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EMPLOYABILITY FRAMEWORK

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INTRODUCTION:

During **iCareer's** work with universities, employers, NGOs, and students to help bridge the gap between the academic offerings and the labor market needs. And through years of experience, extensive research, focus groups, and surveys. **iCareer** found it essential to develop a guide that can help all the stakeholders that contribute to employment and employability to help them better understand the meaning of employability and be able to implement effective employability programs.

This guide -or as we call it "**Employability Framework**"- talks about the main aspects of employability, that if used as a reference will contribute to creating effective programs, activities, and interventions. Which will consequently lead to higher employment rates among early talents.

WHAT IS EMPLOYABILITY?

To improve employability among these talents, we need to first define the exact meaning of employability. Through our research, we found that employability is:
"To have the adequate self and market awareness to choose the right career and the resilience and agility to gain the required skills and knowledge to land a decent job that matches one's interests, values, and needs. And use this agility to develop throughout the career path in the future".

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FRAMEWORK STRUCTURE/DESIGN

ENGAGEMENT

INCLUSIVITY

1. Choose

English Language

Self Awareness

Motivation

Employ ability

Market Awareness

Experience & Exposure

Reflection

Personal skills & attitude

Career education & guidance

3. Apply

2. Prepare

SCALABILITY

ACCESSIBILITY
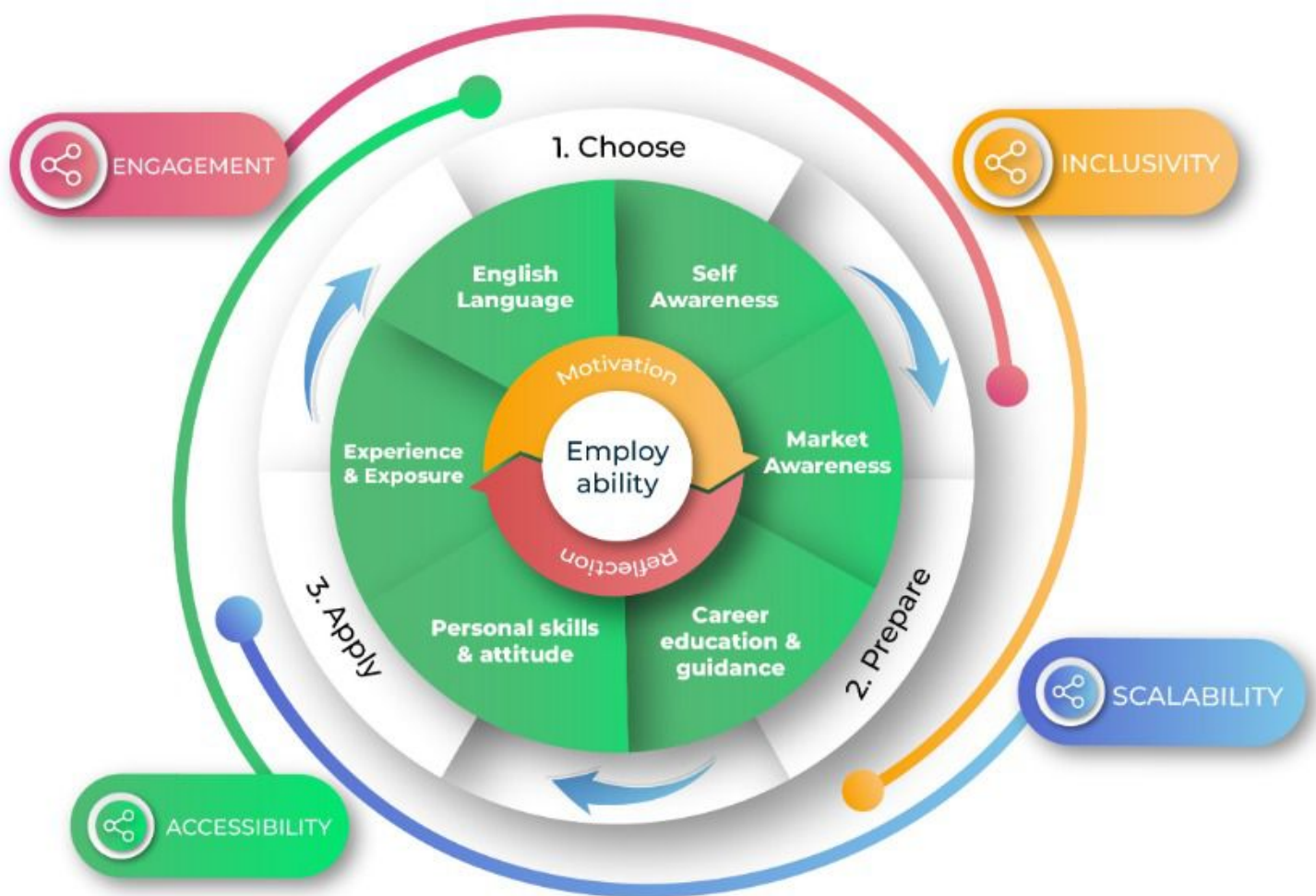
STRUCTURE BREAKDOWN:

This circular structure consists of different layers, as follows:

1- Pillars:

Placed in the outer circle because they hold this framework together. Pillars are mainly the core values that need to always be taken into consideration in any of the stages of this framework and in all its activities.

2- Stages/cycle:

These are the steps that employability programs need to cover as these are the three stages people seeking employability should go through until they land a job.

3- Focus area:

We can say this is the heart of the framework. This is what we believe employability is all about. So, to design employability programs and ensure their effectiveness we need these programs to cover these areas.

4- Fundamentals (can be renamed):

These ensure that the personal experience of each talent seeking employability is worthy of the effort they put into it and generating the result that resonates with each and every talent.

5- Interpersonal skills & attitude:

Although this part is not listed in detail in the framework design we needed to "zoom in" on this part; because even though talents choose different careers and work at different places the skills that are listed down here are in high demand in the current era of the labor market.

PILLARS:

Like everything else, pillars are the cornerstones that hold things together, this framework pillars are like the core values that need to always be taken into consideration in any of the stages of this framework and in all its activities.

1- Engagement:

To reach employability, all parties engaged in employability activities and responsibility need to know the importance of collaboration, working together, synergy and engagement. University is responsible for preparing early talents, employers -who are seeking talents- need to be engaged in this preparation process and collaborate which helps in understanding the needs of employers, preparing talents, and delivering pieces of training that are led by employers. As a result, talents also need to be engaged because, in the end, they are our target

2- Inclusivity:

All employability interventions take into consideration equal opportunities that include people of both genders, people with disabilities, and different cultures and backgrounds.

3- Access:

Offering different services to talents, whom we are working on to become more employable. Intuitively these talents should find those services not only accessible but also easy to know about.

PILLARS:

4- Scalability/Sustainability:

When talking about employability, there's a huge effort made, and a lot of interventions need to take place. Working on employability and ensuring its success and continuity means that we need to have scalable and sustainable activities and nterventions that can be repeated and replicated with all desired beneficiaries delivering actual impact and at the same time with cost-effective approaches. Those interventions need to also be sustainable for the talents themselves -not only as hit-and-run activities

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FOCUS AREAS:

1- Self-awareness:
Increasing talents' self-awareness helps them understand their career preferences, the skills they have, and the skills they need to develop understanding the current gap they need to fill, and enabling them to have a plan to fill that gap.

2- Market awareness:
Talents need to have access to increase their market awareness; the employers, the
sectors, the career fields, and the trending careers which help them to be able to make a career choice and to know the opportunities they can apply for.

3- Career education and guidance:
To understand basic career readiness knowledge, like job search skills, how to write a CV, how to pass an interview, etc.

4-Personal skills and attitude:
When it comes to the workplace and talents personality is king, almost every recruiter and employer agree that the right personal skills and attitude have a greater influence on the hiring decision than the technical skills.

5- Experience and exposure:

ith the gap that's between the market needs and the university interventions, talents are always surprised with the needed knowledge when they face the job market and employers are somewhat frustrated with the early talents' experience. Giving the chance for students at an earlier stage to simulate the work environment -internships, projects, field visits, job shadowing, student activities- adds a lot. Where talents feel confident about their next step and employers do not have to start from zero with every new talent. / Providing the chance to talents to connect more to the labor market will give them a better perspective, this means more than educating them on the companies and careers, but to actually network with subject matter experts, who can share hands-on experience and give personalized advice.

5- English Language:

In today's business world, everything is getting closer together multinationals are spreading to different regions, and teams work remotely from different areas in the world. And as openness is increasing year after year it has become crucial that entrants to the job market are able to effectively communicate with all teams in different locations and cultures with the most common/universal language: English.

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS:

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INTERPERSONAL SKILLS:

As mentioned, employers agreed that personality is king. And because this is considered a crucial part of employability, we gathered all the skills that are found mandatory:

Communication skills:

The heart of all other skills, as nothing gets done without communication. This is what makes work go well or not, and this is what organizes the relations at work with peers, superiors, subordinates, and clients.

Agility and resilience:

In the fast-growing and fast-paced business world of today, this has become one of the top 10 skills that employers are looking for in this era. Being able to develop oneself based on the surroundings and to iterate and change methods to reach goals is an unskippable skill.

Commitment and ownership:

Hiring new talent is both difficult and costly, employers want to make sure that they made this investment with the right person. And that this person will show their long term

Willingness to learn, research and explore:

Complementing agility as a skill, and to adapt with the ever-changing market, there are always new things that one should learn.

Excellence:

In the pursuit of accomplishing and getting things done, and with the hasty attitude of the newer generation, delivering work output with excellence and high quality can easily be neglected or forgotten. But with the very high competition in the market, companies keep looking to improve the quality of their services and products. Reaching this high quality is more challenging as well because of the high level of detail in every aspect.

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STAGES:

1- Define challenges and goals:
We start off with understanding what employability is & how it can be reached, what are the challenges that are facing talents to become employable, and the challenges to developing employability programs. What are our goals and how can we say we have achieved them?

2- Plan and implement:
From the definition of our goals, we start planning and designing the interventions or "employability programs" to serve these goals, then implement these plans.

3- Assess and iterate:
TDuring implementation, it is important to watch closely the process, where we can -while implementing the plan- iterate and refine our approach for better results.

4-Measure and report:
Measuring the final output and where all of the activities have led us to will in the end determine the level of success and the challenges, we've faced which takes us to the beginning of this cycle "defining challenges and goals" and help us design more effective and impactful interventions/employability programs.

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STAGES:

1- Choose:
Choose your career path.
2- Prepare:
Prepare for the career you are pursuing
3- Apply:
Find employers and positions

STIMULI:

Stimuli work like the fuel that keeps talents encouraged and going in the right direction, this is a continuous process
4- Motivation:
The desire and willingness to exert effort
5- Reflection:
Reflect to update their career preferences and the plans they had put to achieve their career goals.