

Good Policy Practice

Attila von Unruh – TEAM U, Germany
HERO MEETINGS FOR RESTARTERS

Embracing failure to facilitate second-chance entrepreneurship in the Danube region

Train the trainers, DanubeChance2.0, Vienna and Bratislava 16-17 April

Our Vision



We envision a world where we learn to deal
with crisis and change in a positive and constructive way.
We believe responsible entrepreneurship is a major force
for solving economic and social problems.



Summary I

TEAM



TEAM U is the **first social enterprise in Germany** to support SMEs in crisis, helping them to successfully manage a turnaround and restart



TEAM U has helped more than **16,000 entrepreneurs in Germany** - its model can be adapted by other countries



SME
< 50 Employees

TEAM U combines **cost-free support for SMEs** through mentor-volunteers that have been specially trained by **TEAM U** as well as a network of turnaround experts and lawyers

TEAM U is active in the creation of a **second chance culture** for honest entrepreneurs who are willing to learn from their mistakes. **TEAM U** encourages entrepreneurship



Summary II



TEAM U is partner in Early Warning Europe and has trained organizations in Italy, Spain, Greece and Poland. EWE offers trainings on capacity building to all European countries



*Source: European Commission
www.ec.europa.eu/growth/smes.de

"Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are the back-bone of Europe's economy. In the past five years, they have created around 85% of all new jobs and provided two-thirds of the total private sector employment in the EU."

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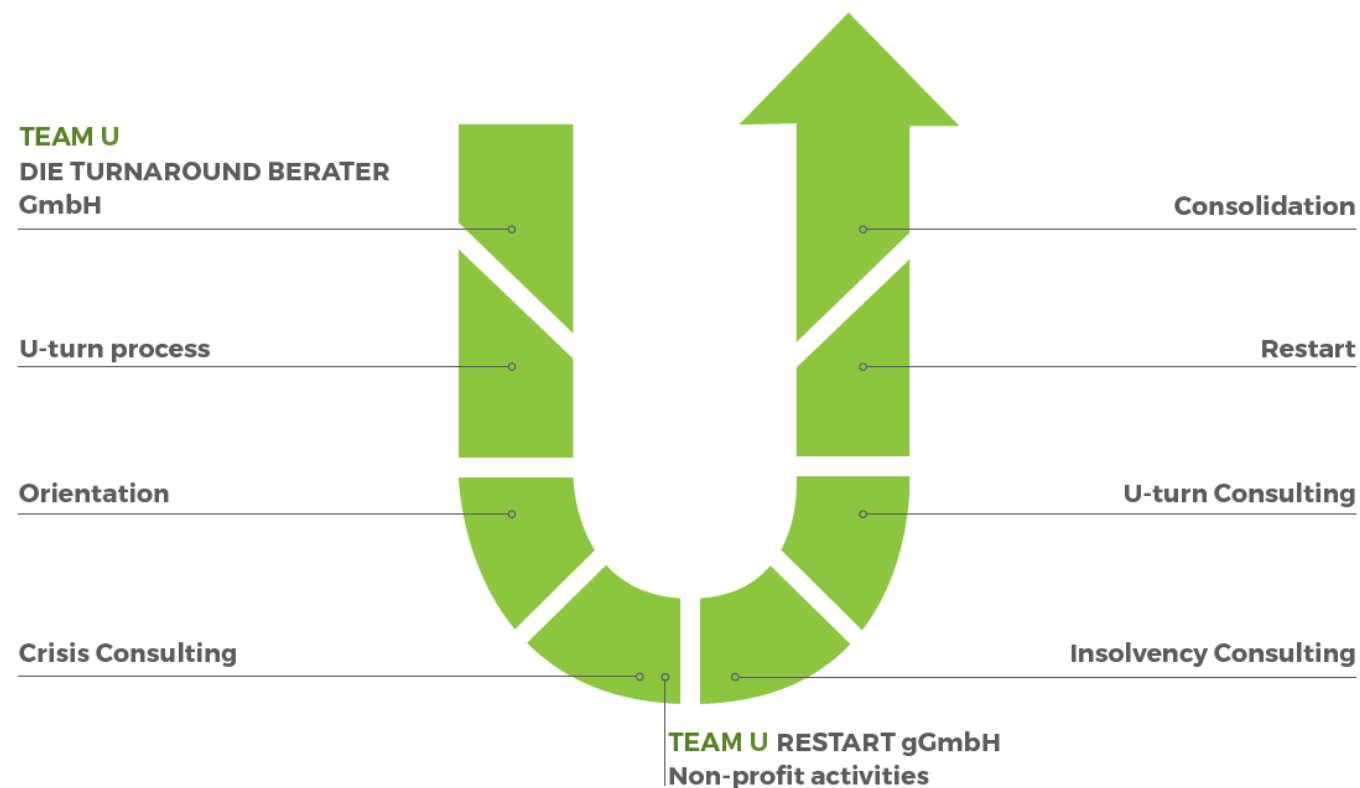
TEAM



TEAM U trains selected entrepreneurs who have experienced a crisis and learned from it to become **TEAM U** mentors. Here, their personal experience is seen as a valuable asset instead of a deficiency – their empathy and skills increase their credibility and trustworthiness within the target group

„The U Principle“

TEAM 



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Our Approach



With TEAM U we have developed an efficient and affordable support system that empowers entrepreneurs to make full use of their potential and solve their economic problems in a sustainable way.

TEAM U is a social enterprise focused on generating a high social impact.



Objectives: Hero-Meetings for Restarters



Hero-Meetings for Restarters

To empower restarters by creating a protected environment where they can

- learn from mistakes
- acknowledge their strength and resources
- break out of isolation, paralysis, shame, guilt and feeling of being a victim
- accept help and support
- Connect with other restarters and find a peer-group
- get motivated to start again and be successful in a sustainable way

Main challenges:

- Stigma of failure, negative image of failed entrepreneurs, communicating it in a positive way,
> keep it simple

Description of intervention



- Restarters meet in a protected group setting
- Learning from each other by sharing their stories of failure and restart
- focus is on empowering each other: learnings, reflection, solution oriented (ver. feeling as a victim)
- No judgement, no blaming, appraisal (> Heroes!)
- acknowledgement of the parts that went well and revealing what did not went well
- Intelligence of the group, feedback from the group gives new insights and perspectives
- Participants gather information and get emotional support
- Participants break the vicious circle of isolation, shame and guilt by opening up and connecting
- They experience: “I am not alone” / “it helps to talk”
- This is real meeting and learning – not a “Fuck Up Night” which is based on the idea of entertainment

Region and implementing body



- Provided by **TEAM U – RESTART gGmbH**, biggest independent Non-Profit Organization to support entrepreneurs in Germany
- Based on the idea of Self-Help Groups **Insolvents Anonymous**
- Insolvents Anonymous derived from a Self-Help Group that started 2007 in Cologne
- The target group is entrepreneurs before / in / after insolvency
- Cost free, provided nationwide by trained group leaders in 14 regions in Germany
- TEAM U is independent from government or interest groups, non profit organization only serving the interests of entrepreneurs
- TEAM U supported more than 16.000 entrepreneurs in personal meetings
- TEAM U Academy trains mentor-volunteers, group leaders, cost free hotline, online-information
- Next level: Online Platform & online Skype meetings

Results + Public Benefit



Results and Impact of the GP:

- Entrepreneurs learn from mistakes, are encouraged to start again and become better restarters. They develop a new self-esteem and professional outlook
- New companies and jobs are created
- Shift in society to see crisis and failure as part of business
- Encouragement of entrepreneurship, innovation through a new culture of learning from mistakes
- Less stigmatization of restarters - culture of second chance
- Cost for social security system and health system are reduced, illness, family problems are reduced
- Society is stable if people have jobs and fulfillment
- Restarters are more successful than start-ups if accompanied by right support

Reasons of success & Transferability



Challenges:

- It needs a purpose driven organization with credibility and trust
- Select the right group leaders with the right mindset
- Needs training and care for the team of volunteers
- Funding needed: it is an invest – not costs!
- Entrepreneurs that were supported now work as volunteers – their experience is referred as experience – not a deficit
- the good practice is transferable to other regions with the right team and the right spirit! Let's go!

Contact details



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