



# Overcoming setbacks

 **BARCLAYS** | LifeSkills



# Module overview

This module focuses on the idea of positive challenge for growth and development. It will encourage learners to consider how they currently deal with setbacks and consider how they can take a solution-focused approach to facing challenges in the future.

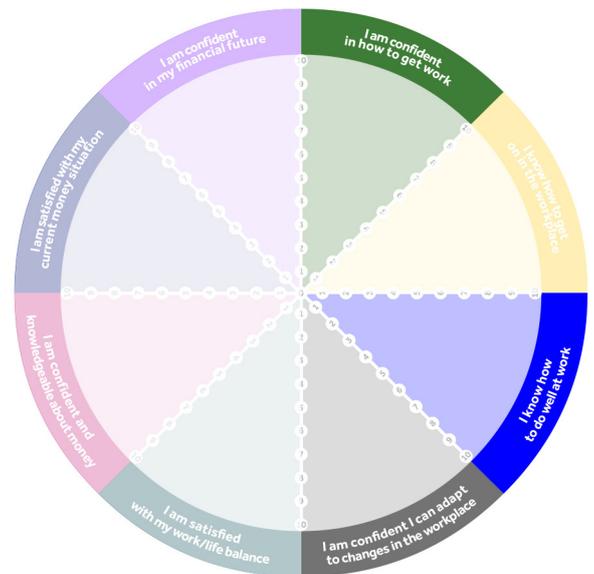
The module aims to challenge learners to respond to challenges and setbacks in a more positive way.

Time	Key learning outcomes	Which will lead to
85 mins	At the end of the module learners will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider personal barriers and identify techniques to help in challenging situations</li> <li>Use tools to help them build resilience when dealing with personal challenges</li> <li>Understand how learning from experiences contribute to success</li> <li>Reflect on their support network and how this can help them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved ability to deal with setbacks. Greater confidence to try again. A new perspective surrounding positive challenge</li> </ul>

## Important

Introduce the activity and theme and remind your learner of the coaching-based approach. Agree the desired outcome of the session with your learner.

Throughout the activity, we have included **'do now'**, **'do soon'** and **'do later'** actions which may help your learner to think about the next steps they could take. Alternatively, you could use the 'do now', 'do soon' and 'do later' headings to help your learner come up with their own actions.



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# Introduction

Time	Educator guidance	Expected outcome
⌚ 2-3 mins	<p>Start the session by referring to your learner’s LifeSkills wheel and discuss how they scored themselves in the relevant area.</p> <p>Discuss what they need to know/do to be able to increase how they rate their satisfaction with this area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learners are reminded of where they are now and what they need to do to reach a higher satisfaction score in this area</li> </ul>
⌚ 3-5 mins	<p><b>Start with the question:</b></p> <p><b>How do you react to challenges and setbacks?</b></p> <p><b>Use prompt questions to establish suitable starting point, such as:</b></p> <p><b>How do you react when things don’t go to plan?</b></p> <p><b>How long does it take you to bounce back from a setback?</b></p> <p><b>Do you have strategies and a support network that can help when needed?</b></p> <p>Try to draw out of the conversation that there are some coping mechanisms that can be used by anyone to support them when things get tough.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishing how your learner currently deals with setbacks and identifying any strategies they already have will help them begin to work toward more positive strategies and greater confidence</li> </ul>

# Core activity one

## How to deal with setbacks in a positive way

Time	Educator guidance	Expected outcome
⌚ 5-15 mins	<p>Explain to your learner that everyone experiences setbacks and challenges as part of everyday life. Highlight that it is how we react to these challenges that affects how we are able to grow and move forward.</p> <p><b>Using the initial LifeSkills wheel, ask your learner:</b></p> <p><b>Which skills do you have that will help you cope with the challenges?</b></p> <p><b>Which skills need to be developed?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learners will have a good understanding about how their skill strengths will help them deal with setbacks in a positive way and which skills they want to develop even further to make dealing with setbacks less stressful</li> </ul>

# Core activity one

## How to deal with setbacks in a positive way (cont'd)

Time	Educator guidance	Expected outcome
	<p>Explain to your learner that an integral part of building our skills and confidence is our ability to learn from experience and use the skills that were built in those moments.</p> <p>Share the <b>case studies</b> with your learner, or only those you feel will resonate best with them. Ask them to consider what they had in common and how each of them managed to continue despite traumatic or difficult setbacks and circumstance.</p> <p><b>Ask your learner to consider the importance of having resilience and endurance. Explain that:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Resilience</b> is the ability to recover quickly from difficulties</li> <li>• <b>Endurance</b> is the ability to endure an unpleasant or difficult process or situation without giving up</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners should gain a good understanding of how learning from experience and developing resilience and endurance are important to how we deal with setbacks positively and proactively</li> </ul>

# Core activity two

## Looking back on previous setbacks and finding ways to improve

Time	Educator guidance	Expected outcome
 5-15 mins	<p><b>Ask your learner to think of a time they've experienced a difficult setback which damaged their confidence or to which they reacted badly. Discuss with them:</b></p> <div style="background-color: #e0f2f1; padding: 10px;"> <p><b>What happened?</b></p> <p><b>What did they do?</b></p> <p><b>How could they respond better next time?</b></p> <p><b>What would motivate them to do this?</b></p> </div> <p>Ask your learner to complete the <b>Last time, next time</b> handout. Discuss the idea that when we successfully meet a challenge or deal with a setback in a positive way it can make us feel rewarded, stretched, proud of ourselves and more confident in what we can do. It can also make us feel that we've learnt something new: it allows us to grow and develop.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners should gain a good understanding of how learning from experience and developing resilience and endurance are important to how we deal with setbacks positively and proactively</li> </ul>

# Core activity three

## Strategies for dealing with setbacks

Time	Educator guidance	Expected outcome
<p> 5-15 mins</p>	<p>If relevant, discuss with your learner a work or finance-related challenge they have coming up. For instance, this could be an interview or trying to reach a savings goal.</p> <p><b>Ask them the following questions:</b></p> <div style="background-color: #e0f0e0; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p><b>What are they trying to achieve?</b></p> <p><b>What could set them back?</b></p> </div> <p>Together, discuss positive strategies to deal with and prevent possible setbacks, they can write this down on the <b>My challenge</b> handout.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparing as much as possible for a situation</li> <li>• Identifying possible pitfalls in advance and brainstorming what you can do to avoid them</li> <li>• Framing setbacks as positive learning opportunities, such as listing five positive aspects of the situation</li> <li>• Accepting a setback and moving on</li> </ul> <p><b>Other strategies they might like to try are:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Realise it's normal</b> It's normal and expected for setbacks to occur. In other words, it's not if a challenge will happen, it's when. Knowing this, it's important to anticipate that the main task will be how to effectively manage the setback when it arises.</li> <li><b>2. Accept negative emotions</b> Receiving concerning news can trigger a seemingly endless spiral of negative emotion. And, when confronted with negative emotion, it can be very tempting to try to resist acknowledging the negative emotions.  Accepting negative emotion can help them to feel better in the long-term. Research that has found that attempting to avoid negative emotion can, in fact, cause more stress than confronting it head-on.</li> <li><b>3. Reframe their thoughts</b> Sometimes, reframing the way you think about the bad news can help to view the situation in a new light and improve overall perspective.  Suggest your learner tries using a technique called cognitive reframing. The idea of cognitive framing is to find a more positive interpretation of an expected adverse event. Cognitive reframing challenges an individual to highlight the positive sides of a challenging situation rather than just seeing the negative.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners should gain knowledge and understanding of positive strategies they can use to deal with and prevent possible setbacks</li> </ul>

# Core activity three

## Strategies for dealing with setbacks (cont'd)

Time	Educator guidance	Expected outcome
🕒 7-10 mins	<p>For example, if someone just lost their job, instead of focusing on the mistakes that may have led to their current unemployment, look at the situation as an opportunity to try new things and explore different work alternatives that might be more fulfilling.</p> <p>Research suggests that hitting rock bottom after losing a job could actually be beneficial and enable people to start a new chapter, create a new positive work identity, and free them from negative emotion.</p> <p><b>4. Learn from it</b> Reflect on previous setbacks and list what you've learnt it/ them. This will help you to avoid similar circumstances from happening again. Each time you fine-tune your plan and put it into action again, you can actually improve their odds of success. This is because you'll learn from each misstep, and your action plan can become more effective with each subsequent attempt. While nobody wants to go through a setback, in the end it can help you achieve your ultimate goal.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learners should gain knowledge and understanding of positive strategies they can use to deal with and prevent possible setbacks</li> </ul>

# Core activity four

## The importance of support networks

Time	Educator guidance	Expected outcome
🕒 5-15 mins	<p>Discuss with your learner the idea that we can't do everything alone and that a strong support network can really help when we suffer a setback. This might include family and friends, as well as support from professionals and organisations.</p> <p>Ask your learner to fill in the <b>My support network</b> handout with everyone who they can talk to for support. Discuss how we go to different people for support when we experience different setbacks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learners to identify individuals who they can talk to for support</li> <li>Learner to identify ways to build their support network</li> </ul>
🕒 5-7 mins	<p>Encourage them to think of a setback and consider who they would go to for support in those circumstances.</p> <p><b>Do they need to get support from anyone else?</b></p> <p>Discuss ways that your learner could build their support network by meeting people or getting in touch with organisations.</p>	

# Wrap up

Time	Educator guidance	Expected outcome
⌚ 5-7 mins	<p>Your learner should decide on a goal that they want to work on so that they are able to deal with setbacks better next time: e.g. to see it as an opportunity and explain why this will have a positive impact on their future.</p> <p><b>Do now:</b> Write down the goal you want to work on and consider how achieving it would be positive for you. Start working towards it</p> <p><b>Do soon:</b> Spend time with someone who makes you feel good about yourself, or do an activity that you enjoy. Reflect on how this made you feel</p> <p><b>Do later:</b> Reflect on how you now feel about your setback and what you have learned through working towards your goal. Carry this positive mindset forward with you</p> <p>Reflect on the score they gave themselves on the wheel – what is the focus of their goal, and would getting closer to achieving it increase how they score themselves in this area of the wheel?</p> <p>Thinking about what they have covered in this session, what steps can they take next to move forward in this area?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learners will finish the session with a realistic and achievable goal to help them deal with setbacks more positively in future</li> </ul>

# Optional extension

Time	Educator guidance	Expected outcome
⌚ 10-20 mins	<p>Ask your learner to consider a person who inspires them to deal with setbacks in a positive way and why. The learner should write themselves a letter about this person to keep coming back to as future motivation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learners will have a tool to motivate them when they experience a setback in the future</li> </ul>

# Case studies

## Sionice-Louise Phillips



I was born in a small town in the north of England. I was born with male anatomy and from a young age was very feminine. In the 1980's little was known about being transgender and I was brought up male. Bullied from a young age for being different, I left school with no qualifications due to suffering with severe depression. At 15 I started to transition, wear make up and started exploring with female clothing. At the 17 I finally understood that I was transgender and started living as my chosen gender full time. I had to leave my town as I was being harassed by the local community and moved to Hull.

During my time in Hull I learned to be resilient, I learned that being determined and personable were tools to overcome some of the prejudice and that a positive outlook was key. Most of all I learned to love and appreciate myself and to accept that being transgender was actually a huge positive. After 10 years I moved to Oxford and started working for Barclays as a Cashier.

Within 10 years, through hard work, dedication, strong networking and being authentic I had been promoted five times, with one promotion seeing me as the UK's first transgender bank manager. My most recent promotion has seen me achieve an area manager role and my first professional qualification. I now attend regular panel events and speak publicly about transgender issues and the benefits of being true to yourself at work.

# Case studies

## Rhianne Knightley

I work for the Council as a Partnerships Policy Officer. A big part of the role is the delivery of communications between partners and members of the council and public. When I first joined, I felt very anxious about working in a different environment with new colleagues. When I started the job, I was given a lead role in the restructure of the partnership website. I experienced disagreements in how to deliver the project with another colleague which I found really hard, as I didn't know how to approach and resolve the situation. I was still relatively new there and didn't feel able to confide in anyone about the pressure I was feeling and how the conflict with my colleague was affecting me.

I spoke with my manager about how I felt and how I could approach the situation professionally, whilst still getting my point across. She helped me develop my emotional intelligence – my ability to recognise emotions and understand what they are telling me.

After getting advice, I felt I could openly discuss my opinions knowing that what I was saying was appropriate and had a right to be taken on board. This resulted in my colleague having newfound respect for me, strengthening our working relationship.

## Marc Powell



I'm registered blind. Growing up I was very shy, so I really had to push myself to get out there. From the age of 18 to 25, my CV basically read as 'Athlete'. My 'workplace' was a judo hall and my 'boss' was a Head Coach. I didn't have a degree and I had no real experience of an office-based job. When I retired from professional sport, I was at my lowest point. I felt lost, I had no focus. I knew I somehow needed to find a career that gave me the feeling of fire and passion I used to have when competing.

I managed to organise a meeting with a senior member of staff at the largest sight loss charity in the country. (I later found out that they agreed to meet partly because they were interested in my approach: a complete stranger contacting them out of the blue.) I worked hard on a presentation, writing down all of the ideas I want to communicate.

I got the job because I believed in myself and what I was saying, skills I only discovered when I pushed myself out of my comfort zone. Making such a drastic career transition wasn't easy. But I'm proof that it is achievable.

# Overcoming setbacks

## Last time, next time

What happened?

I felt...

How did I react?

Was this a positive or negative reaction?

If it happened again, what would I aim do differently?

How will I remember to react more positively?

Reacting differently will mean...

# Overcoming setbacks

## My challenge

My goal

What could set me back

What will help me succeed?

If I don't succeed the first time I will...

I want to achieve this goal because...

This will make me feel...

# Overcoming setbacks

## My support network

Write your name in the centre of the box below.

Imagine you're drawing out a transport map such as the UK rail network but make it up with different directions. Add different 'stations' or 'stops' as the different people who could support you and that person's role in your life, these could be:

Close friends	Family members	Other friends	Neighbours
Support workers	Co-workers	Teachers	Healthcare professionals

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How can my network be stronger?	
Who do I need to reach out to?	
How will I do this?	
Having a stronger support network will help me by:	
How do I give back support to those in my network?	