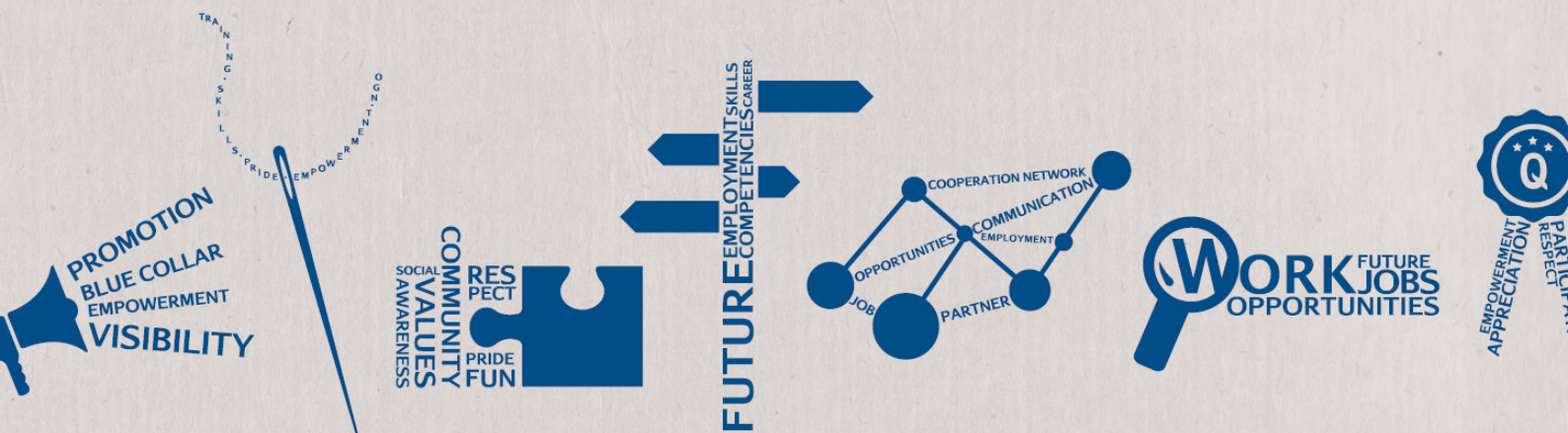




2.2 HOW TO DEVELOP AND DISSEMINATE A REGULAR BLUE COLLAR MAGAZINE



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HOW TO DEVELOP AND DISSEMINATE A REGULAR BLUE COLLAR MAGAZINE



What Is It Useful For

A Blue Collar magazine can be an effective tool to improve the image of Blue Collar work by **raising awareness, respect and appreciation**. The goal is to change perception and then ultimately increase qualified applications for Blue Collar jobs.

The magazine tries to tackle the information gap of work related topics such as decent Blue Collar jobs offered by the private sector, labour market requirements in terms of skills and qualifications, as well as visualising attractive career paths in order to encourage job seekers and Blue Collar workers to join the labour market. It furthermore includes an introduction to essential work ethics and required soft skills. As an underlying philosophy, it aims at empowering, supporting, educating and entertaining its readers.

The **format of a print media** has proven to be highly successful to enhance the image of Blue Collar work due to the following reasons:

- Print media as communication channels are widely accepted among the target group which read newspapers on a regular basis
- Print media are also a trusted source of information for employment related topics (besides friends and relatives), in particular for the target group which might not have regular access to internet
- Print media are durable items which are being passed on and recommended to the environment of the readers, e.g. family or friends, or commuters in public transportation

The term “**Blue Collar magazine**” used in this tool refers to a highly attractive and target group oriented, non-glossy information magazine designed and disseminated for free as a magazine in regular intervals, without any advertisement and solely focusing on Blue Collar employment topics.



When To Use

The tool should be taken into consideration in cases where youth between 15-35 is targeted and a lack of information, orientation and awareness on Blue Collar labour market demands and opportunities shall be tackled.

The tool is particularly effective in cases where comprehensive information campaigns are envisaged but standard mass media tools (such as advertisements) cannot transfer the required amount, content and nature of information and are too expensive.

This tool can e.g. be used by NGOs and professional associations for information and orientation purposes as well as by companies as information tool for their Blue Collar workers.

The format of a specialised **Blue Collar magazine** created for youth has shown a highly positive feedback from the target group and a significant demand from dissemination partners.



What Is Needed

- An organisational team for overall coordination, content management, dissemination and marketing
- Financial and human resources for developing magazine content and layout, for printing, marketing and dissemination



How Long Does It Take

2-3 months for concept development, partnership arrangements etc.
Approx. 1 month preparation (full time) per magazine edition



Examples

The approach has been successfully applied in the Project “Promotion of Blue Collar Jobs” in Greater Cairo, Egypt.

The project developed the **magazine “Shoghlana”** as the first non-profit magazine that seeks to promote topics related to Blue Collar jobs and workers in Egypt. It aims to promote Blue Collar work by providing target group oriented information about job profiles, labour rights, work ethics and soft skills, interesting articles about the appreciation of workers as well as lifestyle tips and tricks. The underlying connotation is to provide the youth with options and hope. Additionally, “Shoghlana” is based on the idea to promote Blue Collar jobs and workers which leads not just to self-appreciation and self-empowerment of workers, but also heads towards societal appreciation of workers in general.



WHAT TO DO

In order to achieve the above mentioned objectives, the following steps should be undertaken:



1

DEVELOP AN OVERALL CONCEPT FOR THE MAGAZINE

The overall process should start with a clear definition of the following **key questions**:

- Which **objectives** shall be achieved by the magazine? (e.g. educating and orienting job seekers and workers on topics related to Blue Collar employment / creating awareness about decent Blue Collar job profiles and career opportunities / creating respect and appreciation for Blue Collar occupational profiles / creating self-respect and self-awareness among Blue Collar workers)
- Who should be reached? (**target group**, e.g. youth between 15-35, in particular students and graduates from technical schools, job seekers and Blue Collar workers)

Based on these questions, a clear and precise **concept** for the magazine needs to be developed. This should cover:

- Which **key messages** shall be communicated to the target group?
- How can we reach the target group? (**Dissemination** channels, frequency)
- Potential **content**
- Requirements for design and **layout**
- Target group oriented **language** (i.e. simple, young and positively formulated)
- Financial **budget**
- Required **personnel**
- **Partnerships** (see step 2)

It is highly recommended to collaborate with a marketing agency for the content and layout development and distribution of the magazine.

2

SEARCH FOR APPROPRIATE PARTNERSHIPS

After making a cooperation agreement with the marketing agency (see step 1), the project initiator should carefully consider which other partners are required for content development and distribution to the target group. These can furthermore serve as important resources for regular feedback on content, layout, language and overall quality.

Depending on the project initiator, this could include:

NGOs and youth centres	
for	- content input - distribution - feedback
Professional associations in sectors with high Blue Collar workers ratio	
for	- content input - distribution
Companies with high Blue Collar ratio / job vacancies	
for	- content input - distribution - feedback
Relevant development cooperation projects and offices (e.g. ILO)	
for	- content input - distribution - financial contribution

3

DEVELOP RELEVANT MAGAZINE CONTENT

The content needs to be developed in line with the previously defined objectives, target group and overall concept.

In principle, it will be of utmost importance to develop content which takes into consideration the main target group, which may have only limited or no education. This also implies elaborating articles in a very short and precise way with relatively simple language and with catchy, casual headlines and a strong focus on visual elements (see step 4 below).

Potential content can cover:

- a. Occupation or sector related topics**
 - Introduction to **one specific sector** and its various fields of work, for example presented by representatives of companies or professional associations.
 - **Blue Collar job profiles**: Description, including required skills and qualifications, demand on labour market and attractive career paths (see also [tool 3.1](#)). This element also proved to be helpful for readers, as it would help them to take informed decisions about their next applications for job vacancies.
 - **Success Story**: Describing a successful career of a Blue Collar worker. In the editions of the Blue Collar magazine "Shoghiana", this proved to be the most interesting element for most readers, as it features a real life person and generated hope regarding career path and opportunities.
- b. Job orientation**
 - **Job orientation**: Provide guidance on how to find the best job, assessment of qualifications and skills etc.
 - **Job market**: Information on how to get a job, employment centres, and most demanded job profiles etc.
 - **Soft skills**: Give information / hints / tips about how to behave in interviews, communication skills etc.
 - **Work ethics**: Raise awareness about importance of being on time, quality work, high motivation, reliability etc.

WHAT TO DO

In order to achieve the above mentioned objectives, the following steps should be undertaken:



c. Legal topics

- **Legal framework:** Provide information about work contracts, workers' rights and duties etc.

d. Events

- **Calendar of events:** Inform about upcoming events related to employment, such as employment fairs etc.

4

DEVELOP A HIGHLY ATTRACTIVE MAGAZINE DESIGN AND LAYOUT

The success of this Blue Collar magazine largely depends on its design. It has to be attractive for the target group, which are typically aged 15-35 with lower education. Only if the layout is appealing to them, they will start reading the content.

Besides layout, also the content will need to contain a large portion of **visual and interactive elements**. This could include:

- Info boxes
- Assessment tests
- Checklists
- Quizzes, games
- Cartoons
- Photo stories
- Caricatures

As a general rule, one article should **never be longer than 1/3 of a page**.



5

ELABORATE A DISTRIBUTION STRATEGY

Previous experience proves that the distribution of the magazine is at least as important as its content and layout.

The distribution approach can be done in various ways and could cover the following distribution channels:

- **NGOs** working in the field of employment
- **Professional associations** in sectors with high Blue Collar ratio
- **Companies** with high Blue Collar ratio, aiming at motivating their employees and raising appreciation for them
- **Community houses, cultural places, youth centres** with a high reputation
- **Events** related to employment
- **Established newspapers** (Blue Collar magazine as regular supplement)

As a guiding principle, distribution partners should have a reputable image which fits the overall image that the magazine shall transmit to the target group as well as direct access to the target group.

One has to take into consideration that for the first few issues, a certain effort will be required to inform distribution partners about the new magazine, its concept etc. For the following issues, the process will be much easier as demand will have been created.

In addition, the physical distribution of the magazine needs to be kept in mind, in particular in large cities where courier services might not be trustworthy, and actual dissemination lies in the responsibility of the project initiator.

6

PROMOTION OF THE MAGAZINE

In general, comprehensive **marketing activities** will be required to launch and establish the magazine. This includes media coverage, presence in social media and communication with NGOs etc.

In order to enhance the visibility and outreach of the magazine right from the beginning, it is highly recommended to organise a **launch event**.

Potential elements of the event could cover:

- Present and distribute the first edition of the magazine
- Organise discussion panels / interactive workshops / games around the topic "Blue Collar employment"
- Include entertaining elements attractive for the target audience, such as a concert etc.

It is important to make sure that the launch event is **appealing to the target audience**.

This also refers to the choice of the venue with a high reputation and positive image for the target group and which is easily accessible at the same time. It might also be a good idea to link the launch event to another related event to assure high participation rates.

At the same time, it will be crucial to **broadly inform about the event**, using social media, street campaigns and media in general. Media coverage in general provides credibility to the magazine and further promotes its cause.

7

REGULARLY EVALUATE AND ADAPT THE MAGAZINE

It is recommended to regularly evaluate to which extent the magazine is truly attractive for the target group and really provides information which is useful to them.

To this end, several approaches can be chosen:

- If the magazine is distributed during an event, short **interviews** can be conducted with readers
- If the magazine is presented in **social media**, feedback can be collected through this channel
- A **focus group** can be created and asked about their opinion

Feedback should be collected from the direct target group (such as youth and job seekers) but also from distribution channels (such as NGOs and companies).

The collected feedback should then be used to further ameliorate the magazine.



WHAT TO OBSERVE

The following lessons learnt should be observed:

The main **key success factors** for a Blue Collar magazine are:

- **Purely focus on the Blue Collar sector.** This will implicitly express the appreciation for this group, by creating at the same time attention among the target group as such an exclusive focus is still very rare, and they will feel appreciated.
- **Strongly align the content and layout** to the preferences of the target group. Make sure the content is formulated in a casual but serious style, and heavily rely on visual elements. Information has to be provided, but should not be overwhelming. The layout has to be attractive but needs to express seriousness at the same time. Be aware of the fact that only if the layout is appealing, content will be read.
- **Provide key information and orientation** on employment and employment related topics which are otherwise not easily accessible / available for Blue Collar workers, which they however need for entering the formal labour market. This includes information on labour market demands and requirements, job profiles, how to apply, which qualifications / work ethics are required etc. Credibility can be achieved by including personal statements of experts in the field.
- **Distribution and marketing** has to be taken serious. A certain effort will be required to introduce the magazine and to establish it as a serious channel of information and orientation for Blue Collar work.

NGOs are valuable partners for content development, as they regularly work with young job seekers and brilliantly understand their needs in terms of information and motivation.

It can be recommendable to develop an overall concept with **consecutive content for each magazine edition**. Each edition could e.g. focus on one particular sector / job profile with announcements for the key topic of the next issue. This approach assures a continued interest of the reader.

Ideally, the **magazine is neutral** and does not exclusively promote or advertise for a specific company. Thus, trust is being built and the reader can be confident that the information provided is not being altered in order to promote a certain institution.

For partnerships with marketing agencies, it can be very helpful to select those agencies which have a **high interest in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) issues**. They will be highly motivated to invest in such an issue which is a social priority, but will clearly understand the economic opportunity at the same time.

As companies are included as partners for content development and distribution, it is highly important to **ensure a balance** between topics on workers' rights and duties as well as work ethics.

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