



TOOL 5: KICK-OFF IN THE COMPANY



MAIN OBJECTIVE TOOL 5

This tool is designed to help you have a great kick-off in your company. This tool is part of a series of 5 tools especially designed for international and multicultural talent looking for a job in Belgium.

You'll learn:

- ✓ How to have a confident start
- ✓ About Belgian work ethics and cultural skills
- ✓ How to handle evaluation talks and give and receive feedback
- ✓ How to further develop your talent and career



CONTENT

1. A confident start	3
2. Administration and salary package	4
3. Belgian business ethics	5
4. Work-life balance	7
5. The story of Denise	8
6. Cross-cultural awareness	9
7. Evaluation talks	11
8. Giving and receiving feedback	12
9. Talent development	13
10. Career moves	14
11. Building your network	17
12. You are never alone	18
13. Takeaways	21
14. Inspired by	22

1. A CONFIDENT START



Being proactive and self-confident

Starting at a new job will always be a bit stressful and exciting. The important thing to keep in mind is that you **stay yourself, have confidence** and have a **proactive attitude**. You can do this by asking questions, knowing your objectives so you can work towards them and if they are not clearly formulated, formulate them yourself (of course don't forget to check them with others afterwards).

See your **strengths** as your starting point at your new job. Think about **what you can contribute** and **craft your job** in such a way that it fits your skills best. It's a common pitfall a lot of starters face: being really grateful for the fact that they got the job and therefore they put themselves in a submissive position. It's great to be thankful **but don't let it affect your work**. You're a professional and you have the knowhow needed for the job. That's why you were selected and not any of the other candidates that applied for the job.

2. ADMINISTRATION AND SALARY PACKAGE

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

As discussed in Tool 4: From first call to getting hired, your salary will be more than cash money. It will come in a package with potentially extra-legal benefits such as a company car, meal vouchers, eco-cheques... So before or on your first day there will also be some administration you'll need to go through. Apart from figuring out the extra-legal benefits, you'll probably receive:

A copy of the work regulations: you'll have to sign the work regulations. This document contains your rights and obligations as an employee. It could contain certain procedures you need to follow when you're sick or it will tell you how working from home is defined. The theory can be stricter than the practice, so if you find yourself in a situation where you don't know what to do, just ask your colleagues.

The vacation bonus: each year you'll receive your vacation bonus in May or June.

The end of the year bonus or 13th month: in December you might receive one of these two depending on how it is defined in the collective agreement (CAO in Dutch), in which the terms and working conditions of employees within a specific sector/region are defined.

As day to day life gets more expensive each year, **your salary will also rise** yearly according to an index. The exact rate of this index can be found in the collective agreement. If you feel that you deserve a higher raise, because you've grown a lot or have taken on more responsibilities, you can ask for a salary evaluation talk after 1 year and/or when changing roles.



3. BELGIAN BUSINESS ETHICS

The culture of your company is something you will adapt to and become a part of. **The chances of you fitting in are quite high**, because one of the reasons you probably got the job in the first place is because you matched their culture well. Not all companies **prepare the onboarding** of a new employee in the best way, so don't get discouraged if **your first day wasn't what you hoped for** because sometimes the long and complicated processes some Belgian companies uphold, will fail and **they might not be fully prepared for your first day**. Don't take it personally, it's just a process.



Belgians are generally rather **conservative**, but they **always seek compromises**. You can use that to your advantage, for example in salary negotiations. However, you should be careful not to demand too much right after your recruitment, as the decision making process is rather slow and **modesty is highly valued** in Belgium.



The business lunch is something very important in Belgium. Since Belgians prefer personal contact over a phone call, small meetings during lunch hour are **the most popular way to keep your business contacts up to date**. At such a lunch meeting, it is not unusual that you might be asked questions about your personal life as well, e.g. about your husband or wife, children or preferred leisure activity. It's a way for Belgians to make small talk and to strengthen and personalize business relationships.



In **meetings and negotiations**, Belgians always strive for a **pragmatic and rational** solution. Due to their rational approach of business, **structure is considered very important**. Even though Belgian business people tend to thoroughly discuss all the matters on the agenda, the meeting schedule should be followed closely. Being late is not regarded as a nonchalant way to enter a meeting, it is considered impolite. If you are getting late for your appointment, contact your business partners and let them know that you won't make it on time.

BELGIAN BUSINESS ETHICS

Through the eyes of newcomers



"Brazilians are more inclined to work. In Brazil, there are no labour organisations, you do not get paid for sick leave, whereas in Belgium, people get paid when they have a burnout, and you have strong labour organisations looking after the workers here". - Victor from Brazil

"I do have an impression that in general, there is a Belgian mentality that supports independency of employees more than guiding them. In the Middle East, most employees are guided on what they have to do. In Belgium, there is a big space of independency and creativity. In other parts of the world, your employer decides how your skills should develop. In Belgium, you decide that yourself". - Anas from Syria, lived in many places in the Middle East



"I heard that Belgian people are usually more distant and cold. However, this is not the case at the company where I work. Here, everyone is friendly and gentle. However, I will say that I miss the more spontaneous get-togethers we used to have in Belarus. Here, you always have to make appointments with people because they are so busy". - Nina from Belarus

"In Belgium, I find that there are more rules, more computer systems to navigate and in general some much more advanced systems than the ones I am used to from Iraq." - Hadeel from Iraq



"Every two weeks, I have one-to-one feedback meetings with my leader and I have monthly meetings where VDAB is also there. Now, I am confident with the process, but it was difficult for me in the beginning to get used to the level of directness. The feedback here is much more direct than in Iraq! In Belgium, they are always looking for zero error performance. In Iraq, you can make 50% mistakes and more." - Omar from Iraq

"People in Belgium are friendly but more closed. As a newcomer, it is really hard to integrate on a more casual level because of the language, for example during the coffee breaks." - Soksreymon from Cambodia



4. WORK-LIFE BALANCE

INDIVIDUAL AND COMPANY CULTURE



Finding **the right balance** between work and personal life is a challenge for a lot of professionals nowadays. Finding yours should happen on two different levels:

On the individual level: no two people are alike and that's why for person A a 50 hour work week is the most normal thing in the world, for person B, on the other hand, 50 hours could be too much. The way your workload affects your personal life depends on many factors and one of them is your cultural background. Some cultures applaud those who work every hour of the day, in other cultures it's strange to work past five o'clock. Not only your culture but also your job position, children, family or friends...can have a big impact on the personal time you may need. It's important to openly discuss this with your employer and to find joint solutions. Eg. when you're new in a country and have no social network to take care of your children when unforeseen circumstance occur. In this case working 80% might be a solution to build in some flexibility.

On company (culture) level: if your working hours are from 8-5, but everybody stays until 7, you may find it hard to leave before they do. The other way around counts as well: if you are the only one working late this might give a strange impression to others in the team. So try to find a balance between the company culture and your own needs in term of balance.

And in all circumstances **an open talk** with a colleague you trust, HR and/or your manager will give new insights to **help you get the balance you need.**

At the very start of your assignment or entry in the company try to adapt as much as possible to the company culture. For example if your colleagues have lunch together join them, if they stay for a drink after work try to do the same. That way you show your interest and your willingness to become a part of their team.

5. THE STORY OF DENISE

Country of origin: Brazil

Educational background: Master Business of Administration (MBA)

Job search length: +6 months

Last job title: Business & Integration Architecture Manager

Company: Accenture

Denise used to work as a **project manager** in Brazil, but gave up her life to follow love of her life, as he was offered a job in Belgium. During 5 years, she stayed home and took care of her kids. Until, completely out of the blue, Talentree reached out to her on LinkedIn.

"They invited me for a Job Day for international talents at Accenture. I had never seen this concept in a company before, so I had to go. They were not asking me to come for an interview for a specific job, they just wanted to get to know me. It was super great, I met a lot of people and had some conversations with managers about my background in Brazil. The most important message I got that day, was that I could still find a job after all this time of home-staying. There was still hope for me. That was a very important message, because being in Belgium had not been easy for me."

After the Job Day, Denise had **several positive interviews** and the possibility of her landing an actual job in Belgium grew larger by the day.

"It really happened, within a few months, Accenture offered me a job! That was insane, I can't express how happy I felt. I could finally prove what I have to offer. Someone actually gave me a chance!"

Denise started to work as a **business analyst** for sometime, but actually wanted to work as a project manager. So after a while, she took **the bold step of contacting her boss**.



"I told him I was not happy here anymore and wanted to work in a different role. He was very understanding and helped me to look for a role as a project manager within the company. It's amazing how helpful everyone has been. It has been a challenging ride, but I did it. I had to prove to both Accenture and to myself that I am capable of doing this, and I did. They gave me a global program. Now I work as a program lead, I have 6 other project managers that report to me and have an offshore team in India. I even got promoted this month. It has been so great.

This journey has really been life-changing for me. I can't tell you how happy I am here. It is absolutely fantastic."

Denise's three tips and tricks for international and multicultural talent out there:

- 1 Believe in yourself:** no matter what other people say. You can do whatever you propose yourself to do if you really want to.
- 2 Be on top of your career path:** don't wait for someone to get you moving. Find what you do best and invest time to improve it. You own your career, the company you work for is only your bridge to the success.
- And last but not least, **stay connected**. This is the only way for people to find you. If you are not in a good time to work, try to get involved with something else, volunteer for something you believe and grow your network.

6. CROSS-CULTURAL AWARENESS

Learning to collaborate effectively with people from other cultures is a **vital skill** when you are working in a multicultural environment. People from diverse backgrounds often have different ways of thinking and communicating. Gaining insights into the differences between cultures helps team members to understand how culture shapes the way people behave and communicate and how misunderstandings might arise when we misinterpret different cultural behaviours. Cross-cultural awareness & communication training can provide employees with the knowledge, skills and expertise to collaborate effectively across cultures and promote acceptance and respect for diversity. **Three models** that are frequently taught are the model of Hofstede, Trompenaars & Lewis.

The Hofstede model of national culture

According to the model of Hofstede, culture is defined as 'the collective mental programming of the human mind which distinguishes one group of people from another'. The model consists of **six dimensions**, which represent **independent preferences for one state of affairs over another that distinguishes countries** (rather than individuals) from each other*:

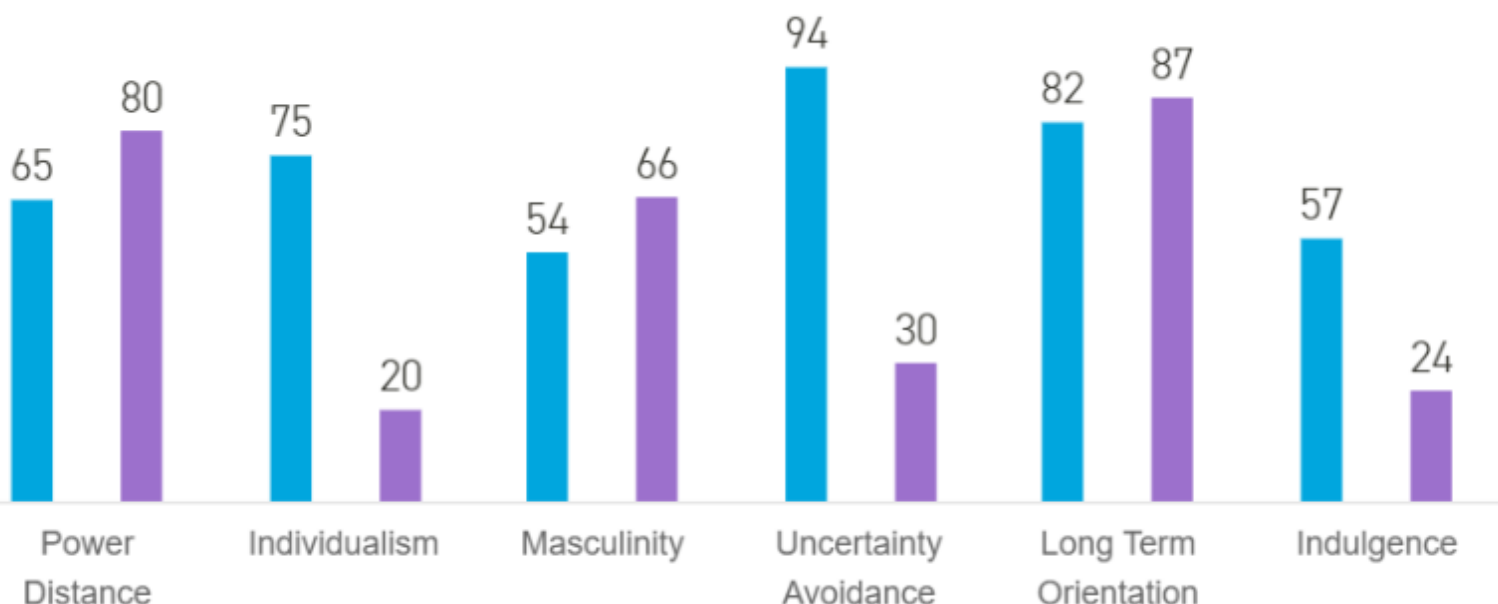
- **Power distance:** the degree to which the less powerful members of a society accept and expect that power is distributed unequally.
- **Collectivism vs. individualism:** the relative importance of individual versus group interests.

- **Femininity vs. masculinity:** the extent to which a society stresses achievement (masculinity) or nurture (femininity)".
- **Uncertainty avoidance:** the degree to which the members of a society feel uncomfortable with uncertainty and ambiguity.
- **Long-term versus short-term orientation:** the extent to which a culture is focused on the future or rather on the past and present.
- **Indulgence versus restraint:** the extent to which people try to control their desires and impulses, based on the way they were raised.

Interested to learn more?

- Check the series of 10-minute videos with PowerPoint presentations created by Geert Hofstede. There is an introduction video and one video per dimension of the national culture.
- You can use the country comparison tool by Hofstede (<https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/>) to compare how countries score on the 6 cultural dimensions. For instance, below you see a comparison of Belgium (blue) versus China (purple):

Source: <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/models/national-culture/>



Trompenaars cultural dimensions: the 7 D model

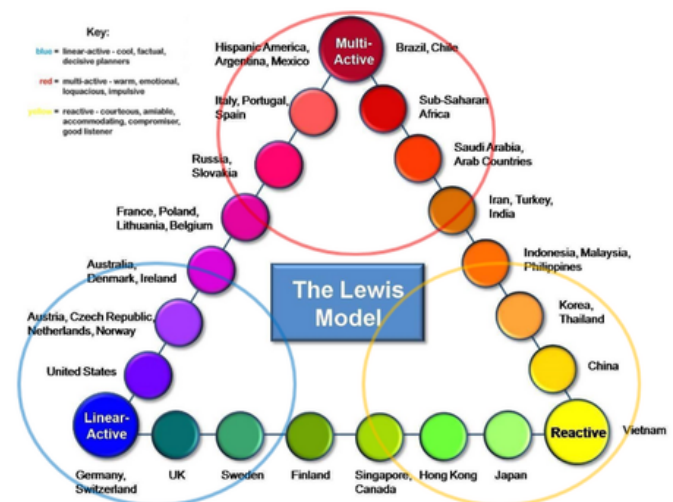
Trompenaars defines culture as **the way people solve problems**. Based on the solutions each culture chooses to certain problems, he defined **the following dimensions***:

- **Universalism vs. particularism:** the degree of importance of formal rules and procedures over circumstances and relationships.
- **Individualism vs. communitarianism:** this dimension is almost identical to Hofstede's individualism vs. collectivism dimension. Generally this dimension classifies countries according to the balance between the individual and group interests.
- **Specific vs. diffuse:** the extent to which the personal and professional life is integrated or separated.
- **Neutral vs. affective:** the extent to which emotions are displayed in the workplace. In neutral cultures emotions are usually displayed only at a minimum extent, while in affective cultures individuals feel comfortable to express their feelings and emotions in public.
- **Achievement vs. ascription:** this dimension is quite similar to power distance cultural dimension presented by Hofstede. It marks the level of tolerance of society towards the pattern of distribution of power and status amongst members of society.
- **Sequential time vs. synchronous time:** whether things get done one at a time or whether many things get done at once.
- **Internal direction vs. external direction:** the degree to which individuals believe they have control over external environment.

2. Multi-active. Multi-active cultures have people that are much more extrovert, rely on their eloquence and ability to persuade and use human force as an inspirational factor. They often complete human transactions emotionally. Such people are great networkers, working according to people-time rather than clock-time.

3. Reactive. People in reactive or listening cultures rarely initiate action or discussion. They prefer to first listen to and establish the other's position. Only at a later stage will they react to it and formulate their own position in the discussion***.

While the three types of cultures are distinctive, each possesses behavioural elements from the other two categories. It is a question of **which one is dominant**. Many individuals deviate from the national type in a work situation, for example engineers and accountants tend to be linear, sales people multi-active, lawyers and doctors reactive****.



Lewis Cultural Types Model

The Lewis model triangulates countries and their culture between **3 clear categories**. These categories are not based on nationality or religion but on behaviour:

1. Linear-active. People in linear-active cultures are people who carefully plan and manage their actions. They do things one at a time, according to schedule, and so are very accurate and efficient in their work. They like working with others who focus on the task and who appreciate structure and reason**.

Source: *International Business Door: Stuart Wall, Sonal Minocha, Bronwen Rees + <https://expertprogrammanagement.com/2017/10/trompenaars-cultural-dimensions/>; **<https://magnussonllc.wordpress.com/2011/01/19/the-lewis-model-cultural-dimensions/>; ***<https://www.crossculture.com/about-us/the-model/reactive/>; ****<https://www.crossculture.com/the-lewis-model-dimensions-of-behaviour/>

7. EVALUATION TALKS

WHEN, WHAT AND WHY



Most Belgian companies will organize an **evaluation talk once or twice** a year. The purpose of this talk is to have a look at your objectives, personal growth (ups and downs) and sometimes also to reevaluate your salary. Some companies will do this in a very formal way, others will choose to do it in a more informal way. If you feel you could use an evaluation talk after your first 3 months, don't hesitate to contact your supervisor and ask for some feedback in a formal or informal way (depending on the culture in your company).

If you haven't received an evaluation talk after your first year, **request one**. In some Belgian companies evaluation talks aren't on the top of the priority list. But these kind of talks are a great way to learn and grow in your job. So don't be afraid to approach your employer and **ask for an evaluation talk**.

During your evaluation talk you will receive and also give feedback. Especially when you're giving feedback it's really important that you know how to do it. Feedback given in a poor way will miss its effect. On the next page you can find tips on **how to give feedback in an effective way**.

8. GIVING AND RECEIVING FEEDBACK

Feedback on the work floor is important, both **positive** and **negative**. Positive feedback gives energy and reinforcement of good behaviour. Negative feedback helps to build your learning curve. To develop your own competences it is important you regularly ask for feedback and give feedback.

An interesting method to give feedback is **nonviolent communication** as defined by **Marshall Rosenberg**. Nonviolent communication helps you understand that feedback is a reflection of the other person's perception of your actions. Interpretation and perception are culturally biased so be very aware of this impact when giving or receiving feedback. A rule of thumb is to give feedback on a behavioural level (without interpretation) rather than on a personal level. Eg. "I notice you are often late for a meeting" rather than "I feel you are a colleague that has no respect" (in some cultures coming late means you show no respect, in others it is part of the working rhythm).

The basis of the **nonviolent communication strategy** is to focus on 4 components:

Observation: give the facts, state the behaviour someone showed that you want to address/give feedback on. Be as precise as possible.

Feelings: tell the person how their actions made you feel and why.

Needs: tell the person what you would need.

Request: request what kind of behaviour you would like the person to show in the future. Be as clear and concrete as possible. Also use a positive tone to phrase your request.

A concrete example, illustrating possible ways of giving feedback to someone who missed a deadline:

Last week you didn't meet your deadline on handing in the paperwork for project X (**Observation**). This made me feel really stressed because I was waiting for it to finish my own work (**Feelings**). It would help if I knew beforehand if you can't reach a deadline so I can adapt the scheme or we can set priorities (**Need**). So, next time can you communicate earlier so we can follow up closely on the deadline (**Request**).

In some cultures missing deadlines gives the perception that the person must have had other priorities, for other cultures missing a deadline could create the perception that you're a slow worker and you're an underperformer. When you are frustrated you might be inclined to give the following feedback: "You are not a trustworthy team member. Again you missed a deadline." Or "You're underperforming, I think you're a really slow worker. Next time you'll have to work faster." This type of feedback will trigger a negative response or feeling without learning impact or solution. So filter this interpretation bias from your communication. When receiving feedback you do not fully understand, try to analyse the situation and understand what triggered the reaction of the other. If relevant, open up the conversation again and find a joint solution linked to the needs of all people involved.

9. TALENT DEVELOPMENT

IT'S YOUR JOURNEY



More and more companies expect you to **take control over your own learning path**. As seen in the second tool there are a lot of ways to **develop yourself and have a life full of learning**. So don't be afraid to set your own goals of what you want to learn and proactively propose them to your employer. **The stronger your skills get**, the better you will be able to perform for the company.

Some companies offer their employees a yearly budget to further develop themselves. If this budget is available spend it on events, interesting books or a course. Don't let it go to waste.

Take control over your own learning path.

You can find possible organisations and interesting courses in Tool 2: Preparing your CV and cover letter. If you're interested in events or webinars then the website Eventbrite can help you find relevant ones.



10. CAREER MOVES

Where do you want your career to take you

Starting a new job also means beginning a new adventure that will further sculpt your career. When you know how you want your career to evolve, your development plan and networking can be aligned to that too. So take some time to think about how you want your career to evolve. The Centre for Excellence in Strategic Talent Management from Vlerick Business School puts forward 8 different career moves:

1

VERTICAL

You want to **ascend in the hierarchy**. You are convinced that you can handle the duties and responsibilities of your supervisor and you would be only too happy to prove this. Key drivers to take on this challenge are not just money, prestige and power but also the increased accountability and visibility within your organisation. To achieve all of this you are willing to invest a great deal of effort. You are prepared to work hard, commit yourself to high profile intensive projects that deliver a lot of added value to the organisation, participate in network activities... However, you need to realise that this vertical move is no obvious career step. For several reasons, such as changing skill requirements or the flattening of organisations and increased automation, there is a decline of the vertical advancement possibilities. Therefore, if your goal is a vertical move, you will have to align your own skills and knowledge with the needs of your organisation.

You want to **expand your responsibilities or change your role in the organisation**. You want to perform different functions, take on additional tasks or do your job in a different manner. By making this particular move you want to master important skills, develop competences and build more productive relationships with colleagues and customers. As an added benefit you can achieve all these advantages without leaving your current position or organisation. In addition to this, you focus on making your current job more challenging by increasing your decision-making power, the variety of skills you use, or the work itself. You are constantly on the lookout to do your job in a more creative and innovative way. This, in turn, increases your career satisfaction and your sense of personal accomplishment. While making your job more meaningful you also add more to your organisation.

2

Enrichment

3

Lateral

You want a change in your job that doesn't necessarily influence your pay, status or level of responsibility. The primary reason for moving sideways, rather than upwards is to diversify your skill and knowledge base. You might for example work with a different product or team. Another option is to shift to a new functional area, such as from marketing to sales. There are a lot of payoffs from a lateral move. Looking at the short term, a lateral move can increase your marketable skills and the network of personal contacts. These could give you a higher income or facilitate your move upwards in hierarchy. In fact, making this sideward move can sometimes be the only option when you're trying to make a major move upwards. It shows that you aren't afraid to be taken out of your comfort zone and it proves your versatility, which increases your opportunities.

You constantly **focus on innovation and creativity**. You are always on the lookout to transform an idea or a dream into a profitable venture, while working within your organisation. This enables you to use your passion and entrepreneurial skills without taking the risk or accountability associated with entrepreneurial activities. Your love for intrapreneurship has a lot of advantages, not only for you as an individual but also for your organisation. You can take risks, develop yourself, learn from failures, and be energised while the organisation becomes more dynamic and profitable.

4

Intrapreneurship

5

Managerial

You dream about reaching a management level within your organisation. You want to participate in shaping the major strategic lines of the organisation so that you have an impact on what and how things happen, both in the short as in the long term. Next to being involved with the vision, you also want to implement it to accomplish the set goals. During this implementation you want to continue in your role as manager by coordinating the process. You make sure that all deadlines are met, that everybody knows and sticks to the budget and you make changes when necessary. You get energized when you are able to implement the resources entrusted to you in an efficient way. These resources are not only material but also include the people you work with. You find it enjoyable to work with people and encourage them to implement the plan.

6

Expert

You continuously want to **grow and develop yourself** withing a given field. You want to have a detailed hold on this field and you like knowing the ins and outs of it so you can easily translate your knowledge into practice. You are prepared to invest a lot of your time and energy in achieving this goal. You want to follow courses, approach your domain from different angles and grab every opportunity that could provide you with new knowledge, insights and experience. You want to excel in your field, not only for yourself but also for your colleagues and the organisation. You want to be considered as a source of knowledge for anyone who needs reliable information. To summarise: you want to be recognized as an expert and you do everything in your power to continue to refine and update your knowledge.

You prefer to remain in your current function. This preference can be motivated in different ways, mostly depending on the phase your life or career are in. Remaining where you are can be a way to further develop the skills and competences that you frequently use during the execution of your current job. In other words, you first want to master these tasks and corresponding responsibilities before thinking about taking on a new challenge. Additionally, staying put can also be motivated by the enjoyment you get from your present job. It is possible that you are so satisfied with your job that you don't see any reason to change the situation. Yet another possible reason for staying in place is having a balance between your work and life. You know exactly what your job entails and how you can play your work so it doesn't interfere with your personal life.

7

Stay put

8

Project

You are interested in **taking temporary steps** that don't entail any formal promotion. You are attracted mainly by short-term projects that may or may not fall within your current functional area. You like jobs with a relatively short duration so that you can finish them and proceed to the next challenge before you get bored. An additional advantage for you is that everything happens at a fast pace: you must decide and/or implement immediately. For you, the succession of short-term projects, instead of one fixed job, boosts your energy and creativity and enables you to stay focused. This preference for projects has advantages not only for you as an individual, such as increasing your network, expansion of skills and knowledge but also for the organisation. You become a multi-skilled, flexible and employable employee.



11. BUILDING YOUR NETWORK

INTERNALLY AND EXTERNALLY



INTERNALLY

Starting a new job means starting in a new team and in a **different working environment**. It's important that you don't do everything on your own but **keep in touch with your fellow colleagues**. Try to interact with as many stakeholders as you can in a formal but also informal way. **Your learning curve will accelerate** once you understand what drives the different people in your team. Questions such as what is most important to management, what is the position of your company in relation to the industry, will not answer themselves. You will need to **get to know the people that you work with**. A lot of companies offer some kind of **buddy system** in which they set up a new employee with a more senior one to show them around and get them integrated. If your company doesn't provide this kind of guidance, **try to search for a buddy on your own**. There will always be someone that wants to show you around.



When working in an international environment a common pitfall is to only network with people that are closest to your culture or have the same nationality. Don't make this mistake and try to network with both locals and internationals.

EXTERNALLY

It's also important to **not lose touch with the outside world**. What's happening in the industry, how is the competition doing, are there any other interesting projects out there? Or maybe you have an interesting idea and you would love to have somebody else's opinion on it? To find an answer to your questions you'll need to **attend networking events** or maybe even **join a professional employer organisation** (like Agoria, Ergon, VOKA, VKW, Unizo, Sirris and FEB).

12. YOU ARE NEVER ALONE



Don't see networking as something you do for your job, but see it as something you do for yourself. It's great to have people you can go to for some personal advice. It helps if not everything is going as planned, if you have a conflict you don't know how to handle or you have a problem you can't face on your own. Then it's good to know that **you're never alone**.

Everyone has to start somewhere and everyone knows what it's like to be the new kid on the block. So **don't hold back** and **approach someone** when you feel you could benefit from a chat. If you don't feel comfortable talking about it to one of your colleagues or you even feel your mentor/supervisor isn't the one to go to for this question, you can always contact the prevention advisor (most of the time this will be someone from the HR department). You can also ask your colleagues who else you can talk to, it's no exception that someone else in the company is great with this kind of situation (apart from the official prevention advisor).

The important message you should take away is that you know you're never alone. If you're struggling with something, don't keep it to yourself, but **dare to ask**.

FIRST 3 MONTHS CHECKLIST

After the first two weeks:

- All paperwork is signed and you understand what everything means
- Your objectives for your first period are clear
- You have met/planned a meeting with everybody in your team
- You have found somebody that shows you around and you can ask your questions to

After the first month:

- You have met everybody in your team and know what their main objectives for the coming time are
- You have received your first paycheck and you understand all the information you can find on your payslip (if not, you've asked help to better understand)
- You're getting to know the company culture

After the first two months:

- You know who the main stakeholders are and how to achieve their objectives and yours

FIRST 3 MONTHS CHECKLIST

- You're working on expanding your external network and will attend an interesting event or workshop soon
- You've tried to give someone feedback using nonviolent communication and to actively seek feedback yourself

After the first three months:

- Everything is clear, you know your objectives and are ready for the coming year, if you feel the need to have an evaluation talk with your supervisor you approached him/her and planned one
- You're comfortable with your work-life balance, if not you've approached your supervisor and talked about it
- You know you are in control of your own learning path, so you thought of how you want to grow in the next year
- Your internal network is getting bigger each day and you're investing time into getting to know different people
- Your external network is getting bigger each day and you've found an interesting external event that you'll attend

13. TAKEAWAYS

- ✓ Stay yourself, have confidence and a proactive attitude
- ✓ Take control over your own learning path
- ✓ Know that your career can move in different ways
- ✓ Get to know your colleagues, different stakeholders, the company culture... but don't forget to also network externally by attending interesting events or happenings
- ✓ Try to find a good work-life balance
- ✓ Be aware of the cultural differences that colour your perceptions. Use nonviolent communication to give feedback
- ✓ Use the "first three months checklist" to help you during those first months

14. INSPIRED BY

The content in this toolkit is created for the **Newcomer Induction Management Acceleration Programme (NiMAP)**, sponsored by **ESF** and the **Flemish Government**. Goal of the project is to fasten the job search and induction process on the work floor of newcomers entering the Belgian job market by supporting both talent and employers.

Belgian partners in this project are **Vlerick Business School** - a top-tier international business school - and **Talentree** - a new venture building international and entrepreneurial teams. This project is inspired by the Rapid Acceleration Programme from our transnational partner, Stockholm School of Economics, whom we are deeply grateful for a great partnership!

The project team:

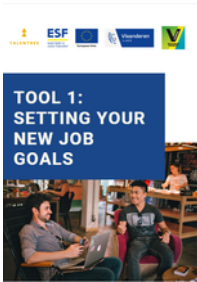
- Prof Dr Dirk Buyens - Professor of Human Resources and Partner at Vlerick Business School
- Dr Emmy Defever - Senior Researcher Area People and Organisation at Vlerick Business School
- Merel Dutry - Intern Area People and Organisation at Vlerick Business School
- Hannelore Waterschoot - Managing Partner at Talentree
- Nancy Leys - Project Manager at Talentree
- Josefine Duvander - Intern Digital Communication at Talentree
- Myrthe Waterschoot - Marketing Manager at Talentree

We would like to thank:

- All international talents who were in the process of finding a job or already found one for sharing their challenges, learnings, tips and dreams. We wish them a great future career journey!
- All the companies and organisations for sharing the employer's perspective via focus groups, interviews and coaching on the work floor
- All other organisations like the public employment services, mentoring and other great local and international projects, network organisations,... for sharing their expertise
- All experts who shared their experiences and knowledge through blog posts and social media



OVERVIEW FIVE TOOLS:



Tool 1: Setting your new job goals

Tool 1 will help you research the Belgian job market, find more information about bottleneck vacancies and mentoring programmes. You'll discover how you can define your new job goal. It ends with a framework to help you define your strengths and weaknesses and two testimonials about reskilling and focusing on your passion.



Tool 2: Preparing your CV and cover letter

Tool 2 will help you create a good CV, cover letter and a LinkedIn profile. It contains information on life long learning and language training with names of possible organisations and courses. It ends with concrete examples of resumes and cover letters.



Tool 3: The importance of networking

Tool 3 will tell you why and how to network. You'll learn how to sell yourself, use LinkedIn as a network tool and how to follow up on any networking you did. It contains a testimonial of a newcomer who found a job in Belgium thanks to his network. It ends with a checklist you can use when preparing for a network meeting.



Tool 4: From first call to getting hired

Tool 4 will guide you through the application process. You'll learn about telephone screenings, preparation for any job interview, assessment centres and feedback. It will give you more insight on how to answer a question related to salary expectations and the STAR method (a method frequently used by recruiters). It ends with a testimonial from a newcomer who found a job by being confident and it contains cards that will help you practice difficult interview questions.



Tool 5: Kick-off in the company

Tool 5 will help you when you've found a job. It contains information on talent development, career moves, internal and external networks, evaluation talks, work-life balance and a testimonial of a newcomer who found a job and made her personal life fit with her work life. In the end you'll find a checklist that will help you in your first three months on the job.