

CASE STUDY

Mila's Story:

Creativity, Enterprise and

Innovation



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Competence	2
Abstract/Introduction/Background	2
Key Words	2
Key Characters	2
The Case Study Story	2
Questions, Comments and Topics of Discussion	5

Competence

Undertake career development activities.

This involves building the relationship with users; enabling users' self-understanding; building users' capability for career management; exploring new perspectives; forming strategies and plans.

Abstract/Introduction/Background

This story portrays the meeting of Anna-Kaisa, an OMA Coach and her client Mila at Ohjaamo in Tampere, a low threshold service for under 30-year-olds. Anna-Kaisa is academically educated and she wants to work for Ohjaamo, because she finds working with young people meaningful. Mila is a young woman, who has discontinued her vocational studies. She is stuck at home with no idea of her future prospects.

Key Words

- Low threshold services
- multi-professional
- career guidance
- client motivation
- rehabilitative work
- fear of social situations

Key Characters

OMA Coach Anna- Kaisa and client Mila

The Case Study Story

Ohjaamo, A One-Stop Guidance Centre is a place for under 30-year-olds, where they can receive assistance and support for various purposes from studying and employment to housing and health. There are 70 Ohjaamos in Finland. In Tampere, Ohjaamo is organised by the City of Tampere. The idea behind Ohjaamo is that a young person can find all the services s/he needs under one roof. Ohjaamo has a very innovative service model that constantly develops its services to meet the changing needs of clients. In Ohjaamo Tampere, an OMA Coach is part of a multi-professional team, which includes alongside OMA Coaches for example; TE Service Experts, Social Workers and Social Counsellors, Health Nurse and a Vocational Guidance Psychologist. Each team is on call for one week in a month and during the on-call hours a young person can come to Ohjaamo without an appointment. OMA Coach is employed by The City of Tampere Employment and Growth Services

OMA Coach Anna-Kaisa is on call in her office at Ohjaamo. Anna-Kaisa is a 30-year-old woman, who has worked as an OMA Coach at Ohjaamo for a year. She is employed by The City of Tampere Employment and Growth Services and it is in her remit to ascertain client's overall situation. OMA Coach (O - skills, M - motivation and A - activation) challenges, motivates and encourages the client to take steps in enhancing his or

her situation and employment.

Mila is a 22-year-old woman. She has graduated from comprehensive school and since then she has studied in a hotel and restaurant school but dropped out two years ago. In Finland, a person under 25 years without a vocational degree or a study place is obligated to apply for at least two places to study. If a young person does not apply for at least two places to study or discontinues his or her studies s/he is not eligible for unemployment benefit.

Mila arrives to Ohjaamo in August with Outreach Youth Work (OYW) employee. Ohjaamo's employee, who meets the clients when they arrive, escorts Mila into Anna-Kaisa's room. Mila arrives with OYW employee. Outreach Youth Work helps young people, who are unemployed and without a study place. In Mila's case, she was guided to their service because she had ended her studies. The education provider has a legal obligation to inform the Outreach Youth Work about a young person, who has ended his or her studies at a vocational or general upper secondary school.

Mila is nervous. She gazes at the floor, avoids eye contact and appears irritated. At first, only the OYW employee speaks, Mila says hardly anything. OYW employee explains why they have come to Ohjaamo. According to OYW employee, Mila spends her time at home on her computer playing computer games. OMA Coach tries with her eye contact to encourage Mila to talk. OMA Coach begins to feel uncertain because Mila avoids answering. OMA Coach asks Mila questions such as "How are you?" Mila answers after a short break "I'm OK." OMA Coach asks Mila to fill in 3XD10, a self-assessment survey. Its purpose is that the client makes numerical assessment about how satisfied they are with their health, accommodation, social situation, daily coping and developing own strengths. Mila and Anna-Kaisa go through Mila's answers in the self-assessment survey. Mila assesses her situation poorly and OMA Coach continues to find out more about her situation with open questions.

OMA Coach: "How do you see your general health in relation to employment prospects?"

Mila: (long silence) "I don't know. I guess it's OK."

OMA Coach: (a little confused): OK. Can you be more specific?"

Mila: "That's about it."

OMA Coach: "What about your living arrangements? Do you live alone?"

Mila: "I live with my cat."

OMA Coach: "OK, you have a cat. That's nice, so do I. What's it called and what breed is it?"

Mila: "She's called Misse. She's quite old and I've had her for a very long time."

OMA Coach: "And do you have any friends or family close by?"

Mila: "My mum lives near-by and I have friends on-line."

OMA Coach: "Do you have friends you meet in person?"

Mila: "Not really. I meet them on-line."

OMA Coach: "How do you meet them on-line?"

Mila: "I play computer games with them."

OMA Coach: “What else do you do than play games during the day? What is your daily routine like?”

Mila: “I sleep during the day and spend my time on Discord at night.”

OMA Coach: “Could you please explain what Discord is and why do you spend your time on it at night?”

Mila: “It’s like an app, where you can talk with other gamers. Most of them are not from Finland and they have a different time zone.”

OMA Coach: “Are you happy with your situation?”

Mila: “No, not really. But I don’t know what else to do.”

OMA Coach: “What about trying this group activity?”

Mila: “Defo not. Not one bit interested.”

OMA Coach: “We have a rehabilitative work Game Workshop.”

Mila: “So what’s that all about?”

OMA Coach: “They have a lot of activities. You can concentrate on developing game software or graphics. If in future you would be interested in gaming as a profession, they advise you with the possibilities like study opportunities. It would give your days some structure and purpose. You would also get a free lunch and a bus card.”

Rehabilitative work is being introduced more thoroughly at the meeting. Rehabilitative work is a service that promotes employment and its purpose is to create paths for the participants into education or other employment promoting service and support long-term unemployed clients to help them find work in the open labour market. Rehabilitative work is a municipal service and in Tampere most of the service providers are associations. They organize a wide variety of workshops ranging from arts and crafts and IT to work in a café. Rehabilitative work cannot be organized in a company. The client commits to attend 1-4 days per week for the activities and the duration of the first period is always 3 months. During rehabilitative work, the client is eligible for unemployment benefit also when s/he does not otherwise meet the criteria.

Anna-Kaisa asks the TE Service Expert to come and join the meeting for the rest of the appointment to write an activation plan that is required in order to be able to start rehabilitative work. TE Service Expert is needed as a representative of the TE Services (Employment and Economic Development Office), a local government authority. The activation plan is a tripartite agreement between the client, and the representatives of the municipality and state. After the agreement has been signed, TE Service Expert downloads the activation plan into TE Services database URA.

The meeting with OMA Coach is coming to an end without there being enough time to go through Mila’s strengths. OMA Coach asks Mila to think about them at home by filling in a questionnaire about strengths and what things would make her life a little bit better. Before the meeting ends, Mila is given an appointment to go and visit the gaming workshop, where she intends to go with the OYW employee. In a week, an employee from the workshop sends OMA Coach a message that Mila has been to visit the place and would like to start the activity. OMA Coach makes arrangements for Mila to start the activity for the first three months, which is the minimum length of the first period.

After a few weeks on a Monday morning, Anna-Kaisa sits at her desk. She receives a message from the Gaming Workshop Coach that Mila has not started the activity as planned. At first, Anna-Kaisa feels

disappointed. Then she gets worried, has something happened to Mila? Anna-Kaisa tries to call Mila, but she does not answer. Anna-Kaisa sends Mila a message asking her why she has not started the activity at the workshop. The workday goes by and Mila does not answer.

Next morning as Anna-Kaisa opens her phone, she notices that she has received a WhatsApp message. It is from Mila. The message says “I couldn’t start at the workshop. I just couldn’t go there.” Anna-Kaisa replies;” Thanks for sending me the message! It is a pity you couldn’t make it there! I think it would be really important to talk about this in person and figure out what to do next. Would you be able to meet?” Anna-Kaisa and Mila continue messaging and arrange a meeting.

Anna-Kaisa and Mila meet after a few days and discuss the situation. It is hard for Anna-Kaisa to comprehend why Mila could not make it to the workshop. Mila seems anxious to Anna-Kaisa. Mila is quiet and avoids eye contact by looking at her hands. Anna-Kaisa tries with a compassionate approach to get Mila to open up. She tries verbally, non-verbally and with her tone of voice to convey to Mila that this is a place where she can speak freely.

As the meeting moves forward Mila starts to relax, her posture changes and she makes eye contact more often. Mila seems to be more comfortable to talk about her situation and the reasons that made her not to go to the workshop. She talks about how she went to the workshop door on the morning in question, but she just could not open the door and walk inside. The idea of a large group of unknown people made her anxious. Anna-Kaisa asks more about it and finds out that already for a long time Mila has found it really difficult to be part of a group. That is why she has wanted to isolate herself in her home and all her social contacts have been mainly via internet. Anna-Kaisa talks to Mila about how it would be important for Mila to expose herself to uncomfortable situations. Mila agrees but wonders if she will have enough courage for it. At least the gaming group still feels too scary.

Anna-Kaisa remembers a new group in Ohjaamo that might benefit Mila. Anna-Kaisa tells her about a new group called Jännä (Nervy). Jännä group is open for eight people and designed for people with social anxiety. The group was created because it was noticed that clients experience fear of social situations a lot. The activities in Jännä group are based on a scientific guidance model. One of the participants is a therapy dog that brings joy to the clients. Mila asks more about the group, where and when they meet. Mila seems to like the idea that there is a dog in the group. Mila wants to think about joining the group. Anna-Kaisa asks for Mila’s permission to give her contact details to the Coach of the Jännä group, who can tell her more about the activities of the group. Mila and Anna-Kaisa decide that Anna-Kaisa will contact Mila in a few days to find out if Mila wants to participate in the group. They will also make an appointment with the multi-professional teams Health Nurse in order to find out if Mila could benefit also from health care services. Anna-Kaisa is left to wonder what will happen next.

Questions, Comments and Topics of Discussion

- What do you feel about Anna-Kaisa encouraging Mila into the gaming industry?
- What would you have done?
- Which career development activities would benefit Mila in the future?
- Do you experience in your work that the plan you have made with your client does not go as you originally planned it? What do you see are the reasons for it failing? Do you feel there is enough time for you to think about the reasons behind the failed plan?
- Do you feel that in your organization it is possible to develop services to meet with clients’ needs? Are you able to influence the service development?
- In what way do you use creativity in your guidance work?

- What do you feel is essential in forming trust with your clients?
- How would you help a client with fear of social situations?
- How to motivate a passive client?

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