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A GUIDEBOOK FOR YOUTH WORKERS AT SANKARIT-ACTIVITY

**Producing orientation material for youth workers working with
youth with disabilities in a youth centre environment**

ABSTRACT

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Sankarit-activity, or shortly Sankarit, is an activity organised by City of Helsinki for youth with disabilities. The aim of the activity is to create a space for youth with disabilities where they can practice social skills and participate in activities of their own choosing.

Sankarit has been organized since 2001. Despite its long history, Sankarit-activity does not have an official guidebook and they do not organize time devoted to exercise and practice for new employees. The aim of this thesis was to produce the first official guidebook for future youth workers at Sankarit-activity. The goal of the guidebook is to make beginning work at Sankarit as proficient as possible. This is achieved by providing new employees with general information about Sankarit-activity, contact information, the most important task of a Sankarit youth worker, and directives for challenging scenarios amongst other useful information. These topics are presented in a variety of different forms including text, picture, video and PowerPoint presentations to accommodate different modes of learning.

This is a product-based thesis. Collecting data to this thesis was achieved using participant observation method and a questionnaire. The questionnaire questions and observations that are presented in the guidebook were selected according to their necessity to provide important tools and information to the future Sankarit workers.

One of the requirements for new Sankarit youth workers is that they speak Finnish. Because of this, Sankarit-activity solicited the product to be written in Finnish. The resulting guidebook is in the form of a Prezi presentation. The Prezi was saved both online and to a local computer file at Sankarit-activity. It takes approximately 20 minutes to finish, depending on the person. Sankarit-activity was both the subscriber and work-life partner of the product. According to the evaluation received from the Sankarit-activity managers, the aim of the guidebook was achieved, and they were satisfied with the product.

Keywords: Employee orientation, Sankarit-activity, Questionnaire, Participant observation, Youth Work, Youth with disabilities.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Sankarit-activity, or shortly Sankarit, is leisure time activity organized and funded by the city of Helsinki for youth with disabilities. It was established in 2001 by Anu Mattila and Sanna Trast in their thesis at Diak Bachelor's Degree Programme in Social Services. Sankarit operates under The Youth Division of City of Helsinki. The name Sankarit translates to Heroes in English. It is the name that the Sankarit youth elected to call their activity evenings. The eponym Sankarit is used in the thesis out of respect for the youth's right to name their own activity, and because I do not believe that all proper nouns necessarily need to be translated into English.

At the beginning of the year 2020, Sankarit moved from their previous location in Happi youth centre, to a new location in Lauttasaari youth centre Apaja. The transition into a new decade and location served as an opportunity for improving the service. One way to improve the quality of service was by creating a guidebook for future youth workers.

My relationships with Sankarit commenced in 2018 while completing my second practical placement. During the practice, I was requested to participate in Sankarit. This relationship continued for roughly one and a half years, including a time spent as a reserve employee and later an official employee at Sankarit for six months. Becoming a Sankarit employee does not require an educational background in either social services or any similar degree program. Nevertheless, there must be a standard of professionalism at the workplace that is applicable for working with youth. Even though there have not been any major incidents involving youth workers in Sankarit, in order to continue that conduit, it is important to have some form of guarantee that each employee knows their tasks and that they have the necessary tools to perform them successfully. Both Sankarit management and I shared this concern. Considering their needs, Sankarit management commissioned a guidebook from me partly because of its necessity and the familiarity between myself and Sankarit-activity.

The result is a product-based thesis, which produced a guidebook. The guidebook compensates for the fact that Sankarit does not organize time devoted to exercise and practice for new employees. The contents of the guidebook are determined by the results of a questionnaire from the current Sankarit youth workers and participant observation by me. In addition, a Word Cloud survey from the youth was conducted, however, it is not a part of the theoretical framework.

To clarify, the thesis uses the expression Sankarit-activity when referring to the activity. The thesis uses the term youth workers when referring to the Sankarit employees from the youth perspective, and Sankarit employees when referring to the labor hired by the Sankarit-activity. The guidebook is meant to benefit the future Sankarit youth workers and employees as well as Sankarit-activity as a whole. It will give new employees the necessary tools to feel confident at their work starting from the beginning. It will assist to mitigate the facilitation of new employees into Sankarit-activity by introducing them to the culture, customs and common rules of the activity. For example, currently there is no source from where an employee can verify the exact time when they are supposed to arrive to work or the time doors are closed at the youth centre. Answers to minor questions such as these will be quickly found from the guidebook without needing consultation from the management.

According to my experience, it is common that organizations and activities in the public sector do not organize time devoted to exercise and practice for new employees, because of budget and time resources. The goal of the product is to ensure a high level of professionalism in Sankarit-activity. One of the most common feedback from the youth towards Sankarit as an activity is that the employees are always friendly and reliable. Upholding that level of trust and comfort is one of the main priorities of Sankarit. After all, Sankarit would not be needed if the youth did not find the activity to be enjoyable.

2 BACKGROUND OF THE PRODUCT

In this chapter, I review the background of the project. Firstly, I define the main aim and objectives of the guidebook. Secondly, I inform who the stakeholders and target group are. Thirdly, I define Sankarit-activity on a general level. Lastly, I will review some of the earlier publications related to working with youth with disabilities and the challenges related to finding such publications.

2.1 Aims and objectives

The thesis aimed to create the first official Sankarit youth workers' guidebook. The guidebook is intended to be used as orientation material in Sankarit-activity by providing support to new Sankarit employees during the beginning of their work career. The guidebook provides support in three main areas. Compressed as shortly as possible they are (1) what is the main objective of Sankarit-activity as a whole, (2) what are the most important tools of Sankarit youth workers and (3) what are the main responsibilities of Sankarit employees? In addition to these areas, the guidebook contains helpful information about the youth centre, its location, and the most important contacts for youth workers.

The guidebook is also intended to provide moral support to new employees. It is important to remember that the tools and skills of a youth worker gradually expand along with their work experience and that no one is a professional from the beginning. This is called continuous professional development (Harrison & Wise 2010, 198.) In order to develop though, employees need encouragement and support.

The objective of this thesis was to gather information from questionnaires as well as observation and using that intelligence to create a guidebook for future youth workers in Sankarit. Since Sankarit employees often have different work backgrounds, the guidebook is designed for all new employees regardless of their work contracts with Sankarit, work experience, or educational background.

2.2 Stakeholders and target group

The definition of a stakeholder is shortly anyone who has an interest in the organization (in this case activity) and who is in an interactive relationship with the organization's product (Worsley 2016, 20). In practice, this means everyone involved in the project is a stakeholder on at least some level. The level of involvement varies depending on the role the stakeholder has in the creation and when using the product.

The first stakeholder of the product is the author of the project, me. The second stakeholder is the Sankarit-activity, who have commissioned the guidebook. Thirdly, the Sankarit youth themselves, for without the service users there would not be a need for the work. However, the main target group of the product, the party for whom the product is created, are the future Sankarit youth workers.

2.3 Sankarit-activity at Apaja youth centre

The declaration on the rights of disabled persons was announced in 1975 (OHCHR. Declaration on the Right of Disabled Persons). The declarations purpose was to ensure human rights to people with disabilities such as the right to seek medical assistance, right for financial security, right to live close to family and relatives whenever that is possible, right to have a guardian and right to be protected from exploitation (Kaski, Manninen, Pihko 2012, 146-147). Human rights themselves are not enough to reach equality. Society must change and adapt so that every member of its unit can be a contributing part of it. This is called integration. Inclusion is the effort to actively include different members of society into its circle (Kaski et al. 2012, 146-147.)

In its essence, Sankarit-activity was created as one solution to the question of how we can make our society more integrated and inclusive (Mattila & Trast 2001). The aim has always been to create pathways of pursuing happiness for the youth. Sankarit has been ongoing for nearly 20 years. The spirit of the

activity has remained relatively the same. This can be interpreted as meaning that the activity is highly relevant.

Creative club activity and extracurricular activity may be beneficial to prompt positive self-image to people with disabilities. It is advisable for people with disabilities to participate in artistic activities such as arts and crafts, drama club, and others alike. (Kaski et al. 2012, 207-208.) Creative club activities may help create new bonds between youth, and that way contribute to the wellbeing of the youth. Sankarit-activity evenings was created to provide meaningful recreational activity for youth with disabilities. Sankarit-activity will be approached from a descriptive point of view below, and from a youth work point of view in chapter 4.3.

Sankarit-activity is organized every Monday from 17:30 to 20:30. Sankarit vol.2 is organized on Friday every other week at the same time and place. In terms of activity, the content of the evenings and the responsibilities of the youth workers vol.1 and vol.2 do not differ in any way. Sankarit employees' shift typically begins at 16:45 and ends at 21:00. The first 45 minutes are used for planning and discussing with the team about the upcoming evening. Also, other preparations can be made during that time according to the evenings' plan. Sankarit staff meetings have a semi-structured form, meaning that time is devoted to certain topics in relation to the evenings' structure and theme. For example, on those evenings that there is some organized activity, such as games or movie nights, the focus is more on how the activity is arranged and who is responsible of which areas.

Many different activities occur during a typical Sankarit evening. The schedule and plans are based on the suggestions made by the youth and financial possibilities. An official schedule is planned and posted on the Sankarit webpages in the beginning of each season. The fall 2020 schedule would have included karaoke nights, game nights, cooking, arts, and crafts and national holiday celebrations such as Easter and workers day to mention a few. However, due to the coronavirus pandemic, Sankarit-activity was canceled from 16.3.2020 until 31.5.2020 as of the time of writing.

Sankarit-activity includes many different forms of activities, some of which cannot be organized indoors. However, the base of the activity is in youth centre Apaja located in Lauttasaari, Helsinki. Apaja youth centre shares the same building as the Lauttasaari library, Happi Pride youth gathering (Munstadi. HappiPride) and the Swedish-speaking youth centre Drumsö (Munstadi. Drumsö). Sankarit vol.2 is organized in Drumsö due there being less youth on Fridays. Apaja is intended for youth between the ages 9-12-year-olds during the daytime, and 13-17-year-olds during evenings. Sankarit youths are however, between the ages of 15-29 (Munstadi. Sankarit). At the beginning of the relocation there were some concerns about the considerable age differences between the youngest and oldest youth. Ethical considerations had to be revised on how to accommodate youth as young as 13-year-old with 29-year-old youth in the same facility, however the adaptation passed better than anticipated. According to my observations, the youth who had gone to Apaja before took notice of the new youth in an inclusive manner and were able to share the space and equipment very well.

Apaja youth centre is well equipped with both indoor and outdoor sporting activities as well as games, gadgets, and musical instruments. According to observations made by me and the Apaja webpages, there are possibilities to play pool, table tennis, air hockey, foosball, and console games as well as many other board games. There is also an indoor football field where it is possible to play floorball, futsal or for example, organize a disco. There is a mini ramp outside that can be used in the summer. Compared to the Sankarit previous location Apaja has considerably more options for activities than before.

For youth to participate in the activities they must apply for a Jässäri-membership card. The membership card is valid in all Helsinki, Espoo and Vantaa youth centres and it is valid until the age of 29. (Munstadi. Get Your own Membership Card.) In addition to the scheduled themes, there are always reoccurring events in Sankarit. Salatut Elämät is viewed nearly every evening. Also, music and singing are highly popular activities.

There are six employees on Monday evenings and three employees on Friday evenings. There are between 30-50 youth on Monday and less than 20 on

Friday (Munstadi. Sankarit). In relation, it means that there is approximately 5-8 youth per youth worker on Monday and three on Friday. According to my observations, Sankarit evenings are commonly attended by people with different agendas. There is the youth who are there to spend their free time, youth workers, assistants, volunteer workers, parents, and friends. Perhaps the most important activity among the youth is to socialize with peers and Sankarit youth workers.

Sankarit youth workers are also tasked with keeping the facilities and equipment in order. Youth workers need to supervise the equipment so that it is not misused or broken. Youth workers also need to ensure that the gadgets and equipment are evenly distributed and that each youth has a chance to use them. One of the tasks of the youth worker is to ensure that the equipment and facilities are suitable for all the youth. If a problem is discovered and cannot be solved with the tools and skills that are available, the obligation of the youth workers is to guarantee that the case is brought to the responsible people.

Sankarit have their own internal rules which they have formulated together with the youth works. There are 10 basic rules that everyone must follow. Bullying and discrimination is on top of the list which enforces the city of Helsinki non-discrimination policy in public places (City of Helsinki, 2018). This is followed by an instruction to let everyone be at peace. Respecting one another is also a rule at Sankarit. Arguments must be resolved by talking, meaning that fighting is absolutely forbidden, as is spreading rumors and falsehoods. If differences occur, the youth must give each other space. Everyone must ask for consent from other people before physical contact. Everyone is also responsible for cleaning after themselves. Youth frequently lose or leave their items after they leave which is why they must take care of their own belongings. Lastly, but not least, everyone should make an effort to make sure that everyone else is enjoying themselves. Each new Sankarit member agrees to these rules in order to participate in the activities. Unified internal rules create safety and security. The rules poster is easy to refer to if they are forgotten from time to time.

Youth centre Apaja have their own rule or guidelines that are mentioned in their webpages. Preadolescent have more specific guidelines than others to assist them to manage in the beginning. All youth who attend Apaja must have a valid membership card called “jässäri”. Consuming and bringing any type of energy drink is strictly forbidden. Youth centre Apaja is a substance-free zone. Parents are always informed when signs of intoxication are discovered, even if only suspected. It is not required for the youth to know all the rules before coming to the youth centre for the first time. Decent manners and good behavior are enough. (Munstadi. Käytännön asioita)

2.4 Publications related to working with youth with disabilities

In her publication Raus (2019) explores ethical considerations dealing with working with youth in a broader sense. Although a comprehensive and informative publication, it does not focus on working with youth with disabilities. Vähätalo writes about creating material for people aiming at working with youth with intellectual disabilities (ID) in her thesis Material for evening clubs designed for young people with disabilities (2011). The goal of the activity is to help guide youth with ID in maturing to becoming adults who are committed to the church. Finally, of course, there is the thesis that created Sankarit activity A Youth centre Integration Project for Disabled Young by Mattila & Trast (2001).

I made a thorough search in Diaconia University of Applied Sciences online library Finna. I also consulted Sankarit-activity managers and youth workers whether they had any information on publications related to working with youth with disabilities in a youth centre environment. My impressions were that similar secular products like the one of this thesis are hard to find or nonexistent in Finland, and perhaps very rare in other countries. This speaks for the need of the product.

3 KEY CONCEPTS AND DATA COLLECTION

In this chapter, I will present the key concepts and data collection methods. The data collection methods are questionnaire and participant observation. The key concepts are employee orientation and youth work with youth with disabilities. To ensure that the reference material is topical, references older than 15 years were not used.

3.1 Employee orientation

The antitheses of this thesis could be “why is orientation important in the first place?” Orienting new employees by organizing an introduction is essential for preparing them to perform their job as quickly as possible. Employee orientation is usually a time-bound single event designed to convey the most essential information about the organization to new employees. Orientation typically includes necessary paperwork, introduction to safety and health regulations and introduction to the organization’s mission, and objective. Ordinary, orientation last one day. (Davila & Pina-Ramirez 2018, 1.)

Orientation is a part of onboarding. Onboarding is a more lengthy process that concludes when the new employee is ready to contribute to the organization and they understand its aims and their own role. (Davila & Pina-Ramirez 2018, 1.) Onboarding can last up to three months, which is why it will not be the aim of the thesis as such.

The difference between a well-prepared orientation and one that is not done with enough care is significant. A proper orientation can present the new employee with important information that can make a difference between risks that are avoided. In worst cases, a poorly planned orientation can be outdated safety rules that put people in the organization at risk. (Hyvä perehdytys-opas 2007, 7.)

Currently, all employees and managers are responsible for orienting a new employee into Sankarit-activity. However, the main responsibility of orientation falls into the highest-ranking employee who is available. The responsibility of learning is also in the hands of the person being oriented. One must keep an open mind, ask questions, and be prepared to step out of their comfort zone while being oriented (Hyvä perehdytys-opas 2007, 13).

In addition to the reasons above for the importance of orientation, the law on Occupational Safety and Health act (L 2002/738) demands that employers must provide their employees the necessary information of the workplaces safety and health regulations in order to minimize risks in physical, mental or social hazards at the workplace. Young Workers Act (L 998/1993) dictates that the employers must provide young workers who lack work experience with adequate information and tools for them to be able to perform well at their jobs. Although it takes time for youth workers to be orientated, time is saved in the long run by shortening the time it would ordinarily take for new employees to learn their tasks in the organization.

3.2 Youth with disabilities

There are several different terms that are commonly used to describe people with disabilities. Terms also frequently get lost in translation, and languages evolve. It is extremely important especially for academic papers to be up to date with the most politically correct terminology to avoid offending anyone. According to the National Disability Authority the politically correct term is people with disabilities, which is also the term that will be used in this thesis (National Disability Authority. Appropriate Terms to Use).

A person's disability is always in relation to the environment they live in. Places and paces can be poorly designed to accommodate the different needs used by people, and not the other way around. According to the World Health Organization, the term disabilities can be used to describe many different qualities such as impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions. (World Health Organization. Disabilities.) People with disabilities have the

same needs as non-disabled people. However, the abilities and available resources for people with disabilities to seek services they require are often limited and may not be achievable without assistance. One of the purposes of Sankarit is to guarantee that youth with disabilities have the same possibilities for socialization and activities as their non-disabled peers.

It is important to differentiate disabilities from other disorders such as movement disorders. Disability is typically diagnosed before the age of 18. After the age of 18 disability, for example, learning disability, is diagnosed as dementia. (Kaski et al. 2012,15-17). Each person has their own personal factors that affect their performance. These factors may cause other health-related problems such as hearing and vision disabilities, which in turn might affect the performance capabilities of individuals. Despite having disabilities, everyone also possesses strengths. Everyone has the ability to develop and learn with the right support. (The Finnish Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. Intellectual Disability).

There are approximately 40 000 people with disabilities in Finland (Vernerä). However, if we count all types of disabilities that develop before the age of 18, including intellectual disability, down syndrome, cerebral palsy, specific language impairments, epilepsy, minimal brain dysfunction and other similar conditions, the number of people suffering from disabilities would be significantly higher. According to some estimates, the occurrence of the previously mentioned disabilities is 5-8% in a society, which would mean 250 000- 400 000 people in Finland (Kaski et al. 2012, 21.). Approximately 30% of the causes of disability remain unknown. (Finnish Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities).

Sankarit youth are diverse in many ways, such as culture, age, and disabilities. One of the best ways to become acquainted by the Sankarit youth is by watching the short documentary Sankarit video by Pietiläinen (2019). Based on personal observation and discussions with Sankarit employees, knowing about different types of disabilities and their medical epidemiology is not pivotal in order to function well as a Sankarit youth worker. Rather, it is more important to learn how to use youth work skills correctly such as listening, for example

when a youth is interested in talking about their health. For this reason, epidemiology will not be revised in the guidebook. However, there is some essential information about disabilities that can assist to perform the tasks of a youth worker more effectively. For example, knowing that people with a severe intellectual disability benefit from sensory perception and closeness may help when encountering a youth (Kaski et al. 2012, 20).

3.3 Webropol questionnaire

Currently, new Sankarit employees are trained into the work by older employees, which goes to prove that their work experience can be used as a source of knowledge to support new employees. Forming a questionnaire for current Sankarit-activity employees was an instrumental method of gathering relevant information about their work to be used in the guidebook.

Contrary to popular belief, questionnaires are not a synonym for surveys: they are one form of survey used to collect data (Guthrie 2010, 129). Questionnaires pose questions using a self-administered instrument (Ruane 2016, 164). The self-administered instrument, in this case, was the Webropol application. Webropol is an online survey and reporting tool used for multiple purposes including research and consultation, staff engagement surveys, and training (Webropol). Webropol functions by sending a predesigned email to selected recipients. The recipients then answer the questions, and the results are sent back into the Webropol online program anonymously. The program automatically deletes the answers after they are read, although they are possible to download into a local file before that happens.

The questionnaire was conducted with five Sankarit employees (Appendix 1 & 2). The questionnaire contained nine short questions, such as what the employees consider as being the most important skills in their work, what they wished they knew when they started, and helpful tips. I used open-ended questions to allow the youth workers tacit knowledge to surface. Open-ended questions are questions that allow the respondent to answer as freely as they wish to the survey (Ruane 2016, 171). Skillful open-ended questions can receive

comprehensive answers in the respondent's own words (Guthrie 2010, 130). The recipients of the questionnaire also received a persuasive cover letter (Appendix 1) that firmly, yet also politely indicated to them the reason for conducting the questionnaire (May 2010, 183).

I considered also other types of interviewing methods for this stage, such as a traditional interview. I chose the questionnaire approach due to the Sankarit employees' strict work hours and other important obligations. Because of my personal history with Sankarit-activity, I was confident that questionnaires would produce detailed and lengthy answers. In any case, additional questionnaires could have been easily made if the results were unsatisfactory. This stage required requesting permits from the Sankarit management.

3.4 Participant observation

Participant observation is a method in sociology in which the intention is to participate in the activities of the research subject in order to apprehend firsthand experiences from their inner culture, behavior, and ways. In its essence participant observation is a qualitative means of gathering information. (DeWalt & DeWalt 2010, 12.) According to Rodriguez-Lainz, Castañeda & Schenker the method can be described as disciplined qualitative data gathering method and can be used in producing detailed information from the subject (2014, 280.) My role as a participant in Sankarit-activity was that of an observer. An observing participant is one that makes their presence know (May 2010, 172). Participant observation in Sankarit-activities is crucial to understanding what happens during their evenings.

One of the duties of the youth workers is inspecting the facilities to prevent anyone from being left behind closed doors after closing hours. In order to perform this task, they need to know the places that youth might go to during their activities. To make the observations more systematic, four metrics in specific were focused on during my visits which were, time, location, people and events (Guthrie 2010, 111). I participated in Sankarit evenings three times while creating the product and thesis writing, from the beginning of January to

the end of February. However, participant observation is prone to reliability and validity issues. Complex situations may be difficult to interpret as they really are due to the researcher's bias. (Guthrie 2010, 110). To counterweight this a mixed method of data collection was used to improve the validity of the findings (Guthrie 2010, 129). It is important to not only disclose positive observations but also negative ones; otherwise, the method would lack scientific value. For this reason, I have made an effort to be both candid and fair in describing what I observed.

Sankarit re-located from Happi youth centre at the beginning of 2020. This change undoubtedly presented itself with both opportunities and challenges for the activity. The relocation may have affected the behavior of the youth in one way or another especially in the beginning, and youth workers must know how to accommodate feelings related to that. Discussing this subject with the current youth workers helped provide more insight into this process. However only discourse is not enough. This change had to be also be revised using participant observation methods.

4 PRODUCT DESIGN AND CONTENTS

In this chapter, I will disclose the different considerations that went into the design of the product and the contents of the product. I used project management tools such as product life cycle, product design, timetable management, and risks management in order to guarantee that the goal of the project was met., Debriefing, youth work in general, relevant legislation and personal boundaries will also be revised as they are relevant to address in the guide-book.

4.1 Product life cycle

It is foreseeable and welcomed that the product will undergo significant changes during its production and after it. Any stakeholder involved in the product may request changes to the product at any given time of the product's life cycle. (Project Management Institute 2017, 115). A product life cycle consists of four main stages: introduction, growth, maturity, and decline (Mindtools). The first stage of the product life cycle was conceiving the idea for the guide-book together with the Sankarit youth workers and manager.

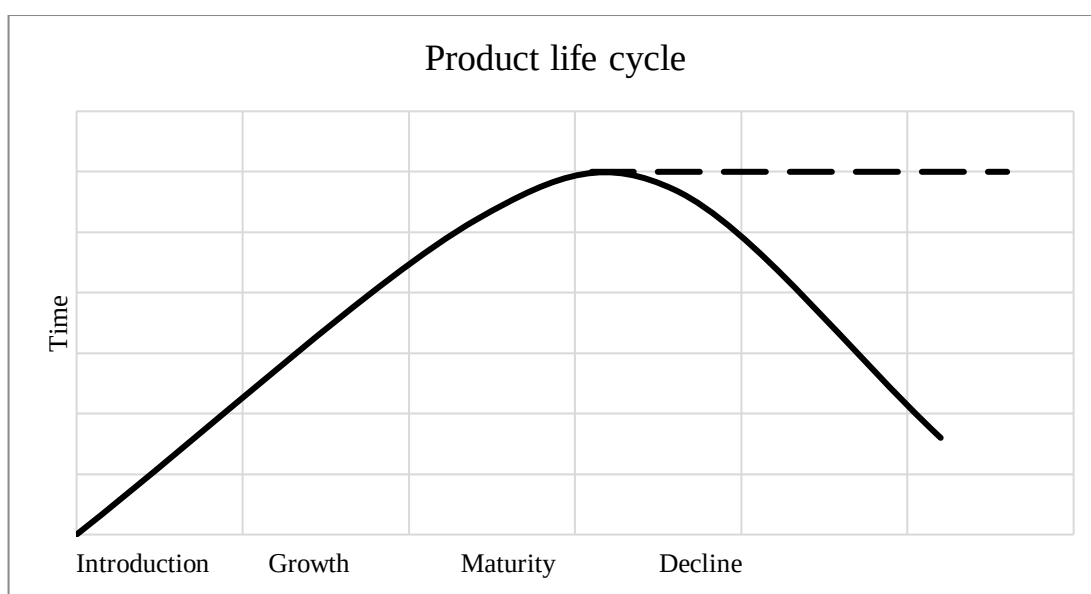


Figure 1. Product life cycle (Mindtools)

The introduction stage requires recognizing the need for the product. This happened when the Sankarit-activities managers originally commissioned the product. The growth stage of the product utilizes communicating with the Sankarit youth workers and sharing ideas. During this period, the product can differentiate itself from other competitors. The product is finally ready to be published and used by the public in its maturity stage. Unfortunately, it also means that the developer of the product is no longer required or able to update or improve the product. Usually, the value of the product begins declining after this point. (Mindtools. The product life cycle). However, in this case, the product can survive longer if the employees continue to update the product for it to remain topical to changing circumstances. This way it may continue to be relevant and useful for a longer time to the future Sankarit employees.

4.2 Product design

The product was implemented from concept to reality using the data collected from questionnaire results and observation. These two data gathering methods served as the backbone of the project. Questionnaires played a large role in determining what topics were presented in the guidebook. The questionnaire results and conversations with the youth workers gave them the opportunity to affect which themes were presented in the guidebook. For example, the questionnaires revealed that supporting, encouraging, and listening are more useful skills than actively looking for signs of intoxication. Participant observation was the most effective way of making observations at Apaja youth centre.

For practical reasons, the product is in the form of a Prezi presentation. Prezi is a free online presentation platform that is similar to Microsoft PowerPoint. Prezi allows the presentation of text, video, audio, and picture in a single format. Prezi utilizes more special movements, zooming in and out to create a more immersive experience (Prezi). A well-prepared Prezi presentation surpasses a physical handbook in many ways. It allows inputting video clips and other multimedia material. The product is slightly different from most of its equals by the form it is presented in. Most guidebooks are indeed handbooks, while this guidebook will be a Prezi presentation. This choice was made in

order to facilitate a more engaging orientation to the work experience and to save time. A presentation saved in a file on a computer can also be stored in a file storage service such as Google Drive. This prevents the product from getting lost or damaged easily. A multimedia presentation is also more compelling and easier to absorb than a traditional text handbook. The guidebook is made to resemble a board game to accommodate a suggestion made by one Sankarit youth worker.

The guidebook contains the most essential information for new employees including a brief history of Sankarit, common values, the task of the youth workers, most important tools, helpful information, general information about the youth and tips on which qualities are most valued in a Sankarit youth worker gathered from the questionnaire and Word Cloud. The colloquial language in Sankarit is Finnish. Therefore, the guidebook is also in Finnish and written in a way that is easily accessible by anyone who is hired to work as a Sankarit youth worker. Because of time constraints, the guidebook is also relatively brief for new employees to be able to apprehend the most important information about the work without using too much time out of work. The duration of the guidebook is approximately 20 minutes.

I attempted to benefit the Prezi format to its full capacity in order to support different modes of learning by including text, pictures, diagrams, links for further reading, and videos. One example of an important link is A guide for understanding, supporting, and affirming LGBTQI2-S children, youth, and families which “provides general information for service providers, educators, allies, and community members who seek to support the health and well-being of children and youth who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, intersex, and/or two-spirit (LGBTQI2-S) and their families” by Poirier, Fisher, Hunt, & Bearse (2014).

Table 1. Contents of the guidebook (Prezi)

1. Introduction to Sankarit
2. Important work-related information
3. Youth centre Apaja
4. Sankarit youth
5. Pictures from the youth center
6. Sankarit evenings routine
7. Most important tasks of the youth worker
8. Sankarit-activities
9. Sankarit Word Cloud
10. Health and Safety
11. Helpful tips from previous Sankarit youth workers
12. Important contacts, addresses and phone numbers
13. Final words



Illustration 1. The cover page for Sankarit guidebook for youth workers (Prezi).

The guidebook was visually inspired by the outlook of Pikku Kakkonen (a Finnish kids television show), the board game Alias and hopscotch.



Illustration 2. Introduction chapter (Prezi).

The color scheme was selected to be in liaison with the Sankarit-logo (White and blue characters on a red background), which was designed by one of the youths.



Illustration 3. A chapter on relevant legislation (Prezi)

Communicating with the current youth workers at Sankarit was especially important in the implementation process, to gain knowledge of the timetables, themes, and any other specific information concerning Sankarit evenings.

There was a reliable communication relationship between Sankarit youth workers and me. Functional communication channels also provided an opportunity to receive viewpoints and suggestions on the product.

I created the guidebook by self-learning how to use Prezi. To my advantage, I had earlier experience with working with the program for there was neither time nor resources available for a separate course.

4.3 Youth work at Sankarit

Based on discussions with Sankarit youth workers during participant observation visits, youth work with youth with disabilities and non-disabled youth is basically the same. The same social work tools and principles apply to both. In practice, there is some differences in the needs of youth with disabilities and non-disabled youth. Youth with disabilities may require more support in their activities than others, for example with operating electronic systems. Differences between youth work with youth with disabilities and non-disabled youth have been intentionally removed in Sankarit-activity to promote equality and to encourage inclusiveness at the youth centre. Sankarit youth workers function as youth workers for all the youth in Apaja. All the youth also share the same space and properties.

Sankarit-activity provides the youth with the possibility to create happy experiences together or alone. The activity is also intended to be a safe place and space for youth with disabilities to interact and socialize with others in their age group (Munstadi. Sankarit). The role of the youth workers is to facilitate that objective using social work tools such as supporting, encouraging, insuring safety and listening. As youth workers at Sankarit, it is important to respect the choices made by the youth on their preferred activities, also when they choose not to participate in any activity. In addition to these skills, youth workers must be able to assort and assess unwanted behavior such as to notice intoxication, difficulties at home, and mental health problems. On many occasions, youth workers utilize a variety of skills that even they themselves may not be aware they are using (Harrison & Wise 2010, 12-13). This might transpire in situations

where a youth worker is received as being easily approachable from the perspective of the youth, while the youth worker only experiences that they are simply doing their jobs and socializing with the youth.

On many occasions, youth workers utilize a variety of skills that even they themselves may not be aware they are using (Harrison & Wise 2010, 12-13). This might transpire in situations where a youth worker is received as being easily approachable from the perspective of the youth, while the youth worker only experiences that they are simply doing their jobs and socializing with the youth.

Some youth may need assistance with setting up the games and advice on how to play. It is also important to keep in mind that the main objective of a youth worker in Sankarit is to do youth work, not be a personal assistant. Youth workers are encouraged to participate in games with the youth however in no circumstance can this task affect the youth worker's state of awareness on the other surrounding events. Youth workers must keep their focus on their actual work and never lose their attention to games.

As previously mentioned, there are no educational background requirements in order to become a Sankarit youth worker. The aforementioned skills are, however, essential in all youth work and must be addressed in the guidebook, even if only as to serve as a reminder to the new employee. It is important for a youth worker to be able to acknowledge distinct emotional states from various features that the youth choose to show and apply proper youth work tools to manage them. Based on personal work experience, I may comfortably state that a wide spectrum of emotional expression is not out of the ordinary on a typical evening. Knowing when to request support from other coworkers is an important skill. This is where the importance of reliable coworker relations comes to effect. Each youth worker also possesses different strengths that can be applied at the workplace. For example, I had previously worked as a security guard, which made me more aware of the facility's safety features. Every youth worker works with the abilities and attributes of their own personalities.

Sankarit youth arrive and depart from Apaja by different means and from different parts of Helsinki. In some instances, youth workers can facilitate the arrival and departure from the youth centre, by for example opening doors or checking for busses. One of the main tasks of the youth worker is also to ensure that the facilities are accessible to everyone. Youth workers are not responsible for repairing the structural problems they find, however they are obligated to inform about those problems to someone in charge, for example to the Sankarit manager. It is important for the youth worker not to become just a referee at the youth centre when conflicts arise, but to also encourage socialization actively. The role of the youth worker at Sankarit may often vary from promoting equality and equity to intervening in discriminatory behavior. Although, one must remember that youth do not constantly need youth workers around them, and that encouragement can easily become interruption when a situation is interpreted incorrectly. Social relations must form organically. Over-enthusiastic youth work might reduce how willing the youth are at participating in activities.

Youth workers must have the know-how on how to intervene in unwanted behavior such as violence occurring. During the one-and-a-half-years of work experience at Sankarit, I did not encounter a single severe aggressive situation and did not hear of one occurring. The impunity of others is a serious matter at Sankarit. There is zero tolerance towards aggressive, confrontational, or overall threatening behavior. Serious discussions always take place with the youth if that transpires. As an extreme measure, those youth who are unable to follow these basic principles can be banned from participating in Sankarit activity. This been said, youth workers are encouraged to visit Rikosuhripäivystys webpages beforehand in case they need to direct youth or request for support in transgressional situations (Riku). However, as said before, Sankarit is a place where youth come to create happy memories which is why situations such as these nearly never happen.

Stepping into a new environment full of new people can be frightening especially if one does not know anyone from there beforehand. One of the tasks of the youth worker is attempting to ensure a pleasant first experience. There are

several different ways how to encourage youth visiting for the first time in participating in the activities. Sankarit have so-called tutors how are volunteer youth how are tasked with paying attention to possible newcomers. Their “job” is to welcome them into the group, show them the facilities and activities, and introduce them to the other youth. Everyone shares the responsibility to make sure that no one is left alone. Sankarit youth workers organize the informal training and guidance of the tutors.

Each Sankarit evening is concluded with time dedicated to a lighter version of group debriefing from 20:30 until 21:00. Debriefing is a method in which a traumatic or stressful incident is processed guided by a professional (Tannenbaum & Cerasoli, 2012). Based on personal experience, observation, and dialogue with other youth workers this time is extremely important for the employee’s wellbeing for at least three reasons. Firstly, youth workers can share observations that others may have missed. One youth worker may wonder why a specific youth had a temper or was in a bad mood, while another youth worker may have had a discussion with that youth, which they can then share with the group. This can assist to create a unified approach strategy for the next time someone encounters the youth.

Secondly, youth work can be emotionally and psychologically demanding. Youth workers must be prepared to endure stressful conversations and situations. It is natural for some discussion with the youth to touch upon sensitive areas of the youth worker. Each youth worker is also a person with their personal life, and they may be going through difficult times that may affect their ability to handle stress during work. As a youth worker in Sankarit one does not need to carry the burden alone. They can disclose their worries in a safe and unjudgmental environment after each evening.

Lastly, the reason for the debriefing is to create an atmosphere of trust and to increase the bond between the youth workers. After all, Sankarit employees’ function as a team and they have a better chance of reaching their objective when they work together. An example of the benefits is knowing one’s own strengths and their teammate’s strengths. One may be knowledgeable about sports-related topics while another may be an expert in music. When one of

these topics arise the youth workers may know whose council to direct the youth so that they may have a more knowledgeable person to talk to.

It is highly recommended that all the youth workers participate in the debriefing both for their own wellbeing and for the wellbeing of the team. Each youth worker is different, everyone might not have anything to share on each occasion while others may need more time for sharing. Nonetheless, it is advisable for each youth worker to both listen and share information, feelings, and ideas in the debriefing. Debriefing is always confidential.

Each person has their personal boundaries. For example, one person might accept hugging while another person might find that uncomfortable. There are no right and wrongs within personal boundaries. As a rule, no one is obligated to tolerate behavior that makes them uncomfortable. One of the tasks of a youth worker is also mentoring the youth on developing their social skills and learning what is acceptable behavior and what is not. In the case of hugging, for example, it is recommended for youth workers to explain to the youth, that before giving a hug one must always ask for consent from the other person, whether they accept, or decline being hugged. Another type of boundary involves how much information about one's personal life one is comfortable with sharing. Yet again, there are considerable differences with each person, however as a rule, no one is obligated to share any personal information. However, in the atmosphere of trust and friendship, it is important to avoid being rude and to focus on how one frames their answers.

Youth workers must also consider what kind of behavior is acceptable from their own behalf. It is natural for youth to have temper tantrums from time to time. Youth workers are also people and can experience frustration and disappointment, albeit for professional reasons they may not express them in tantrums or outbursts. If these emotions arise, one is required to be in control or exit the situation. However, it is advisable in the spirit of mentoring the youth on developing their social skills, to verbally express different emotions along with explanations to the reason behind why they occur (Harrison & Wise 2010, 119). For example, one youth may be continuously using foul language. In that

instance, the youth worker may express to them “I think you are much funnier when you don’t use dirty words so much” or something similar.

Legislation that applies to Sankarit youth work is the Constitution of Finland, Youth Act, and the Social Welfare Act. The Constitution of Finland dictates, “No one shall, without an acceptable reason, be treated differently from other persons on the ground of sex, age, origin, language, religion, conviction, opinion, health, disability or other reason that concerns his or her person” (L 731/1999). This ensures basic human rights to all people. Youth Act aims to support the growth of the youth, independence, community, and the advancement of skills related to these areas. According to the act, youth are people under the age of 29 (L 1285/2016). The Youth Act was reformed in 2016 (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2016). The Social Welfare Act is intended to secure the wellbeing and social security of all Finnish Citizens. Social Welfare Act applies to social services, income support and social support systems (L 1301/2014.) Sankarit youth workers are not anticipated to be knowledgeable of the above-mentioned laws by heart. However, they need to exist in the guidebook as reference and support.

4.4 Timetable management

According to A Guide to the Project Management and Body of Knowledge (Project Management Institute 2017, 173) “Project Schedule Management includes the processes required to manage the timely completion of the project.”. Research for the background of the thesis begun in November 2019 and it continued until the final version of the thesis was completed in April. The research included reading previous thesis of the same topic. I made notes of the material in unison to reading. The first opportunity for participant observation at Sankarit was on 13.1.2020. For the guidebook to include important information regarding their new location required waiting until the turn of the year in order to make observations on their new facilities. I participated in Sankarit evenings 3 times while creating the product. The focus was less on atmosphere and tone and more on the location, facilities, and properties and how the youth interact with them. I am relatively familiar with other aspects of Sankarit-

activities, because they had remained approximately the same as they were in Happi youth centre. During each of these visits, I also took notes and suggestions from the Sankarit employees for the advancement of the product. The product was developed commencing from early February 2020 until April 2020. Conducting the questionnaire was also done in February. The first version of the product was ready to be presented to the working life partner by the end of March. The final product was ready by the end of April.

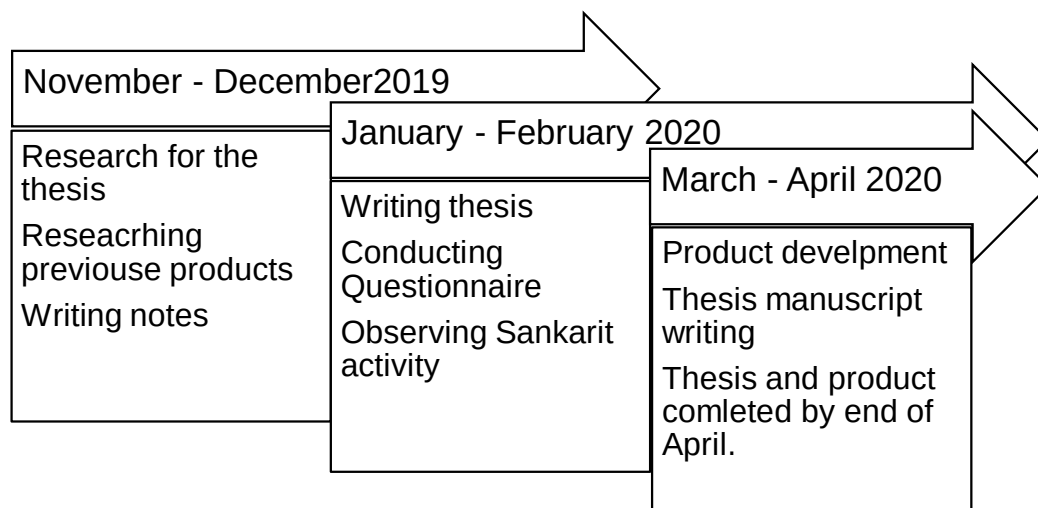


Figure 2. Timeline of the project

The product is copyright protected from the moment it is commissioned from Sankarit. A guidebook is a result of the work input of several parties. Copyright laws permit the author of a product with the authority to decide how their work is used. Copyright laws protect oral, verbal, and written works. Copyright begins from the moment a product is created. It does not require documentation to be valid. (Tekijänoikeus. Tekijänoikeuden loukkaukset.). The law also requires the name of the author to be presented whenever the product is shared. It also forbids any changes being made to the product without the permission of the author. Intentional violations of these laws can lead to criminal prosecutions under the Criminal Code of Finland (L 39/1889). The product of this thesis is intended for internal use only, and this will be stated in the guidebook. It is not intended to be distributed or for commercial purposes. However, the product can be shared with other non-profit activities which function in the public sector or with NGO's.

4.5 Risks management

According to Hyttinen (2017) Project Management Handbook “Proper risk management helps to avoid project crisis and improve problem-solving by managing risks early in the project life cycle.” In practice, this simply means that being prepared can assist mitigating risks. I took steps from early on to identify the risks of the project using risk assessment methods such as SWOT-analysis and my own consideration.

For the guidebook to be practical in real life the content needed to be relevant specifically to youth work at Sankarit, by for example mentioning areas in the youth centre Apaja that may pose threats to the youth. In addition to that, the contents needed to contain all the necessary general information, like who to contact in case of an emergency (emergency number 112). As previously mentioned Sankarit employees may have a wide variety of different educational backgrounds, and it is important to ensure that the guidebook covers both general and specific areas about youth work at Sankarit, albeit shortly. Requesting the employees to take additional time out of their busy work schedule and personal lives demanded flexibility and time management skills from both parties.

The products risks were evaluated and managed using SWOT-analysis. SWOT stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunity, and threats. Before and for the duration of implementing a product, it is advisable to create a SWOT analysis in order to have a clear depiction of the resources for the project. SWOT-analysis assists at charting and keeping track of the development of the project. Failing to estimate one’s own resources could lead to difficulties along the way or failure to reach the goal of the project. (Mindtools) SWOT analysis matrix is a useful tool that assists in visualizing the abbreviation in SWOT. The SWOT-analysis for the project can be seen below.

Table 2. SWOT-analysis (Mindtools).

Strengths	Weaknesses
Motivation Work ethic Timetable Relationship with work-life partner Support from work-life partner A familiar concept	Finding appropriate literary references Time Working alone on the product The size of the project Workload
Opportunities	Threats
Creating a beneficial new product The appropriate time period for the product Demand for the product	Running out of time Creating a useless tool Coronavirus outbreak

Regarding the strengths, I was highly motivated to create a useful tool for the Sankarit-activity. This partly comes from the work history with the organization. This in part fueled a firm work ethic to achieve the goals of the project. I was inclined to work more efficiently under a strict timetable. The functional relationship with the work-life partner was also a strength. It made asking for support and information, and access to the activity less difficult. The final strength is the familiarity of the product idea. Many theses have previously been made on the premise of creating a guidebook, which means that I am not completely walking into a new territory of social work.

Finding appropriate literary references on youth with disadvantages, and youth work with youth with disadvantages proved more difficult than anticipated. It required a deeper study to find correct scientific research on the subject. On the flip side to the benefit of working under a strict timetable, the time to create the thesis and product was also limited and rather short. There was not much room for even minor setbacks. Working alone on the project was preferable, but it also increased the workload. The size of the project was also rather large.

The end game was creating a beneficial new product that would be used in the future by the Sankarit-activity. To help achieve this goal I was actively communicating with the Sankarit-activity on the process of the product and taking advice on how to improve it. Publishing the product in the spring of 2020 comes at an appropriate time since Sankarit have moved to a new location at the same time. The product is a positive development for the Sankarit team, which is working vigorously to improve their services.

The risk of running out of time was real. This also created another risk, which was sacrificing staying on schedule for quality. There are more guidebooks and orientation material in existence than there is the actual need for them. The difference, in this case is, that the produced guidebook was commissioned by Sankarit-activity. This implies that there was an actual need for, however only if the final product is of high quality.

The World Health Organization declared Coronavirus a pandemic on 11.03.2020 (World Health Organization). On 16.03.2020, the Finnish government announced measures to shutdown public institutions in the country in the effort to prevent a widespread epidemic (Valtioneuvosto). Of those measures, the closing of all public gathering places such as youth centres, libraries, and schools at least until 13.4.2020 affected the thesis process directly. According to the timetable at this stage, the intention was to co-develop the product with the work-life partner. After the announcement, communicating with the work-life partners was now limited to emails and online meetings. This also caused longer response times due to less staff in the activity.

The Word Cloud also needed more visits to the youth centre, however that had become impossible to organize due to the lockdown. Obtaining literature was limited to material available online during the final months of product development. The pandemic was an unforeseeable force majeure. Following national guidelines had to be prioritized above all. Despite these challenges, I was able to proceed according to the timetable.

5 PROCESS DESCRIPTION

In this chapter I will review the results of the gathered data. The questionnaire approach was used in order to be as time-efficient as possible in collecting data. The participatory observation method was used because of my personal work history at Sankarit and the trust relationships developed between me and the members of the organization. The participatory observation method also allowed me to utilize and use tacit knowledge that I had accumulated while working as a Sankarit youth worker.

5.1 Observing Sankarit-activity

There were altogether 3 separate observation days. Doing participant observation requires asking permission from the organization's gatekeepers. The other option would be not informing the organization of the research, which would be highly unethical and impossible in this case (DeWalt & DeWalt 2010, 44-45.) I asked permission from the Sankarit management initially in November 2019 about plans to observe the activity, to which they agreed. It is important to remember that the point of the observation was not to become familiar with the Sankarit-activity as such since the core of the activity had remained the same as in Happi. The aim was to make observations on the space and place and how the youth had been able to adapt to their new environment. I made use of taking notes and pictures as the primary way of gathering information. For this research stage jot notes, or scratch notes were the most effective way for writing down bits of information that could later be expanded at a location where there was a better atmosphere for writing (DeWalt & DeWalt 2010, 138-141.)

The first day of observation was on Monday 20.2.2020. It began at 16:45 with a staff meeting. I had already disclosed my role as an observer for the upcoming evenings to the staff, so no areas of responsibility were directed to me in any of the observation sessions.

The evening commenced typically by sharing topical news about Sankarit-activity. By then Sankarit had only been organized a few times in Apaja youth centre. The first three evenings were designated for planning the upcoming spring activity. One youth worker was assigned the task of collecting ideas from the youth on a flyer and providing support in writing when that was necessary. Another youth worker was appointed the task of making sure the taxis found their way to the right entrance, and that the youth got into the youth centre safely. They were also tasked with making sure those youth who needed to leave with a taxi had ordered one in time. A third youth worker was appointed with the task of cleaning the meeting area before the evening would be over. The three out of six remaining youth workers would do youth work without any specific tasks and help wherever they were needed.

Several youths came much earlier because they were still becoming acquainted with how to find the new location. The temperature outside was well below zero so the youth were exceptionally let inside at 17:00. The evening officially began at 17:30. Although I was focused on observing, it was occasionally impossible not to mingle with the youth who were familiar. 17:30-19:30 was spent walking around the facility making observations of the space and place. At 19:30-20:00 most of the youth were gathered to watch *Salatut Elämät*, a popular Finnish tv drama. During that time I made notes about the more complex layout of the facility. At the end of each evening, youth workers are supposed to inspect all the rooms, including bathrooms to ensure none of the youth is left behind closed doors. There is also a risk of youth having a medical emergency somewhere hidden, for example in the dark stage area behind the indoor football field. This is particularly important to point out in the guidebook. The evening concluded as planned. One youth worker had made sure that everyone who leaves with a taxi had ordered one and assisted them to get to their car. Another had cleaned the staff room. And the rest at that moment were mingling with the youth until the last youth left the youth centre at 20:30. From 20:30-21:00 the evening was spent debriefing between the staff.

The second day of observation was on 10.1.2020. The structure of the evening is always the same unless agreed otherwise. The staff met at 16:45. I arrived

at 17:15 and found a group of youth outside waiting to be let in. It was already getting warmer so this time the doors were not opened until 17:30. This is also because preadolescents have their own time reserved from 14:00-16:30 (Mun-stadi. Lauttasaari Youth Centre). One hour is required for transition and for preparations.

On this evening there were two special activities planned. It was karaoke night, and secondly, it was time to announce the upcoming Sankarit-activities Erasmus international exchange to Saarenmaa on 28.6.-4.7.2020. The session was held at around 18:00 in the so-called situation room. It lasted for approximately 20 minutes. The youth received information about the project and how to apply to it. After the session was over, the karaoke night began. Again, one youth worker took the responsibility of the taxi arrangements, one took the responsibility of operating the karaoke equipment on the Playstation 3 console, one cleaned the staff room and the other three did youth work. I noticed that the popularity of karaoke evenings had dramatically fallen after the transition from Happi to Apaja youth centre. Upon raising this topic with the other youth workers, I learned that it was due to the many other activities that were made possible in the new youth centre. After these main events, the evening continued in its ordinary course. Karaoke was finished at 19:30 to allow the youth to follow *Salatut Elämät*. I did not find it necessary to remain until the very end of the day since all the major events had already been organized.

The third and final day of observation was 14.2.2020. From an observational point of view, the last evening was very different from others. This further highlighted the importance of visiting and participating in the place of which one is making their research. Firstly, it was the first Friday evening for observation, and secondly, I had planned to organize a Word Cloud event for the youth as described in chapter 3.3. Moreover, it was Valentine's day. For this reason, the evening was not organized in the youth centre for Swedish speaking youth Drumsö as it is usually on Fridays. The indoor football field had been transformed into a youth disco for the occasion. Three members of the staff started work at 16:30 with decorations. Between 18.00-19:30 I organized the Word Cloud. I moved around the youth centre gathering volunteers for the project

and explaining what the idea was. Gathering the volunteers ceased before Salatut Elämät begun at 19:30.

5.2 Questionnaire results

There were 9 questions (Appendix 2) sent to a total of 8 Sankarit youth workers. Of those 8 youth workers, 5 replied. The questionnaire was sent on multiple occasions since time to answer expired many times before all the participants were able to answer. The questionnaires produced extremely important information on what to include in the guidebook from the work-life professionals.

To the first question as to what kind of person is a good Sankarit youth worker in the youth workers' opinion, many respondents replied a sense of humor, openness, versatility, and being a team player as being important qualities in a Sankarit youth worker. One distinct answer was being artistic which is very useful in crafting events such as evenings around national holidays. Listening skills were mentioned in many sections of the questionnaire. The ability to make circumspect decisions was also felt as being important. One youth worker brought up the importance of being present was as "just doing stuff".

On the second question about the most important skills, youth workers felt that being considerate, creating a safe and positive atmosphere was an important skill. This could be achieved by for example intervening in exclusion or bullying. Giving support and encouragement was also mentioned as was motivating the youth. Two youth workers brought up communicational skills for supporting youth with specific language impairment. One youth worker suggested adding links to Papunet, which is a website for sharing information and tools for supporting people with specific language impairments (Papunet. Selkeää ja saavutettavaa viestintää). Another youth worker suggested including some basic information about augmentative alternative communication skills. AAC is a type of communication that includes all types of communication that do not include talking (American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. Augmentative and Alternative Communication). These skills were adopted in the the

guidebook. Other important skills were being present, calmness, and being able to recognize strengths as well as being discreet.

When asked what the youth workers would have wished they had known before their first day, youth workers mentioned how they were surprised by how the youth expressed their personalities ranging from humor to mendacity occasionally. When asked what the youth workers considered to be important topics in the orientation material, they answered the general description of Sankarit-activity, important information, contact information, most important tasks, directives for different scenarios, the youths comments on what is a good youth worker, encouraging to talk about work experiences (debriefing) and lastly links to suggested reading.

In the opinion of the youth workers, the best form for the guidebook was a near tie between a PowerPoint presentation or online reading and a traditional paperback print. The online version was more futuristic in the opinion of two of the youth workers. One youth worker suggested having a play or a game as the orientation material. Another youth worker suggested a short video accompanied with a paperback guideline material. When asked how the youth workers had arrived to work at Sankarit, two of them answered through their university of applied sciences practice placement (same as myself). Others came as substitute workers initially, then staid, while another answered that they started working there by accident.

When asked about their preconceptions about people with disabilities before they started working at Sankarit, two youth workers answered that they had thought that working with people with disabilities would revolve around health-related issues and that their limitations would dictate what activities they could organize. Another answered that they thought working with people with disabilities would be mostly positive, but that they had learned to be prepared to face the entire specter of human emotions. One youth worker was worried about possibly having to encounter aggressive youth and how to communicate with people with specific language impairments. Some were also worried about bathroom assistance tasks, which are not part of the youth workers task in Sankarit-activity.

Lastly, the youth workers were given an opportunity to freely add anything relevant related to Sankarit-activity. One youth worker disclosed that in their opinion people with disabilities were underrepresented in the media and that they felt that people are more alike than different. Another mentioned that their professional development had increased working at Sankarit. Two youth workers answered that they considered the work done in Sankarit to be very important and that they were grateful for the making of the guidebook.

5.3 Word Cloud

In the process of creating a tool for future Sankarit youth workers, one cannot ignore taking into consideration the opinion of the stakeholders to which the product will be created to benefit in the first place. Sankarit youth had the opportunity to decide which words would be presented in the Word Cloud. Although Sankarit youth are not meant to ever see the product or use it themselves, their opinion on the one of principal questions of the thesis, which is “what constitutes a good Sankarit youth worker”, was too important to be left ignored. Concurrently the Sankarit youth themselves are not the main target group, therefore interviewing them in depth would not add to the main goal of the product, which is to provide future Sankarit workers a versatile orientational material.

I conducted an anonymous Word Cloud inquiry to the Sankarit youth. I collected adjectives that the youth associated with a “good”, and similarly with a “bad” Sankarit youth worker from the Sankarit youth. The questions were presented in plain language and youth workers were advised to give support in writing and explaining in accordance to Selko guidelines (Selko). The purpose of this was to form a Word Cloud that would assist to illustrate how the youth view the youth workers in a simple and effective manner. Word Cloud is efficient at visually communicating the frequency in which youth associate certain words to Sankarit youth workers. For example, the youth may commonly associate “talkativeness” to good qualities of a youth worker, and “indifference”

to bad qualities of a youth worker. This will assist the youth worker to pay more attention to their behavior.

The purpose of the Word Cloud was also to allow the youth to participate as stakeholders in the creation of the guidebook. Participation was voluntary, and the youth were properly informed of how their contributions were used. This conduit is not traditional interviewing and it will not factor to the theoretical framework of the thesis. This is meant to function as a visual reminder for the future youth worker to pay attention to the youth, rather than for example using their phones for consecutive periods of time.

Overall, seven youth participated in the Word Cloud project. Gathering participants was difficult due to it being Valentine's day. The youth were not motivated, and they were understandably too busy to interrupt their own activity in order to participate in the inquiry. On the bright side, the youth who participated understood well, what they were participating in.

As previously mentioned, the coronavirus pandemic did not severely affect the product creation process. It did affect my plans to revisit the youth centre in order to gather more words in the Word Cloud. One Sankarit manager suggested using Instagram to retrieve more responses. I received the password to the Sankarit profile on Instagram (sankarit_toiminta). There I organized a short campaign story, where I asked Sankarit youth to participate in my inquiry. This generated 3 responses, which I then added into the Word Cloud. After collecting the responses, I deleted any direct message boards containing any answers to the inquiry.



Illustration 2. Word Cloud results.

The result shows that youth associate words such as brave, talkative, nice, humoristic, and caring to a “good” youth worker. The results then show that youth associate words such as too talkative, swearing, inattentive, and impossible related to a “bad” youth worker.

6 PROJECT ETHICS

According to Raus ethics is the process of distinguishing between good and evil, right versus wrong (2019, 15). Ethical thinking is the philosophy that motivates how people make choices. More often people make choices and justify their actions according to their own moral belief systems. There are always ethical challenges whenever working with people (Raus 2019, 21). In this chapter, I will explore what ethical preparations needed to be considered when implementing the thesis idea.

6.1 Ethical research and data protection

The main ethical considerations were related to personal privacy and data collection. Gathering the data from the participants required using a Webropol questionnaire, participant observation methods, and collecting words to the Word Cloud. Self-reflection and conflict of interest issues were also necessary to plan before beginning research for the project. The privacy and rights of people with limited capacity were also important to uphold. The product itself does not contain any sensitive or personal information. Information such as addresses, phone numbers, and opening hours that are in the guidebook are public information that can be found on the internet.

According to The Finnish Board on Research integrity (2019, 7), shortly TENK, researchers must perform their research in a manner that does not cause harm to the participants. Ethical principles regarding researching people with limited capacity dictate that the participants (1) must be made aware that they are participating, (2) must give their consent, (3) must have autonomy while involved in the research and (4) must be protected from harm if the research is not in the best interest of the participants (Finnish Board on Research Integrity, 10.) I followed these principles to the best of my ability.

Processing personal data was carefully observed when planning the questionnaire questions. It was important not to ask questions that might lead respondents to reveal any personal information. I made sure that the questions themselves did not reveal anything that could be traced back to the respondent. Concurrently, it was important to express clearly who was answering the questions using only titles (Sankarit youth worker/ previous youth worker) not names, in order to prove that the questionnaires were answered by qualified persons. Respondents revealing too much in an answer was a risk for privacy issues. I was alert and prepared to use censoring when documenting the results, however this was not required. According to TENK (The Finnish Board of Research Integrity. The ethical principles of research with human participants and ethical review in the human sciences in Finland 2019, 12), respondents should not be guaranteed of complete anonymity when that is not possible. In this case, complete anonymity was not possible since the number of youth workers in Sankarit-activity is so small, and I was familiar with the respondents beforehand. However, Webropol questionnaires do not reveal the identity of the respondent, and participation in the questionnaire was voluntary.

While performing participant observation at Sankarit evenings I made sure not to interrupt the ordinary flow of the evening or to harass the youth in any fashion. I also clearly expressed to the youth workers what the purpose of my visitation was and how their information was going to be used. The same effort was put into informing the youth about the purpose of my visitation. However, in practice, the youth were mostly unaware of it. Circumstances simply did not allow me to clarify to everyone what I was doing. It could be argued that achieving full consent of every member of a large group in their leisure time activity is nearly impossible, and by continuation, so would be working completely ethically (DeWalt & DeWalt 2010, 187.) However, constantly mentioning the purpose of my visit in between every conversation or taking time, in the beginning, to disclose to the whole group what I was doing could have been interpreted as rudeness. I made an effort to mention why I was visiting to the youth whenever it was appropriate. Participating in the Word Cloud was voluntary. Permits to conduct this part of the thesis were obtained from Sankarit-activity and the youth who participated. Only youth over the age of 18 years old were asked to participate to avoid any further ethical issues. Notes made during

observations were deleted and the flip charts containing adjectives for the Word Cloud by the youth were disposed of in a data protection bin.

A thesis agreement was signed by the Sankarit-activity, me, and Diaconia University of Applied Sciences. The research permit was necessary in order to receive consent so that the gathered material could be published, and to ensure collaboration between the activity and myself. The agreement was also meant to secure my right to high-quality guidance. Most importantly, it was to ensure that I followed ethical guidelines while researching (The Rectors Conference of Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences Arene, 2019.)

Self-reflection was an important aspect while making observations and collecting the words to the word cloud. It was important to be constantly aware of what I was doing, and especially why. For this part of the ethical consideration, action research methods were used to an extent to justify the action. In action research, the researcher must be certain to a degree that their practice is indeed important to the research, and they must be able to disclose their decisions to a third party (McNiff 2006, 23).

The Word Cloud was created to guarantee that the Sankarit youth had an opportunity to be heard. This was mutually important to me and to the subscriber of the thesis, the Sankarit-activity.

6.2 Personal work history at Sankarit-activity

Another ethical consideration related to my personal work history at Sankarit-activity. As previously mentioned, I worked as an official youth worker for six months, a reserve employee, and completed a 12 week practice placement at Sankarit-activity. The practice and work relationship began in the fall of 2018. During these years I managed to form authentic friendships with the Sankarit youth workers. Work-life experience provided relevant insight into the activity and enabled forming a trustworthy relationship with the members of the activity, which in turn helped in aspects like communication and visiting Sankarit-

activity later. Without this history, the product idea would not have been suggested to me in the first place. However, this also raises ethical issues regarding my qualification to produce a guidebook that can serve the common good.

The product was directly commissioned from the Sankarit-activity to me, the author of the project. The project benefited both parties in their areas of need equally. Concerning biasedness issues, it would be impossible to prove beyond a doubt that the product does not contain any biasedness. For example, as an observer at Sankarit-activity I gathered information using my own sentiments and impressions about the facilities. On one hand, an experienced observer might be more knowledgeable about their surroundings, on the other hand, the same quality might make them blind to some important aspects. Complete objectivity is rarely achievable in any academic work. However, I made an effort to remain unbiased to best of my ability at all times.

7 EVALUATION OF THE PRODUCT

In this chapter, I will review the evaluation process of the product. It is important to ensure that stakeholders are satisfied with their product (Spolander, Martin 2012, 144). My main questions for the Sankarit-activity management were their satisfaction with the quality and overall outcome of the product. Oxford learners dictionary defines quality as “the standard of something when it is compared to other things like it; how good or bad something is”. By this definition, it is hard to establish the quality of the product since I could not find similar products to compare it to. However, the quality of the product can be determined by how satisfied the customer is with the result of the product (Pesonen 2007, 36).

Two separate meetings were held in Microsoft Teams application with the Sankarit management to receive constructive critique about the product on 26.3.2020 and 16.4.2020. In these meetings, the management shared their impressions and tips on how to move forward and improve the content of the guidebook. Asking participants to comment on an early version of the product in order to improve it is also called triangulation (Guthrie 2010, 110). They were generally satisfied with the direction of the product, with some minor suggestions on how to improve it. I then made the adjustments.

The final product was presented and handed over to Sankarit-activities use in a meeting on 30.4.2020. During the meeting, I openly asked for the final evaluation of the project compared to the aims disclosed in chapter 2.1. Their response was that “The guidebook addresses Sankarit-activity in a broad, comprehensively, and easily approachable manner from the perspective of a new employee. The guidebook is easy to read, and it is implemented in a motivating way. In addition to the most important information for new employees, Ivan has also implemented humor, which is important in working at Sankarit-activity”.

Regarding observations made by me and the contents of the guidebook they commented that “Ivan has recognized significant observations from the stand-

point of a new employee, which have in part helped to advance Sankarit-activity forward. The guidebooks contents are unique, and they respond to the need of the activity in an excellent fashion. Ivan has succeeded depicting the foundations of Sankarit-activity in a practical and understandable fashion and to raise the topical content regarding the activity”.

7.1 Cost evaluation

According to the Project Management Institute (2017, 231) a project's cost evaluation consists of planning, estimating, budgeting, financing, funding, managing, and controlling costs. A cost evaluation was made in order to estimate the financial capital that would be required if an activity or organization such as Sankarit-activity were to create a similar product in the future. I estimated the value of the product by calculating how many hours were contributed by myself in creating the guidebook. According to Diaconia University of Applied Sciences guidelines, the scope of the thesis process is 15 ECTS (Diaconia University of Applied Sciences 2010, 24). One ECTS corresponds to approximately 27 hours of work (Diaconia University of Applied Sciences). Using this calculation, the time required to create a similar product would take approximately 405 hours.

The average salary of a Bachelor of Social Services in Helsinki region is approximately 2370 euros a month working an average 40-hour workweek (Palkkavertailu. Sosiaaliohjaajan palkka.). By this calculation, recreating a similar project would cost an organization an estimated 6000 euros. Although, it is important to note that the work hours of Bachelor of Social Services vary according to which municipality they work in and the specific task they are tasked with performing. It is also important to note, that the above-used estimation is only based on a multiplication of the hours required to create a similar product and the approximate value the producers time. In actuality, a similar product would be likely subscribed from a private company, which would significantly affect the actual price.

In addition, cost evaluations for products created for the social field may be difficult to make. This is because of the difficulty of comparing the cost to benefit ratios and subjective worth in products designed for the social field. Standardization systems used to evaluate quality like the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) are commonly used to evaluate market products. (Salmi 2010, 5 -7.) Some social field products may yield benefits after a long period of time, or in unquantifiable ways. For this reason, the cost estimate made for this product should be taken with a grain of salt.

7.2 Ways to develop the product

There are plenty of ways to develop and expand the product in the future. One way would be gathering user experience and feedback from new employees. If it were possible, I would have asked how the product was received by the relatively new Sankarit employees, who started work after February 2020. Unfortunately, for the project this will not be doable since Sankarit-activity was closed 16.3.2020-31.5.2020 as of the time of writing.

Due to the lockdown of public places in response to the coronavirus pandemic, Sankarit-activity was organized in a virtual youth centre, discord (Munstadi. Sankarit). It is possible that in the future services and activities for youth are organized in a virtual space more often. One way to develop the product would be to include chapters on youth work in a virtual environment.

One of the most important skills of a youth worker is knowing how to support youth who are discovering their identities. For some youth, for example, sexual minorities, the journey of self-discovery might be more challenging, and it is important for youth workers to have the necessary skills needed to provide support to them (Poirier, Fisher, Hunt, Bearse 2014, 4). However, considering the scope of the thesis, this subject was rather large to cover, however it could be developed further in the future.

8 CONCLUSION

Many organizations and activities working in the social field in Finland lack qualified labor. This occurs despite evidence to suggest that qualified workers help to guarantee the quality of service in the social field. (Studentum. Sosiaali-alan koulutus.) Organizations and activities may however take steps to help guarantee the quality of their services, for example by organizing an orientation for their new workers. The aim of the thesis was to create the first official guidebook for the future youth workers at Sankarit-activity. Before the product, Sankarit-activity did not have any material for orienting new employees into the activity. Sankarit-activity is a unique activity in Finland. Because of this, previous products that focus on working with youth with disabilities in a youth centre environment are hard to find.

The goal of the guidebook is to provide support for newly beginning youth workers. To achieve this, I used participant observation method and a questionnaire for the current workers to gather relevant data for the guidebook. In product design, I utilized the full potential of the Prezi presentation format including text, pictures, audio, and video to orient the reader. In addition to this, I collected words from the youth anonymously, which were used to create a Word Cloud. Altogether this helps to create a wholesome, yet time efficient orientation experience.

The need for the product came directly from the Sankarit management. According to the feedback received from the Sankarit manager the goal of the guidebook was achieved. As an outcome of this project, I ended up created a new product for an activity in the social field. The finished version of the product was published on 30.4.2020 when I handed it over to Sankarit-activities use.

I began this project in the fall of 2019 while still working as a Sankarit youth worker in Happi youth center. Around August the management proposed the thesis idea of a guidebook for Sankarit youth workers. Thinking in retrospect it might have been due to their knowledge of the oncoming decommissioning of

Happi youth center. I speculate that the management foresaw challenges that could follow the end of what many youths considered as an era in their life. Along with the relocation, a hand full of the youth workers who had worked in Sankarit for several years would not continue at the new location. It is possible that all these changes gave the management enough concern that they felt they needed to take preventive measures. In all likelihood, the guidebook was commissioned in order to have a better guarantee for a successful adjustment into the new decade of Sankarit-activity.

By all measures, the thesis process itself has been educating, testing, and finally rewarding. The process has bestowed me with information and tools I simply did not have before. Parts of the production process corroborated with my own strengths more than others, while weaker skills were strengthened. Product design advanced rather smoothly, while relevant source material was hard to find, partly due to the restrictions caused by the corona epidemic. The timetable was perhaps the most challenging part of the process. The project was prepared and produced in a relatively fast pace, partly because of my own preferred work method and partly because of necessity. Remaining on schedule required rigorous commitment to time management skills, a solid work ethic, and attaining to one's own intermediate targets.

There was a candid effort on my behalf to produce a high-quality product for Sankarit-activity, and this was achieved at least to some degree. I have only sincere appreciation and genuine admiration towards the work Sankarit-activity carry out. I am also grateful for the support and encouragement that I received from the Sankarit team during the creation of this product. I sincerely hope that activities such as Sankarit can continue to receive the necessary tools and funding they need to be able to continue providing their sterling services to one of most vulnerable members of our society.

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APPENDIX 1. Cover letter to Sankarit youth workers

Saatesanat:

Hei,

Minun nimeni on Ivan Maniraho ja olen Diakoni-ammattikorkeakoulun sosionomi opiskelija. Teen tällä hetkellä opinnäytetyötä, jonka aiheena on Sankarit-toiminnan ohjaajanopas. Lähestyn teitä tällä sähköpostiviestillä siksi, koska haluaisin mielelläni kuulla Sankarit-toiminnassa työskentelevien ja työskennelleiden mielipiteitä siitä, millainen olisi hyödyllinen ohjaajan opas. Tarkoitukseni on tehdä mahdollisimman yleishyödyllinen opas, ja siihen tarvitsen apuasi. Kyselyyn vastaaminen on vapaaehtoista. Tietojanne kuten nimeä tai asemaa Sankarit-toiminnassa ei tulla julkaisemaan opinnäytetyössä tai missään muualla.

Otan mielelläni vastaan myös palautetta liittyen kyselyyn tai johonkin muuhun Sankarit-toimintaan tai ohjaajanoppaaseen liittyvässä asiassa.

Kiitos että osallistut kyselyyn.

Foreword:

Hello,

My names is Ivan Maniraho and I study Social Services in Diak Bachelor's Degree Programme (DSS). Currently I am working on my thesis on producing a guidebook for youth workers at Sankarit-activity. I am sending you this email because I am interested to hear the opinion of current and past Sankarit youth workers on what would be useful to include into the guidebook. My intention is to create a comprehensive guidebook, and for that I need your help. Answering to the questionnaire is voluntary. Your information such as name or position in the activity will not be used in the thesis or anywhere else.

I am also interested in receiving feedback related to the questionnaire or anything else related to Sankarit-activity or the guidebook.

I thank you for participating in advance.

APPENDIX 2. Questionnaire results

Question. 1 What kind of person is a good Sankarit youth worker in your opinion?

#1	Sense of humor, relaxed, team player, open, interested about the youth, listens to others, and allows for their own and the teams growth
#2	Open, talkative, humoristic, team player, can indulge in situations
#3	Sets boundaries, empathic, invigorating, present, coequal, artistic
#4	Versatile, good listener, patient, reliable, supportive, real, professional, communal and a team player
#5	Present, circumspect decision maker, trustworthy, respectful, welcoming

Question. 2 What are the most important tasks of a Sankarit youth worker?

#1	Listening to the youth, interested in the youth, participates the youth, encouraging, educational dialogue
#2	Considering the youth, listening, creating a safe environment
#3	Supporting, motivating, enabling, creating a safe and positive atmosphere
#4	To show a good example and to intervene in any type of exclusion
#5	Youth encountering, participating, enabling, safe, coherent

Question. 3 What are the most important skills/ tools of a Sankarit youth worker?

#1	Communicational skills (augmentative and alternative communication), recognizing strengths
#2	Ones own persona, ability to indulge, humor, taking care of one own self, openness, sharing emotions
#3	Sensitiveness, participation, setting boundaries, interaction skills
#4	Being present, calmness, and giving time to the youth
#5	Discreet, good listener, encouraging, present, participating

Question. 4 What would you have wished you had known before your first day?

#1	The youth sense of humor, youth undergo the same experiences as anyone else, exaggerations are common, learning about ones self
#2	The most important thing is not to just “do” things but to also be present
#3	Being present, making ones self-unnecessary
#4	There were none because I received a good oral orientation
#5	Facility tour, general rules, useful tools such as communication tools

Question. 5 What in your opinion should be included in the orientation material?

#1	Directives for different scenarios, contact information, general information, description of Sankarit-activity, the youths comments on what is a good youth worker, links to suggested reading
#2	Directives for different scenarios, encouraging to talk about work experiences,
#3	General information, description of Sankarit-activity, most important tasks
#4	Guidelines for communication (Papunet) and safety regulations
#5	General guidelines, youth workers tasks, goal of the activity, links to suggested reading

Question. 6 What in your opinion is the best form for the orientation material?

#1	A clear power point presentation
#2	Either a point presentation that includes videos and pictures, paperback or a something other such as a orientation game
#3	A traditional paperback version or an electric orientation material
#4	A simple paperback version and a pdf file
#5	A short orientation video and a short paper back

Question. 7 How did you arrive to work at Sankarit? Did you have any previous experience with working with youth with disadvantages?

#1	By accident, heard from friends, had no prior experience
#2	Substituting another youth worker, had no prior experience
#3	Through applied university practice placement
#4	Through applied university practice placement
#5	Through volunteer work, a friend told me

Question. 8 What preconceptions did you have about people with disabilities and working at Sankarit before starting to work there?

#1	No preconceptions about people with disabilities
#2	Disabled people have many health-related challenges (preconceptions changed radically after the first evening)
#3	Disabilities must be considered first in working with people with disabilities
#4	Preconceptions were positive, a lot of hugging and so on. The reality has been a more checkered version of life
#5	Worried about possible aggression and how to make contact with people with specific language impairments. Worried about bathroom assistance tasks

Question. 9 Would you like to add or specify anything else relevant to your work?

#1	Professional development has increased
#2	People are more alike than different, people with disabilities do not have enough media representation
#3	This type of activity is extremely important
#4	Thanks to the author for making the product
#5	Encountering youth with disabilities is the same as encountering any other person. In my opinion it is good that Apaja youth centre is for everyone