

VOLUNTEERS
MOTIVATION

TIPS & TRICKS



FOR MENTORS

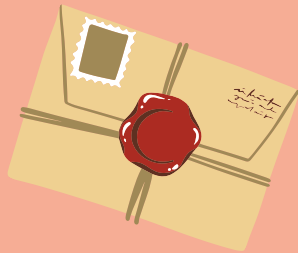
A LETTER TO YOUR FUTURE SELF

TASK FOR THE VOLUNTEER

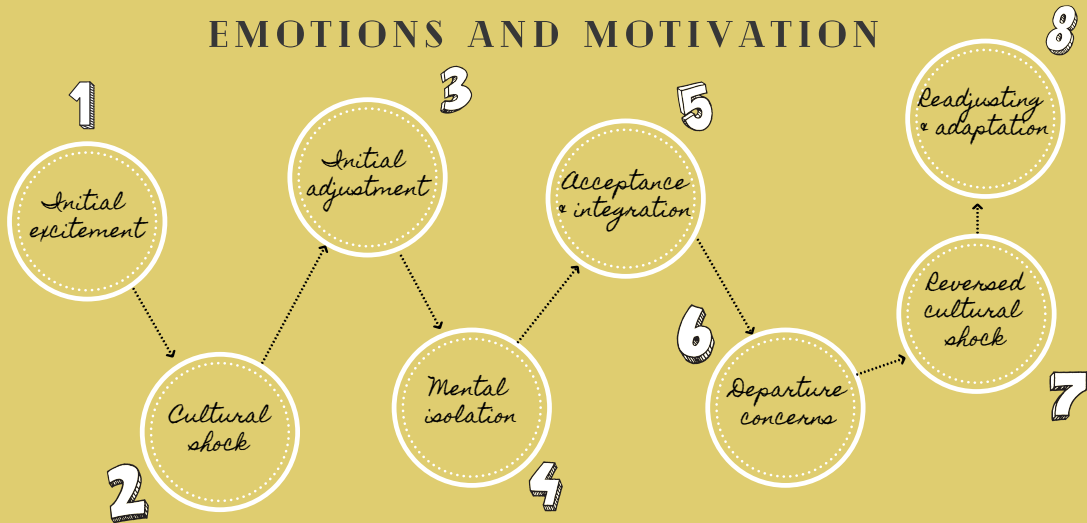
Writing a letter to your future self is a powerful exercise. It forces you to both look inward at your present self and consider your future. Nobody is going to check it, you can write it in any language you like. You can use those questions to help you write the letter:

- where will the "future" you be?
- what will you be doing?
- do you have specific goals?
- what will you need to hear?

Read the letter when the project is finished.



THE CYCLE OF THE VOLUNTEERS EMOTIONS AND MOTIVATION



1

INITIAL EXCITEMENT

- Fascination with the new settings
- "Honeymoon" period

The first stage is often overwhelmingly positive. Volunteers become infatuated with the language, people, and food in their new surroundings. At this stage, the trip or move seems like the greatest decision ever made and an exciting adventure.

tips and tricks

"suggest intercultural evenings"



"let them find their autonomy & routine"



"space for self-discovery"



2

CULTURAL SHOCK

- physical and emotional reactions
- chronic tiredness
- avoiding social contacts
- fear of being cheated
- too much/little drinking, eating, sleeping..

tips and tricks

“Suggest to be open minded, to observe and to try not to compare everything with what they have seen in their country”



3

INITIAL ADJUSTMENT

- feeling much more positive
- easy functioning within the team
- focus on tasks
- genuine & open communication

tips and tricks

"getting familiar with the city"



"check their understanding about functioning of the organisation and staff"



"ask if they are satisfied with what they are doing"





MENTAL ISOLATION

- miss friends & family
- "life out there happening without me"
- difficulty to express themselves
- superficial communication
- confrontation with deeper cultural differences or personal life dramas
- wish to go home

tips and tricks

"refocus the attention on the good things living in the project"

◇ ◇
"share within the volunteers feelings: share common feelings make us stronger"

◇ ◇
"organize some team building activity"



5

ACCEPTANCE & INTEGRATION

- genuine adjustment phase
- fully accustomend to the habits, food, values, people in the hosting community
- starting to feel at home, independent, functional

tips and tricks

“encourage them to take initiative and to propose something for the community and/or hosting organization”



6

DEPARTURE CONCERNS

- afraid of what comes after they return home
- insecurity/uncertainty
- sadness

tips and tricks

"Reassure them about being part of a larger community"



"Give advice, talk to them about the future possibilities"



7

REVERSED CULTURAL SHOCK

- unexpected confrontation with the familiar
- "everything feels different here!"
- "no one understands my experience"
- wishing to go back to the project (missing people, places, tasks)

tips and tricks

"suggest to organize an evening that would help volunteer to share his/her experience - sharing is caring"

"propose to meet with former volunteers to compare experience"





READJUSTING & ADAPTATION

- finding rhythm again
- accepting changes in themselves & others
- ready to apply what they learned/discovered during volunteering in their "home" life
- new opportunities...

tips and tricks

"Remember that it is not your task to keep the contact as a mentor once the project is over, it depends on the personality and desires of both sides"



Key competences

supporting volunteers
in their learning process



social interaction

An illustration of three stylized figures in a celebratory pose. One figure on the left is wearing a blue top and red pants, with arms raised. The middle figure is wearing a blue shirt and dark pants, also with arms raised. The figure on the right is wearing a dark green dress and has one arm raised. They appear to be dancing or celebrating.

People
I interacted
with this week

What did
we do?

Was it difficult
to meet? Why?

Language



Challenges
I faced

How did I deal
with them?

Fun/interesting
new words

Initiative



My skills that
were useful
this week

Any distractions
I had this week

What helped
me to stay
focused

Citizenship



Social
initiatives
I learned
about

Social issues
discussed in
the media this
week

Ideas and
initiatives
I would like
to implement

Personal growth



Challenges
I faced

How did I deal
with them?

What did I learn
about myself?

Technology



Social media
I use in my
project

Problems I had
and did I solve
them

Where can
I look for help?

Literacy



What type of texts have I written this week?

What misunderstandings have occurred?

Has the new language changed the way I look at my own?

Science



What are the financial conditions concerning my project?

What previous knowledge I used?

Did I learn something new?

VOLUNTEERS
CARDS UP!

