



TRANSFORMING CHALLENGES INTO RESULTS

The Power of MySkillsLab's Integrated Solutions

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The Business of Biomarkers

BIT's Role in Revolutionizing Health-Tech Operations



Longevity, the pursuit of a long and healthy life, is a concept gaining increasing significance as life expectancy continues to rise. In 1900, the average lifespan was just 47 years. By 2024, people born that year can expect to live to 79 years, with 75% of lifespan variation attributed to how individuals care for their bodies. This rising focus on health and wellness is evident in the global market's rapid expansion, projected to grow from €5.268 billion in 2023 to over €8.895 billion by 2033.

For a European start-up, this trend presented an opportunity to create a business linking the measurement of biomarkers to healthier living and nutrition. However, while the team excelled in research and development, operational execution required external expertise. The Business Intervention Team (BIT) at MySkillsLab was brought in to establish an operational framework and ensure the start-up could meet critical business milestones.

During initial introductions, two guiding principles emerged as critical to the business's success:

These were:

- Be ready for shipments in six weeks to align with the marketing campaign launch.
- Be able to scale quickly and globally to meet market demands.

At the time, all operational activities were coordinated manually by the R&D team, with registration and logging handled via email and Excel spreadsheets. Physical activities, such as testing and supplement production, were outsourced, while distribution was run from an employee's garage—a setup far from scalable or sustainable.

BIT's challenge was clear: to transform this manual, labor-intensive operation into a governed and efficient system capable of delivering on the guiding principles. Over a two-month timeframe, BIT designed and implemented a structured operational model that not only met immediate demands but also set the stage for global scalability. This case study explores the challenges faced, the strategic interventions implemented, and the remarkable outcomes achieved through our team's involvement, showcasing how operational excellence drives entrepreneurial success.

Case Insights

The Challenge

Manual processes, fragmented operations, and location-based distribution hindered scalability and efficiency for future success.

Solution

Implemented governed workflows, professionalized logistics, and separated R&D from operations.

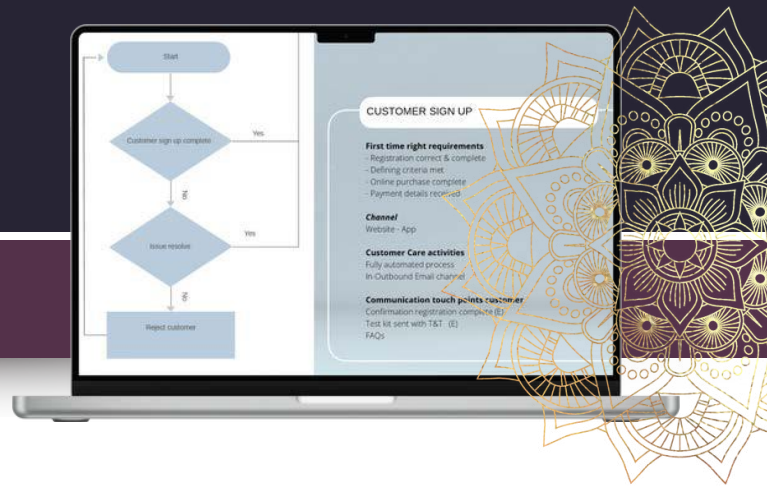
Key Gaps

Prepare for shipments in six weeks and establish a scalable global operational model.

Outcomes

Achieved on-time shipments, enabled global scalability, and freed R&D to focus on innovation.

Assessing the Situation



When the Business Intervention Team (BIT) began their engagement, they conducted a thorough assessment of the organization to uncover the critical challenges hindering its operational readiness. This deep dive into the start-up's processes, infrastructure, and capabilities highlighted significant gaps that posed a direct threat to achieving its ambitious goals.

The assessment revealed the absence of a registration backbone capable of supporting operational workflows. The company relied solely on EXACT, a financial tool ill-suited for tracking and managing operations. Furthermore, there were no established processes, work agreements, or clearly defined roles and responsibilities. This lack of structure left the team operating in an ad-hoc manner, which was neither efficient nor scalable.

Supplier relations also emerged as a major hurdle. Key suppliers were unwilling to support the proposed operational model, casting doubt on the feasibility of outsourcing the production of personalized supplements. Compounding this issue was the lack of a dedicated physical workspace and the absence of operational staff, which forced the R&D team to take on tasks far beyond their expertise.

The most pressing challenge revolved around the initial plan to outsource the blending and production of personalized supplements. Upon closer analysis, it became evident that outsource manufacturers lacked the capabilities to meet the low-volume, high-mix production requirements. Their equipment turnaround times were measured in hours, creating bottlenecks for a process that only required minutes to complete. These constraints necessitated a shift toward setting up in-house, HACCP-controlled manufacturing operations to ensure quality control, efficiency, and flexibility.

Based on the findings of this initial assessment, BIT developed a comprehensive plan of approach, which was reviewed and refined in collaboration with key stakeholders. The plan was structured around three strategic pillars to ensure both immediate and long-term success:

Priority 1: Create the Foundation

The first priority was to establish the foundational elements of the operation. This involved designing and implementing robust processes, governance structures, and role definitions to bring clarity and efficiency to day-to-day activities. BIT introduced a registration backbone to replace manual tracking methods and ensured that all operational workflows were streamlined. Establishing a physical workspace equipped for the unique demands of the business was also part of this foundational effort.

Priority 2: Create the Business Canvas

The next focus was to create a business canvas that would serve as a roadmap for operational and strategic alignment. This included defining key value propositions, customer segments, and revenue streams, along with operational metrics to track success. The business canvas also provided a framework for identifying risks and dependencies, ensuring that all stakeholders had a shared understanding of the path forward.

Priority 3: Setup to Scale Fast

With a solid foundation in place, the third priority was to prepare the business for rapid scaling. BIT designed an operational model that could support global expansion, emphasizing flexibility and efficiency. This included setting up in-house manufacturing operations for blending and sealing supplements under HACCP standards, ensuring the ability to meet production demands quickly and reliably. BIT also implemented scalable governance practices to facilitate growth without compromising quality or customer satisfaction.

By structuring the approach around these three pillars, BIT provided the organization with a clear and actionable strategy to overcome its challenges. This plan not only addressed the immediate needs of the start-up but also set the stage for sustainable growth and success in the competitive health and wellness market.

The Solution



BUSINESS INTERVENTION TEAM

To establish a robust operational foundation, BIT leveraged its expertise to implement swift, practical solutions across multiple areas of the business.

Recognizing the urgent need for key personnel, the BIT team used its professional network to quickly identify and fill three critical roles within just 12 days. This rapid onboarding ensured the business had the essential talent in place to drive operations forward.

On the technology front, a comprehensive evaluation of ERP systems led to the selection of Microsoft Dynamics 365 for its robust capabilities in managing operations, finances, and business processes. An implementation partner was brought on board immediately to expedite deployment. In parallel, Zendesk was adopted for customer service, and a Shopify-facilitated webshop was integrated into the marketing-driven website. Middleware and standard APIs ensured seamless integration across all platforms, creating a fully automated, touchless operational environment. As production and logistics shifted in-house, the team quickly sourced an affordable physical location that combined office space, a warehouse, and a temperature-controlled production facility. This site was operational within one week, laying the foundation for efficient manufacturing and distribution.

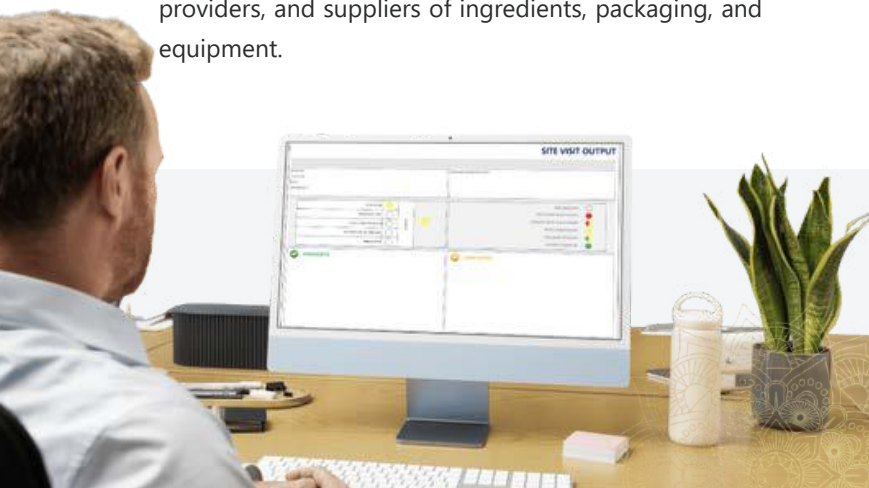
Operational design began with an analysis of existing external partnerships, which revealed the absence of formal agreements. BIT identified and formalized relationships with critical suppliers, including test labs, blood sample points, nurse networks, logistics providers, and suppliers of ingredients, packaging, and equipment.

Contracts were negotiated to secure competitive lead times, scalability, and flexibility for fluctuating demand.

To enhance efficiency early on, BIT developed and implemented standard operating procedures (SOPs) and visualized workflows using swimming lane diagrams. Two primary supply chains were established: one for onboarding customers and testing, and another for managing the repetitive production and distribution of supplements.

The onboarding process required seamless coordination with testing facilities. Academic partners delivered high-quality biomarker data but posed operational challenges due to inflexibility. Commercial partners were more manageable but came with higher costs and less precise results. Blood sample testing posed another challenge, requiring processing within 24 hours to avoid data loss, which necessitated a localized testing structure. Additionally, unique patient and testing IDs were introduced to anonymize data and ensure compliance with patient protection regulations while maintaining clear communication with labs and the R&D team.

Once biomarker data was processed, personalized supplement recipes were created. To support this, BIT established a HACCP-controlled manufacturing facility capable of producing low-volume, high-mix blended pouches. This was complemented by robust warehouse logistics, ensuring end-to-end traceability and compliance for global shipping.



A clear and pragmatic swimming lane structure was implemented to define roles and responsibilities, ensuring operational clarity and efficiency. To maintain alignment across all functions, BIT introduced governance meetings tailored to key operational needs:

- Sales & Operations Planning (S&OP): Focused on synchronizing demand with production to optimize resources and minimize delays.
- Change Control Board (CCB): Designed to oversee recipe and ingredient updates, ensuring product consistency and compliance.

These governance meetings became a cornerstone for decision-making, with actions and outcomes meticulously documented and shared across the organization. This transparency ensured alignment and accountability, creating a cohesive operational rhythm. To support rapid scaling, BIT identified and implemented key automation opportunities early in the process:

- Order Flow: A seamless integration was established between the webshop, payment systems, Microsoft Dynamics 365, and the warehouse. This touchless system ensured orders were processed and fulfilled efficiently without manual intervention.
- Shipments: Automation between Microsoft Dynamics 365 and DHL enabled real-time shipment notifications, electronic invoices for customs clearance, and daily parcel pickups, significantly improving logistics efficiency.
- Customer Service: Zendesk was fully integrated with the webshop, creating an automated, responsive support system that enhanced the customer experience.



By immediately embedding automation into the business canvas at this early stage, the start-up streamlined its operations, reduced reliance on manual processes, and positioned itself for global scalability. These interventions not only addressed immediate operational challenges but also established a robust foundation for sustainable growth. BIT's expertise enabled the start-up to navigate the competitive health and wellness market with confidence and agility.

In just three months, the Business Intervention Team (BIT) at MySkillsLab successfully completed the assessment, solution design, and implementation phases, achieving operational readiness for the start-up. This rapid and structured execution culminated in the shipment of the first test kits, marking a major milestone for the company. Here's how each critical gap was addressed and transformed into a successful outcome:

Results

FROM

No Registration Backbone

Undefined Processes

Supplier Resistance

No Physical Workspace

No Operational Team

External Manufacturing Challenges

TO

Fully Integrated ERP System

Fully Implemented Business Canvas

Insourced Manufacturing Model

Operational Facility

Fully Staffed Support Function

HACCP-Compliant Production Line

HOW

The reliance on EXACT, a financial tool unsuitable for operational purposes, was resolved through the implementation of Microsoft Dynamics 365 as the new ERP backbone. This system provided a centralized platform for managing operations, ensuring data accuracy, and streamlining workflows

The absence of processes, work agreements, and defined roles created operational inefficiencies. BIT addressed this by detailing and implementing a comprehensive business canvas. The canvas outlined the company's operational framework, roles, and workflows, which were then trained across the organization. This ensured all team members were aligned and equipped to perform their roles effectively.

Key suppliers were initially unwilling to support the proposed production model due to its low-volume, high-mix nature. To overcome this, BIT designed and executed a solution to insource manufacturing. This strategic shift allowed the company to maintain control over production processes and meet its unique requirements without reliance on external manufacturers.

The lack of a physical location for operations posed a significant barrier. Within one week, BIT secured and made operational a facility that included office space, a warehouse, and a temperature-controlled production area. This location became the foundation for the company's production and logistics activities.

With no dedicated personnel in the operations domain, the start-up faced challenges in managing supply chain, manufacturing, and customer service activities. BIT recruited and onboarded a key team of professionals, ensuring the necessary expertise and capacity to support the business's growth.

The unique demands of blending personalized supplements required the setup of an in-house HACCP-controlled manufacturing operation. Within four months of project initiation, compliant production was live, enabling the company to blend and seal supplements to high-quality standards while ensuring global traceability and compliance.

Lessons Learned



BUSINESS INTERVENTION TEAM

This project taught us invaluable lessons about how to efficiently start successful operations, engage teams, and grow sustainably. It showed us the power of breaking down complex challenges into smaller, focused tasks and trusting people to take ownership of solutions.

One of the most impactful approaches was dividing the work into manageable areas and connecting them in a way that allowed teams to work simultaneously. Instead of dictating solutions, BIT provided guidance and let the teams shape the outcomes themselves. This approach created a sense of ownership and pride among the team members. People weren't just following instructions—they were actively creating the solutions, which not only sped up progress but also reduced the need for endless alignment meetings. Teams could focus on action and results, and that made all the difference.

When we created the business canvas, we kept it simple and practical. It wasn't about over-complicating things but about designing clear processes and instructions that worked. This simplicity meant that everyone knew what they were doing and why, without the burden of unnecessary bureaucracy. It was a balance between structure and flexibility, allowing the organization to operate efficiently and adapt when needed.

Early on, we identified opportunities to automate repetitive tasks, which freed up the team to focus on bigger-picture responsibilities. Instead of being bogged down by manual work, they could oversee and control operations, ensuring everything ran smoothly. Automated order processing and shipment handling were game-changers, allowing a small team to scale operations quickly without sacrificing quality.

A major turning point was the decision to bring manufacturing in-house. By setting up a low-volume, high-mix production facility, the company gained the ability to offer personalized solutions tailored to individual customers. This wasn't just about scaling—it was about doing it in a way that gave the business a real competitive edge. It allowed the company to move away from standardized offerings and focus on meeting customer needs in a unique way.

Finally, setting up a HACCP-controlled production environment in such a short time showed what's possible with the right knowledge, mindset and tools. Simple visuals and controls made it easy to ensure compliance and transparency, giving the team confidence in their processes. It was a reminder that the best solutions don't have to be overly complicated—they just need to work.

This project wasn't just about solving immediate problems; it was about building something sustainable. By focusing on what mattered most—empowering teams, simplifying processes, automating where possible, and staying adaptable—we created a foundation for long-term success and growth.



Key Achievements



BUSINESS INTERVENTION TEAM

The shipment of the first test kits was a pivotal moment, marking the company's ability to meet critical business and marketing campaign deadlines. Within just three months, the operational foundation—spanning systems, processes, and a skilled team—was fully established. This rapid progress not only addressed immediate needs but also positioned the company for sustained growth.

By bringing production and logistics in-house, the company gained the flexibility to adapt quickly to customer demands and the control needed for efficient manufacturing and distribution. Governance structures and automation further streamlined operations, reducing manual tasks and enabling rapid scalability without compromising quality. These enhancements laid the groundwork for global expansion and ensured the company's competitiveness in a dynamic health and wellness market.

The project underscored the value of a structured, collaborative approach. Breaking down challenges into focused tasks and empowering teams to take ownership drove faster, more effective solutions. Strategic decisions, such as insourcing production, gave the business an edge by enabling personalized offerings that competitors couldn't match. Automation, meanwhile, allowed the team to operate with greater efficiency and focus on high-value activities.

This wasn't just about solving immediate operational issues—it was about building a sustainable model for long-term success. The project demonstrated how smart planning, collaboration, and targeted interventions can turn complex challenges into opportunities, creating a foundation for growth and scalability in even the most competitive industries.

...By quickly identifying opportunities for automation and leveraging standard APIs, the team significantly reduced manual work. This shift enabled staff to focus on overseeing and controlling processes rather than being burdened with repetitive execution tasks. As a result, the organization achieved rapid scalability with minimal personnel, demonstrating the efficiency and effectiveness of this streamlined approach.

*Michel Ophelders
Head of BIT MySkillsLab*

...With BIT, we bring deep knowledge and extensive experience to the table, allowing us to take immediate, practical action—no lengthy theoretical models or generic approaches. We step in to empower teams, sharing expertise that drives quick, effective results. Our mission is to transfer this knowledge in a way that creates swift autonomy, ensuring organizations can grow sustainably and operate independently long after we've stepped out

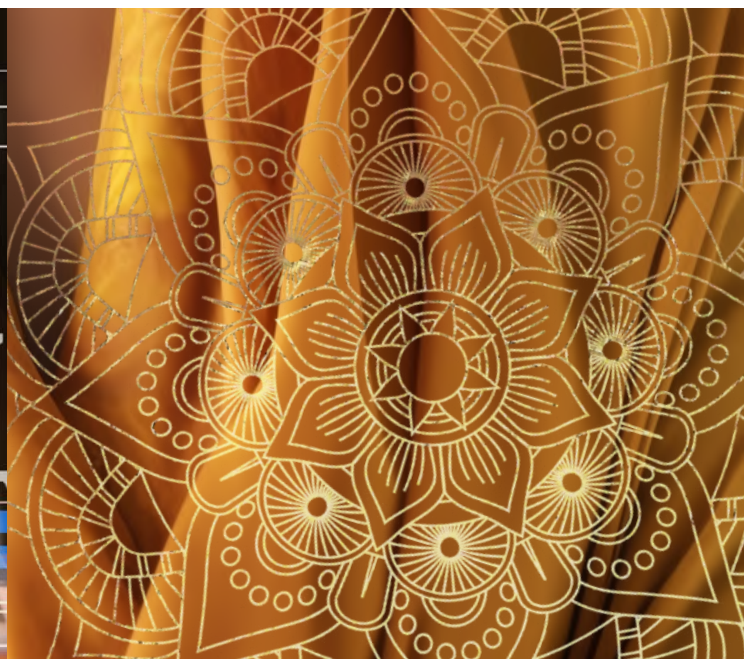
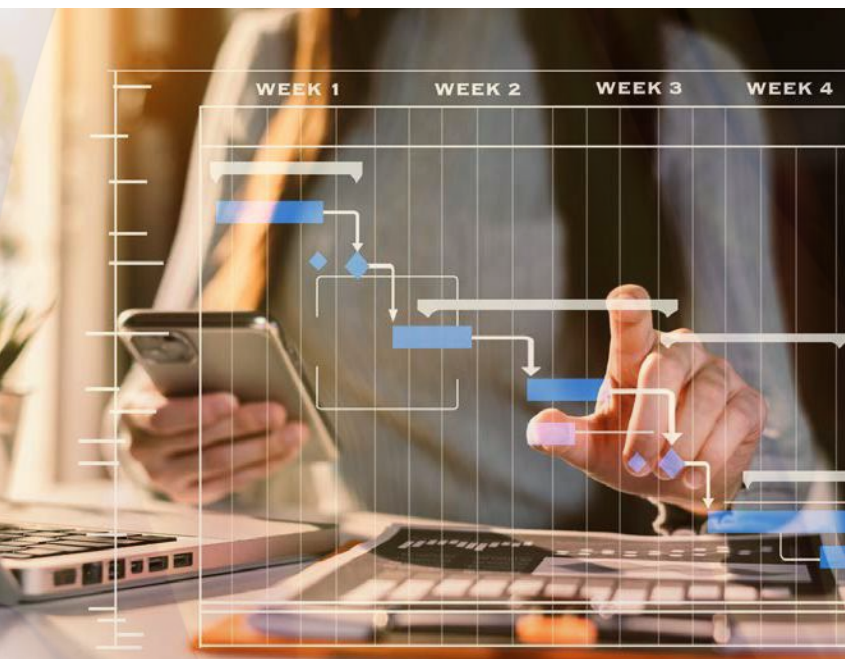
*Petra Stormen
Founder MySkillsLab*





ABOUT BIT

BUSINESS INTERVENTION TEAM



Business Intervention Team

Organizations often face challenges that hinder progress—especially during periods of complex transformation or intensive learning and development. Teams can become overwhelmed by the speed of change, the volume of new skills required, or the intricacies of navigating uncharted territory. That’s where our Business Intervention Team (BIT) comes in.

By partnering with us, you eliminate the steep learning curve and significant resource investment typically required to build internal capabilities for addressing these challenges. Instead, you gain immediate access to a bespoke team of specialists, expertly aligned to meet your unique needs and objectives. Our BIT team doesn’t just focus on quick fixes or surface-level solutions; we’re dedicated to creating sustainable impact. We dive deep into your organization’s pain points to uncover the root causes of challenges, applying precision, insight, and proven methodologies to resolve even the most complex issues.



MEANINGFUL INTERVENTIONS, WHEN TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE

Our BIT team serves as your trusted partner, helping you overcome roadblocks, drive transformation, and achieve your strategic goals with confidence. With us by your side, you can focus on growth and innovation while we handle the complexity, ensuring every intervention delivers maximum value and long-term benefits.

Highlights

Tailored Expertise

Every intervention is customized, ensuring our solutions directly address your unique obstacles.

Strategic Precision

From streamlining operations to revitalizing team dynamics, we focus on impactful, measurable outcomes.

Cutting-Edge Innovation

Whether introducing advanced technologies, redefining workflows, or fostering cultural shifts, we ensure your organization is ready to thrive in a competitive environment.

Lasting Results

Beyond resolving immediate challenges, we lay the groundwork for ongoing success by strengthening your team’s capacity to adapt and excel.

Why Choose the Business Intervention Team (BIT)

The Business Intervention Team (BIT) at MySkillsLab has a proven track record of supporting organizations of all sizes and industries. We specialize in stepping into complex situations, conducting thorough assessments, crafting tailored solutions, and delivering results that are fully embedded into the organization. Our success lies in our ability to adapt our toolset to meet the unique needs of each client. No two organizations are the same, and we thrive on the challenge of creating innovative, customized strategies that drive meaningful and lasting change. Your organization's challenges are distinct, and we're here to tackle them head-on. Let's collaborate to transform your constraints into opportunities for future success.

About the Authors

Michel Ophelders

Head of Business Intervention Teams

- CONSULTANT
- SCM EXPERT
- SPEAKER



Personal Profile

Michel is an established leader in Business Strategy and Organizational Development, renowned for his expertise in Total Operations Management and end-to-end solutions in complex scenarios. His extensive experience spans over two decades, during which he has effectively led operations management from strategic planning to supply chain optimization across a spectrum of environments, from Fortune 500 companies to dynamic innovative startups.

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Petra Stormen

Founder MySkillsLab

- FOUNDER MYSKILLSLAB
- COURSE INSTRUCTOR
- EXECUTIVE COACH
- BUSINESS CONSULTANCY
- ASSESSOR (GLA360)



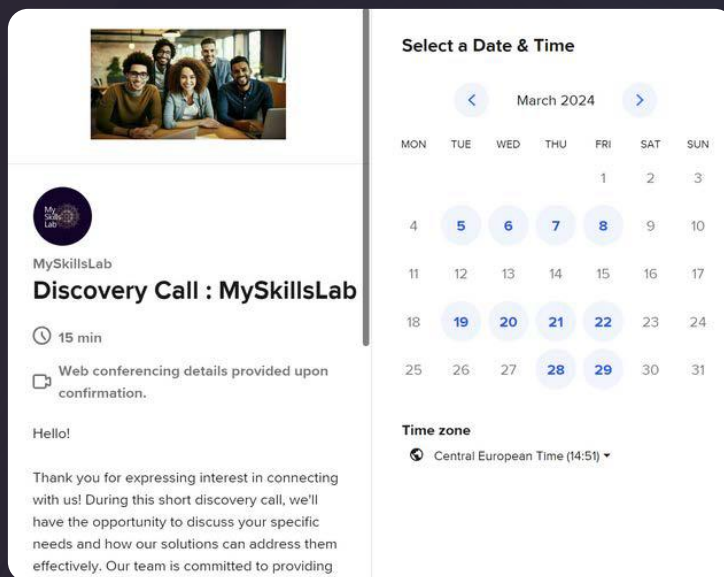
Personal Profile

Petra masterfully uncovers subtle challenges during her interactions with others, intuitively guiding individuals to transformative breakthroughs. With a gentle yet determined approach, she delivers impactful results while building lasting connections. Balancing influence with humility, Petra inspires others by recognizing the powerful interplay of mind, passion, and universal forces in every transformative journey.

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How to connect with us

Reach out to us today to learn how our bespoke approach can support you and your organization. We're here to design a program that fits your needs and helps you reach your goals.



MySkillsLab
Discovery Call : MySkillsLab
15 min
Web conferencing details provided upon confirmation.

Hello!

Thank you for expressing interest in connecting with us! During this short discovery call, we'll have the opportunity to discuss your specific needs and how our solutions can address them effectively. Our team is committed to providing

Select a Date & Time

March 2024

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