

MEEG – Model of Enabling Employment Guidance

A capability informed approach to supporting people experiencing unemployment access decent and sustainable work, and careers.

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MEEG

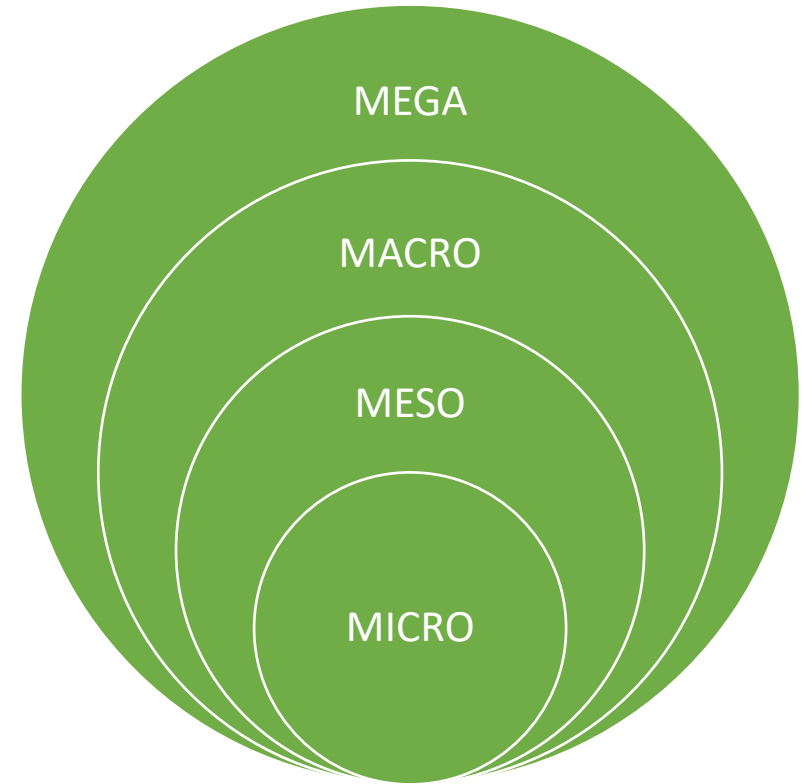
Model of Enabling
Employment Guidance

Practitioner Toolkit





Living and working in an uncertain world





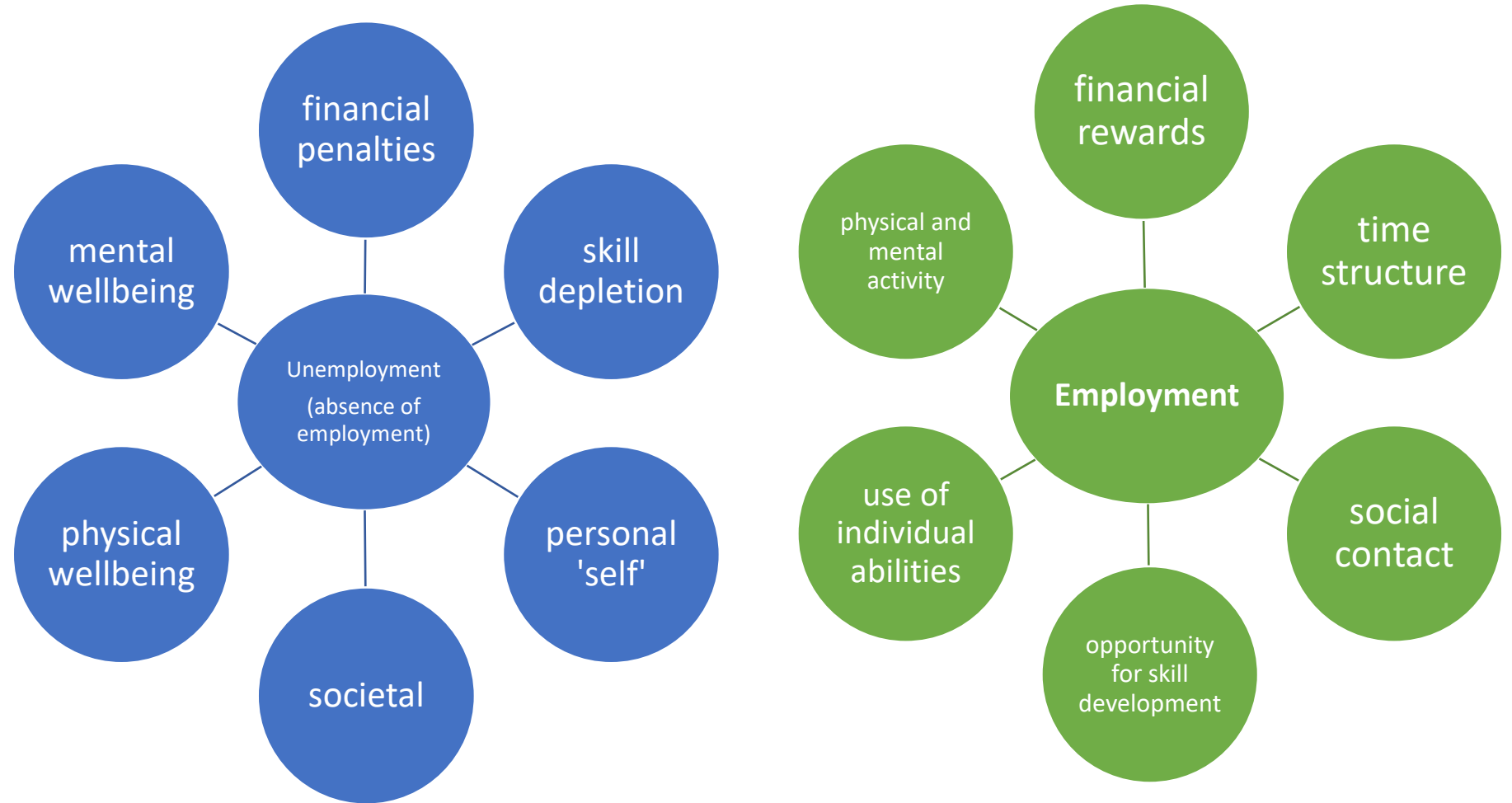
How many of you are working with people experiencing unemployment now?

How many of you think you will be working with people experiencing unemployment in the future?

How many of you have experienced unemployment yourselves?

The Impact of Unemployment

- Societal and Individual impacts
- **100+** psychological variables
- Employed **vs** unemployed
- Effects are **multiple**

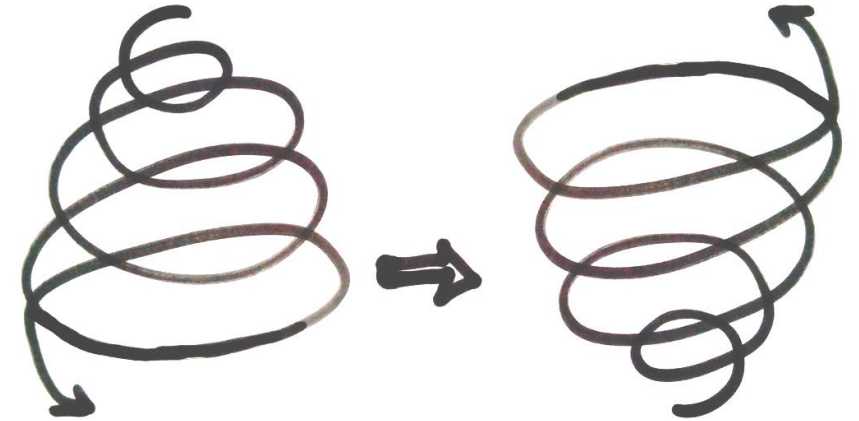


Individual and situational moderators

Age, gender, length of unemployment, ethnic & racial origins, family unemployment, local levels of unemployment, social class, attribution cause of job loss, prevailing views of unemployment, nature of the welfare system, personality variables, values and beliefs (Creed & Bartrum, 2006)

Downward career spiral

- Negative well-being impacts:
 - unemployment (Paul & Moser, 2009; Gedikli et al., 2022), the longer the spell, the larger the impact
 - Stronger in men than women
 - poor work (Butterworth et al., 2013)
 - insecure and precarious work (Rönblad et al., 2019)
- Short-term thinking / the first opportunity available / downward mobility
- Influences effort, motivation, job search self efficacy (Kim et al., 2019)
- Enforced job-seeking
 - negatively impact re-employment outcomes (Vesalainen & Vuori, 1999), increase levels of discouragement (Malmberg-Heimonen & Vuori, 2005)
 - achieve unspecified goals such as ‘any job will do’, often leading to less satisfactory outcomes (Latham, Mawritz, & Locke, 2018)
 - Conditionality – low pay, insecure work & prevents work-life balance (Jones et al., 2024)

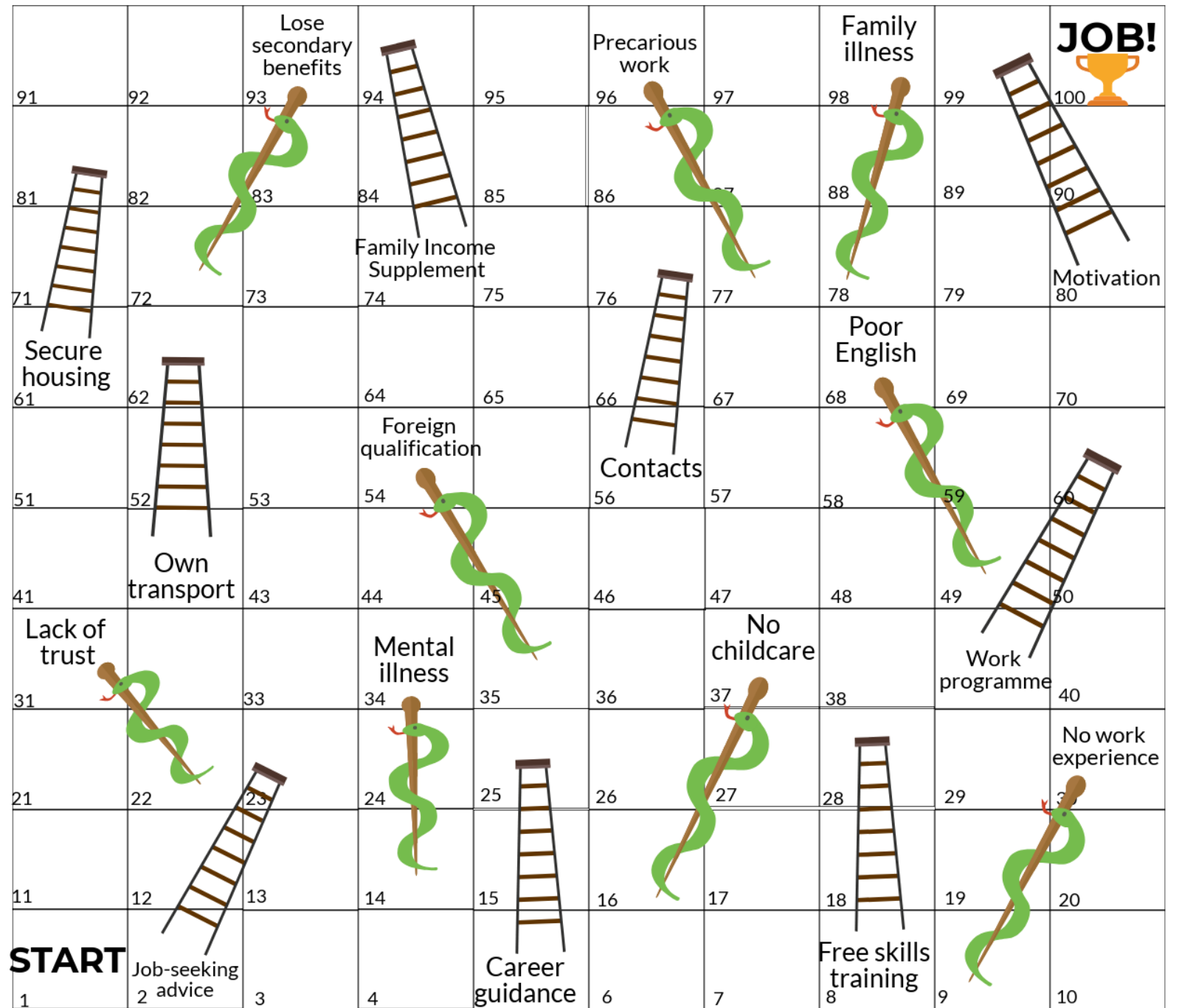


- Promote longer-term career planning and sustainable quality employment
- Interventions should aim to mitigate negative effects, priority to LTU

(Hooley, 2014; Gedikli et al., 2022)

People with **high levels of hope** are better at coming up with multiple higher quality alternative routes when faced with barriers than those with low hope. (Peterson & Bryon, 2008).

Experience of unemployment



NESC, 2018 (Jobless Households)



Employment Guidance

- a specific form of lifelong guidance
- aims to build people's employability

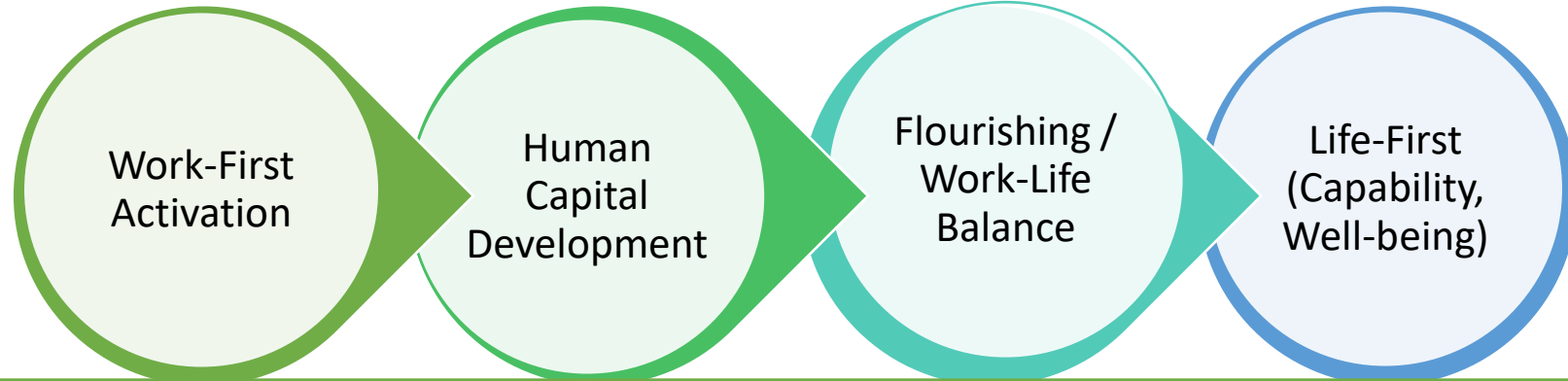
The ability to gain and maintain a job in a formal organization and, self-sufficiency in the labour market. Its focus is on paid work, employment and careers.

- involves a combination of factors which enable individuals to progress towards, transition into, and sustain employment, and to progress during their careers:
 - personal attributes
 - the way these personal attributes are presented in the labour market
 - the environmental and social context
 - structural issues
 - the economic context

It includes
(but is not
limited to) a
range of
activities



1. Conceptual Framework



Employment Guidance

‘Missing middle’ implementation

Role & extent of employment guidance

WORK-FIRST
 PES employment guidance as a subset of lifelong guidance. Labour market focused, prioritising short-term outcomes related to rapid employment attachment. **Limited and short-term**, still adheres to monitoring and sanctions. Focus is on job-matching (some use of **person – environment fit**)

Market/functional employability

HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT
 Limited to those who need it, time-bound, monitored, driven by an understanding of the self (**person – environment fit**). **Medium-term outcomes** including the development of employability and career management skills, and those education or training outcomes which lead to employment

Fostering employability

WORK-LIFE
 Available to all, goes hand in hand with good triage and needs assessment, driven by an understanding of the self and an understanding of context (narrative and developmental). PES guidance focuses **on longer-term outcomes** including the development of **employability** and **career management skills**, leading to sustainable employability across the lifecycle

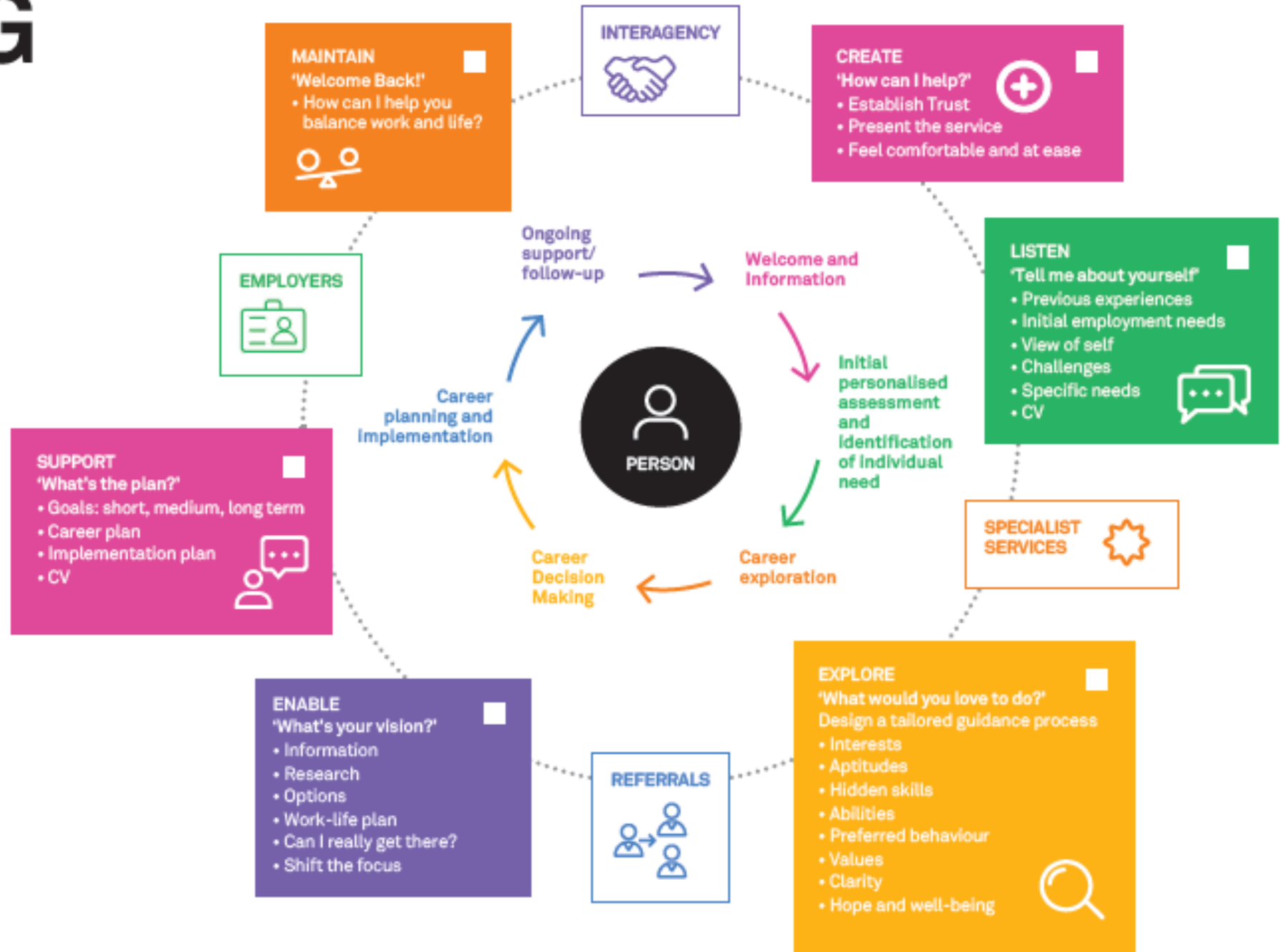
Enabling employability

LIFE-FIRST
 Widespread availability, recognises intersectionality, driven by an understanding of the self, of context, and a belief in transforming contexts (life design/ psychology of working). PES guidance focuses on enabling career management and making educational, training and occupational choices that are right for the individual. It helps people to **reflect on their ambitions, interests, qualifications, skills and talents**

Empowering employability

2. Model of Enabling Employment Guidance (MEEG)

MEEG



- Create
- Listen
- Explore
- Enable
- Support
- Maintain



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Section 1: Introduction

Section 2: What is employment guidance?

Section 3: A capability-led work-life inspired employment guidance model

Section 4: Delivering a work-life model of enabling employment guidance – MEEG

Section 5: Implementation and environment

Section 6: Evaluation

+ **Practitioner Training / Manager Training** (Effectiveness of career interventions further improved with supervision and ongoing staff training (Sampson et al., 2020))

- suggested number of meetings
- aims of the stage
- recommended resources and materials
- approach
- some helpful tips to enable the implementation of a work-life balance informed, co-produced, enabling employment guidance model


Stage 3 Career Exploration

EXPLORE

Stage Aims (Meetings 5 & 6)

Design a tailored employment and career guidance process
Identify interests
Identify abilities
Identify latent (hidden) skills
Identify aptitudes
Identify preferred behaviour in the workplace
Identify values and career vision
Build career clarity, career identity, career efficacy
Build self-esteem, motivation, hope, well-being

What would you love to do?



How do you currently do this? What's effective? What skills do you use?

Approach

- Tailored and Person-centred
- Caring, helpful & professional
- Understanding that people can be overwhelmed- guiding the person through the stages, feeding back with clarity and interest in a constructive and open way
- Alleviate any feelings of uncertainty /vulnerability
- Be curious
- Link questions back to the original profile
- Connect ideas and themes that may emerge
- Be aware of hidden skills and competencies that need to be uncovered.

Resources required (Practitioner checklist)

- ✓ Guidance framework
- ✓ Tools to indicate career interests, values, personality, specific aptitudes
- ✓ Initial profile

Stage 3 Career Exploration - Useful Tools

- **Reflect on the information known /unknown... what tools could help uncover this information?**
- ✓ **Interest assessment** – Feedback – confirmation of broad career areas
- ✓ **Values assessment / Behavioural (Personality) assessment** – Feedback – confirmation of the preferred work environment and types of tasks
- ✓ **Review and reflection** - narrowing down to more specific types of careers / jobs
- ✓ Questions to ask:
 - Are there **specific aptitudes** required?
 - How do these types of jobs interact with the **person's personal circumstances**?
- ✓ **Career plan**

RIASEC MODEL



RREALISTIC



INVESTIGATIVE



ARTISTIC



SOCIAL



ENTERPRISING



CONVENTIONAL

- [Interest Assessment \(qualifax.ie\)](http://qualifax.ie)
- Transferable skills: Jack & Una
- Values: My Values
- Career Circle: jobs, life roles, career
- Descriptive words

Stage 3 Career Exploration

Some helpful questions....

- ✓ Tell me about what you like and what you dislike- in general in your everyday life, in jobs you have previously held, in education or in other aspects of your life.
- ✓ What are you good at?
- ✓ What skills do you think you have?
- ✓ What type of work environment would suit you best – outdoors, office based, social...?
- ✓ What do you value – money, status, friendships, good conditions?
- ✓ What are your beliefs and ideals? Is there something you feel strongly about? (for example, the environment, social justice, health, animals)
- ✓ Do you have a clear sense of where you can go in your career?
- ✓ Do you have a clear sense of the type of job you would like to get?
- ✓ Do you believe in your ability to get the best job possible?
- ✓ Are you hopeful for the future?

....are there other questions that you have found
useful to ask at this stage?

3. Outcome measurement tool/metric

Measurement

(Personal)

Career related self-knowledge & Decision Making

Well-being / Quality of Life / Social capital / Accomplishment / Sense of Meaning

Employability Strengths

Hopefulness / Goal setting / Self-efficacy / Confidence / Self-belief / Self-esteem

Work related Behaviour

Work-life / Self-motivation / Adaptability / Resilience

Job readiness (Structural)

Labour market reality / Practical

Future employment: Job seeking

Career Management / Career decision-making

	Question	1 😞 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Don't Know	4 Agree	5 😊 Strongly Agree	Not relevant to me
18	I know where to get information about upskilling						
19	I know what's expected of me in the workplace						
20	I can take feedback (positive or negative)						
21	I am motivated to take the steps required to achieve my goals						
22	I often reflect on my career, on what I have done and where I am going						
23	I have strengths that can be developed						
24	I am curious to see how my skills and abilities could be used in a variety of jobs						
25	I am open to change						
26	I know how to get support about work related issues if I need it						

Results: Model of Enabling Employment Guidance

Conceptual Framework

Practitioners & service
Model of Practice & Toolkit

Metric



Hope - Self-value - Openness/adaptability - Social capital - Wellbeing - Resilience



Where to from here....

- **Challenge dominant LMP approaches**, move towards more inclusive models that recognize social justice and the freedom to make life choices as core principles of employment guidance in PES
- **Illustrate ways** of going beyond activation (research, evidence, policy–practice collaborations) toward more sustainable employment e.g. Operationalising CA
- **Recognise and acknowledge** the psychological impacts of unemployment, underemployment, youth unemployment and marginalisation and the value of having skilled practitioners work in an enabling and empowering way
- **Draw on Practitioners knowledge and experiences** so as to generate new knowledge about practice, about the changing labour market, about working with clients towards sustainable careers

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Whelan N., Murphy, M.P., & McGann, M. (2021). The enabling role of employment guidance in contemporary public employment services: A work-first to life-first typology. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 49, 2, 200-212.

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MEEG Updates

<https://activationinireland.wordpress.com/meeg/>



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