



Low budget life hacks

Relevant escape room scenario & project resource	The participants must solve a series of puzzles based on life hacks (low-budget tips) and frugal innovation strategies to save their project, all on a limited budget and using recycled resources. The scenario must highlight creativity, collaboration and the intelligent use of free or open-source digital tools. Related resources: • Les Défi'Créatifs project (Réseau Entreprendre) – Escape games on frugal innovation. • Low-Tech Lab kit – Practical fact sheets on low-cost and sustainable solutions. • Zero Waste Hackathon scenario (student associations) – For inspiration on budget constraints.
Target group & needs	Age: 15–30 years old (high school students, university students, young entrepreneurs, project leaders). Group size: 3–5 participants (to encourage brainstorming and task sharing). Prerequisites: • No advanced technical knowledge required. • Interest in entrepreneurship, DIY or innovative solutions. • Basic familiarity with digital tools (online research, social media).



Duration	1 hour (brief and debrief included)
Target competence areas	EntreComp (European Framework for Entrepreneurship): 1.2 Creating value (with limited resources). 2.1 Planning and managing a project (tight budget). 3.3 Collaborating with others. DigComp (European Digital Competence Framework): 1.2 Develop digital content (using free tools). 3.1 Share information via digital channels.
Objectives	Frugal innovation: • Finding creative solutions with limited resources. • Reusing or repurposing existing objects/materials. Digital entrepreneurship: • Identifying free or low-cost tools for prototyping (e.g. Canva, Figma, Trello). • Understanding the importance of MVP (Minimum Viable Product) and user testing. Transversal skills: Problem solving, stress management, teamwork.
Materials & equipment	• 1 computer or tablet to access the internet for research. • One set of printed puzzle sheets to includes low-budget challenges (e.g., 'Make a prototype with 3 recycled objects'). • One box of recycled materials (with cardboard, bottles, string, old magazines, etc.)



	• Some digital tools, such as Canva (design), Trello (organisation), Google Forms (surveys) • One timer • 2 to 3 combination padlocks for physical puzzles. • 1 flipchart or post-it notes for noting down ideas and clues.
Useful resources	Teaching resources: • Low-Tech Lab – Low-tech tip sheets. • Frug’Innovation – Case studies on frugal innovation. • Canva Education – Free templates for prototyping. Digital tools: • Figma (free prototyping). • Trello (project management). • Google Forms (survey creation).
Setup	Physical: • Arrange tables in a U-shape to facilitate discussion. • Create a ‘recycling corner’ with recycled materials (boxes, bottles, etc.). • Hide clues in everyday objects (e.g. a QR code under a chair). Digital: • Prepare a Google Drive folder with video tutorials on life hacks. • Create a fake website (via Google Sites) for a ‘start-up in difficulty’ that needs saving.



Step-by-step instructions	Introduction (10 min): Present the scenario: 'Your start-up has £100 and one hour to survive!' and hand out the first puzzle (e.g. 'Find three free tools to create a logo'). Puzzle 1 – Low-cost prototyping (15 mins): Create a product prototype using recycled materials (e.g. a cardboard phone stand). Puzzle 2 – Zero-budget marketing (15 mins): Design a communication campaign using free tools (e.g. an Instagram post via Canva). Puzzle 3 – Problem solving (10 mins): Find a low-tech solution to a challenge (e.g. 'How can you cool a computer without air conditioning?'). Final puzzle – Rescue pitch (10 mins): Present a comprehensive solution to save the start-up (2-min video or oral presentation). Conclusion (5 mins): Reveal that the key to success was collective creativity and debrief.
Debriefing questions	• What low-budget tips have you discovered and how would you apply them in a real project? • How do you manage time and budget constraints as a team? • Which free digital tools do you find most useful for an entrepreneur? • How can frugal innovation be an asset for a start-up?



Assessment & evaluation	Assessment criteria: - Originality and feasibility of proposed solutions within constraint - Effective use of digital tools. - Team cohesion and task distribution. Self-assessment: Online quiz (via Kahoot) on key concepts (e.g. 'Name three free tools for entrepreneurs').
Variations & adaptation	For beginners: Provide a list of free digital tools and step-by-step tutorials. For advanced users: Add a puzzle on data analysis (e.g. 'Optimise a budget with a spreadsheet'). Accessibility: Provide audio versions of the puzzles for visually impaired participants. Use text-to-speech tools for texts.
Trainer tips	Anticipate challenges: • Some participants may struggle with creativity: encourage them with concrete examples (e.g., 'How did Airbnb start with air mattresses?'). • Allow time for free brainstorming before launching the puzzles. Tips: • Use Instagram or TikTok stories as a medium for the puzzles (e.g., 'Create a story to promote your product').



	• Involve participants in creating new puzzles for a future session.
References & further readings	• Book: "Jugaad Innovation" (Navi Radjou) – On frugal innovation. • YouTube channel: Low-Tech Lab – Low-tech DIY tutorials. • Game: The Startup Game (board game about entrepreneurship).



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