation is, the more he tries to minimize risks of failure. Or - surprisingly - chooses highly difficult tasks so that failure would not be so embarrassing. People with a high Need for Achievement usually choose moderately difficult tasks that are feeling challenging - but within reach. For those with a high Need of Achievement recognition of their achievements is the most satisfying reward.

Other factors influence the level of motivation and the likeliness of failure as well (Covington 1998):

1. Levels of Aspiration: Individual judgments of success or failure depend less on actual levels of performance, but more on the relationship between the individual's performances and aspirations.

2. Self-Confidence: Self-confidence reflects the extent to which individuals believe themselves if they are able to reach a certain goal.

3. Expectancy: Expectancy generally refers to perceived estimates of eventual success - no matter if the person is the cause of success or not.

4. Realistic Challenges: Sustained involvement in tasks requires a realistic match between the individual's capabilities and the demands of the task.

5. Self-Generated Goals: Setting own achievement goals allows to alter them as necessary. This again results in higher aspirations and higher achievements - performing at a current maximum.

6. Control of One's Own Progress: The feeling of control of one's own progress generates a positive dynamic that sustains involvement in a task.

Grouping those factors, Need for Achievement is a function of motive, expectancy (subjective probability), and incentive (Atkinson, 1957). This helps to understand why people choose tasks which differ in difficulty and why people perform differently in a given task.

The level of Need for Achievement can be tested professionally in different ways. You might want to try the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) which can be done online here:

⬅ **http://www.utpsyc.org/TATintro/**

Did you know that...
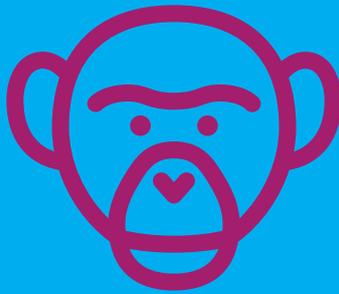
...Charles Darwin was considered an average student and dropped out of University to become a parson before he started to study nature and changed science with his discovery of evolution?

⚕ Summary

The goal of this module was to develop a basic understanding of failure in general and the first steps and skills necessary to identify, analyse and optimize the learning experience from failures.

You have learned which factors influence your Need for Achievement and how this again influences your performance and the likeliness to fail with a certain task. But in fact, failing is a matter of perception and aspiration in the first place.

You should try to remember this when analysing warning signals for failure in the next modules.

Additional information, literature and resources can be found on our website and our Pearltrees-Account:

⬅ www.valueoffailue.com

⬅ www.pearltrees.com/thevalueoffailure/

Did you know that...
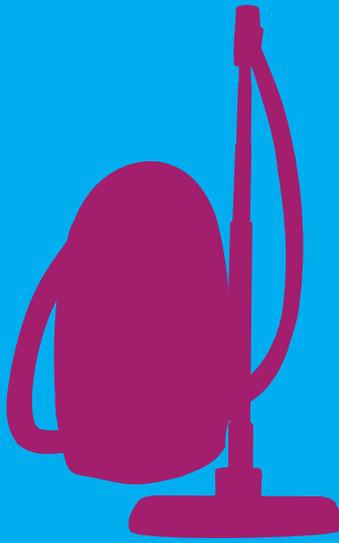
...Sir James Dyson needed 5,126 failed prototypes and more than 15 years before inventing the worlds best selling bagless vacuum cleaner?

Notes

V Disclaimer

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