

**BRIDGING THE GAP OF IN-
COMPANY TRAINERS SOFT-SKILLS
COMPETENCES IN THE VET SECTOR**

Project N° 2020-1-PT01-KA202-078592

**ENHANCING
MANUAL FOR
IN-COMPANY
TRAINERS
IN SMES**



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Introduction

The role of the mentor is very important in both the educational and working environment. In fact, various studies and insights have been focused on this figure for several years. Indeed, it follows that there are currently various definitions concerning the figure of the mentor.

“The role of the [mentoring] programme co-ordinator is to manage the entire [mentoring] scheme including the development of support mechanisms, to act as the main point of contact for all stakeholders within and associated with the scheme, to be the link between the programme and top management and to troubleshoot relationships” (Koczka, T. (2017), p.248).

Therefore, the mentor is a main figure that links the all different dimensions of the work and it is a reference point for all stakeholders. Clearly, the mentor performs his most important function through education and guidance as he explains (koki S., p. 2):

“In education, mentoring is a complex and multi-dimensional process of guiding, teaching, influencing and supporting a beginning or new teacher. It is generally accepted that a mentor teacher leads, guides and advises another teacher more junior in experience in a work situation characterized by mutual trust and belief”.

Among the mentor's functions, being a reference point and guide is certainly one of the central points to focus on. Indeed, there are different approach and ways of mentoring:

- ▶ Traditional mentoring: transmit the values and cultures of the organization.
- ▶ Transitional mentoring: it is a more equal process that deals better between the culture of the organization and the mentee's identity.
- ▶ Transformative mentoring: it is a mutual relationship where the mentor and mentee improve themselves at the same time.

To understand better the role of the mentor it is essential to know the main responsibilities: to prepare the activities for mentees; listen actively to the mentees; help the mentee maintaining a professional relationship that does not involve mentee's personal life; to create a proper schedule for the personal growth of the mentee; set and manage the internal meeting; encouraging and empowering personal development; to guarantee a strong commitment in the mentoring relationships; to study and understand the mentoring role and its different perspective; to participate in evaluation of the Mentoring Program; being open minded in problem solving and exchange ideas and to provide honest feedback able to help mentee's evolution.

The aim of this handbook is precisely to help mentors in the fulfilment of their responsibilities and duties through an in-depth study of key skills. The soft skills that have been identified are:

- **Interpersonal Skills**
- **Problem Solving Skills**
- **Transversal Skills**
- **Time Management Skills**
- **Business Etiquette Skills**

In particular, this manual serves as a complementary tool to the self-reflection-instrument. This tool, which is easily available on our project website: <https://softcominvet.eu/it/>, **allows mentors to test themselves and understand their own competences level in the skills examined.** Once again, the importance of soft skills for learning and improving one's personal skills is emphasised. So, this manual is also intended to be a promoter of the study and application of soft skills.

After carrying out the self-evaluation, this manual will help the mentor by compensating for the gaps highlighted by the self-reflection-instrument. In this way the mentor could go directly to study the skill's field where he/she is not properly prepared.

E-module I. Interpersonal Skills

Interpersonal skills help us to find common ground with others, navigating complex situations, communicating our needs and collaborating to make the most of any opportunity. **They are the skills used daily to communicate and interact with other people, both individually and in groups.** In this module we focus on two of them, **Emotional intelligence (EI) and Empathy.**

What is Emotional Intelligence?

EI or Emotional Quotient (EQ) is a type of social intelligence that involves the ability to manage and monitor one's own as well as others' emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use the information to guide one's thinking and actions. **EI helps you build stronger relationships, succeed at school and work,** and achieve your career and personal goals. It can also help you to connect with your feelings, turn intention into action, and make informed decisions about what matters most to you. According to Goleman, Emotional Intelligence consists of three components:

WHAT ARE INTERPERSONAL SKILLS?

→ **Self-management** – You're able to control impulsive feelings and behaviours, manage your emotions in healthy ways, take initiative, follow through on commitments, and adapt to changing circumstances.

→ **Self-awareness** – You recognize your own emotions and how they affect your thoughts and behaviour. You know your strengths and weaknesses, and have self-confidence.

→ **Relationship management** – You know how to develop and maintain good relationships, communicate clearly, inspire and influence others, work well in a team, and manage conflict.

E-module I. Interpersonal Skills

WHAT IS EMPATHY?

Many theories and concepts have been written and defined about what it means to be empathetic, but all of them share the idea that **empathy is a form of connection that allows you to place yourself in someone else's shoes and understand what they are experiencing, how they feel in a given situation rather than sympathizing with the person's feelings.** It's the comforting voice that we tell each other when we are told, "You are not alone."

Empathy is not about feeling sorry for someone, but rather, seeing a person as equal or on the same level as yourself, and trying to understand or connect with them.

Empathy is the **act of recognizing emotions of others** and step into their shoes as you are the one experiencing, what they are going through.

Daniel Goleman has identified five key elements of empathy:

- 1 Understanding others:** In terms of empathy understanding others means sensing others. Be aware of their feelings and be interested in their concerns. This requires active listening and observation of nonverbal signals.
- 2 Developing others:** It means understanding the strengths and weaknesses of others and helping them to develop to their full potential. You have to congratulate them for their achievements, provide feedback and also a piece of advice they might need.
- 3 Having a service orientation:** This element is primarily implemented in the working environment. It means to care most about customers' needs and find ways to satisfy them to the maximum.
- 4 Take advantage of diversity:** Leveraging diversity means to show respect to different cultural, financial and social backgrounds and celebrate the fact that each person introduces a new idea. See diversity as an opportunity to thrive.
- 5 Political awareness:** Political skills mean sensing and responding to group's emotional state and take action based on this knowledge.

E-module I. Interpersonal Skills

EMPATHY AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE MEANS:

↳ Mentees and mentors are positive

↳ Know the people well

↳ Identify their feelings

↳ Accept change

 **Empathy and emotional intelligence are key in building successful and rewarding relationships and the main purpose of empathy and emotional intelligence is creating better behaviours, so “that passive-aggressiveness is replaced by honest, candid conversations; so, conflicts are resolved in ways that don't force feelings down, only to resurface again later with even more negative consequences; so, it is possible to build psychologically safe cultures, instead of places people dread coming into”.**

↳ Set limits

↳ Improve their weaknesses and know their strengths

↳ Make everything interesting

↳ Avoid comparison

E-module I. Interpersonal Skills

THE MAIN OBSTACLES AND CHALLENGES OF OBTAINING EMPATHY AND EI SKILLS:

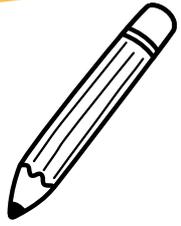
- ✘ Lack of Empathy and EI training for **mentors**
- ✘ Difficulties in implementing these emotional skills
- ✘ Negative environment hampers the development of emotional intelligence and empathy in children and young people, and including socio-emotional skills in teacher training programs in order to address social and emotional skills in the classroom is a key factor in fighting against any obstacle.



- ✘ Adolescence is a critical stage of lives of **mentees** that presents enormous challenges for the personal development and specifically, the development of these interpersonal skills, empathy and EI, in a context of emotional maelstrom that they experience on a subjective level it can be complicated and difficult. Be empathetic means controlling emotional reactions and choosing to cultivate a more positive frame of mind and it may seem more difficult to master at this stage. That from the outside a mentor/tutor "imposed on you" their management is often seen and considered as a personal attack and his rejection and opposition is obvious.

E-module I. Interpersonal Skills

Activity 1: The Exclusion Game (company/school)



- **Necessary materials:** Sheets of sticky dots in three different colours
- **Duration:** 30 minutes
- **Key terms / special vocabulary about / during the activity:** To enable participants to experience exclusion and domination in a safe environment encouraging empathy and solidarity with others. **Activity's step-by-step description:**
 - Divide participants into 3 groups. Place a dot on the forehead of each participant: Red for one group, Green for another and Blue for the third.
 - Tell participants that Greens are all in their 30's and 40's years of age and that they have all the power. Give them chairs to sit on and sweets. Tell the Reds that they are all over 65 years old and to stand together with their noses touching one wall and not to look around or talk.
 - Tell Blues that they are all under 18 years of age and that they must do exactly what the Greens say. You can give Greens some suggestions for instruction such as hop on one leg, do press ups, make animal noises, pretend to be elephants.
 - Repeat with Blues being in their 30's and 40's years of age and having all the power, Reds being under 18 years old and following Blues instructions and Greens being over 65 years old with the noses against a wall.
 - Repeat with Reds being in their 30's and 40's years of age and having all the power, Greens being under 18 years old, following their instructions and Blues being over 65 years old with noses against the wall.
 - Bring the group back together in a circle. Ask all participants to remove the dots from their head and to shake out their arms and legs taking deep breaths.
- **NOTE:** It is important to ensure participants shake out any anger built up in the game and have the opportunity to discuss how the game made them feel. You can choose different groups depending on your teaching / reality.

- **Evaluation -** The facilitator could ask a few follow-up questions in order to assess the activity's results:

How did you feel during the activity? Does this game reflect how people of different ages are treated in your community/school? How are young people treated? How are old people treated? What other groups in your community/school experience exclusion? Where do you think exclusion and oppression like this happens around the world?

E-module I. Interpersonal Skills

Activity 2: The Own feelings (company/school)



- **Necessary materials:** A room .
- **Duration:** 30-45 minutes
- **Key terms / special vocabulary about / during the activity:**

This exercise can help students work on one of the most fundamental skills related to emotional intelligence: understanding and accepting their own emotions. **Activity's step-by-step description:**

- You'll need a group of people for this activity, but you could also modify it to work with just one pair. Here's how to do it:
- Divide your group into pairs and have them sit far enough away from the other pairs to get a sense of privacy.
- Have each pair decide who will go first.
- Tell the group members that they will each have a chance to share an experience where they felt like a victim. Once one partner has explained the experience, they should explain how they felt as a result of their experience in as much detail as possible, thinking about their specific feelings at the moment and how it impacted them afterward.
- Allow 15 minutes or so for the first partner to share and for the pair to discuss, have them switch roles.

- **Evaluation:** If you are running this activity in a group, bring everyone back together and have a group discussion using **questions** like these:

What did you think first when you were told to share a difficult experience with another person?

How did you manage to share it? How did you feel when you shared it with someone else?

How did you feel after acknowledging and accepting your emotions?

Does this exercise help with accepting how certain experiences make us feel and that it is okay to feel a certain way after negative experiences?

Did you feel more at peace after accepting your emotions generated by your experience?

Would you consider using this exercise to evaluate and acknowledge your emotions after negative experiences?

E-module II. Problem Solving Skills

Problem solving "is the act of defining a problem; determining the cause of the problem; identifying, prioritizing, and selecting alternatives for a solution; and implementing a solution".



The module Problem Solving Skills includes five main skills:

**#Critical Thinking #Showing Initiative #Flexibility;
#Adaptability #Learning Quickly**

WHAT IS CRITICAL THINKING?

Critical thinking (CT) is **the ability to think clearly and rationally**, understanding the logical connection between ideas and might be described as the ability to engage in reflective and independent thinking. In essence, CT requires to **use the ability to reason**, it is about being an active learner rather than a passive recipient of information.

CT is to **arrive at the best possible solution** in the circumstances that the thinker is aware of. In more everyday language, it is a way of thinking about whatever is presently occupying the mind so that come to the best possible conclusion. CT as a general skill from **giving feedback**, and more specifically skills on **synthesis, argumentation and counter-argumentation, integration and respect for different perspectives and views**, individual accountability, different opinions and learning autonomy.

E-module II. Problem Solving Skills

Critical Thinking

CRITICAL THINKERS ARE ABLE TO:

- ↳ Understand the links between ideas.
- ↳ Identify inconsistencies and errors in reasoning.
- ↳ Recognize, build and appraise arguments.
- ↳ Approach problems in a consistent and systematic way.
- ↳ Determine the importance and relevance of arguments and ideas.
- ↳ Reflect on the justification of their own assumptions, beliefs and values.

ACTIVITIES AND TOOLS TO IMPROVE CT:

EVALUATION

PROBLEM SOLVING

ANALYSIS

DECISION MAKING



EXPLANATION

OBSERVATION

INTERPRETATION

REFLECTION

E-module II. Problem Solving Skills

Critical Thinking

EXAMPLES/TIPS:

-  Identify the different arguments there are in relation to a particular issue;
-  Evaluate a point of view to determine how strong or valid it is;
-  Recognize any weaknesses or negative points that there are in the evidence or argument;
-  Provide structured reasoning and support for an argument that we wish to make.
-  Notice what implications there might be behind a statement or argument;
-  Think about a topic or issue in an objective and critical way;

THE MAIN OBSTACLES AND CHALLENGES OF OBTAINING CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS:

-  Lack of feedback and communication
-  Poor peer interaction
-  Shortage of creating different work scenarios
-  Lack of creating spaces for the exchange of ideas and practices

E-module II. Problem Solving Skills

Critical Thinking

Activity 1: Make your own story

Step 1: All students receive a pen and one paper. On each paper is written one problematic situation and one superpower.

Step 2: Every student chooses three objects in the room that can help him in resolving the situation.

Step 3: Every student creates one story to solve the problem.

Step 4: Create a group and repeat the same exercise, but this time all the problematic situations have to be solved with the help of the entire team.

Step 5: Read in front of all groups the stories you have created.

Step 6: Analyse the differences between the stories solved by the entire group and the singular one.

Step 7: Express and share your thoughts and suggestions.

Activity 2: Vision Board

Step 1: Divide all students in different groups.

Step 2: Each group decide one country on which they have to focus.

Step 3: All groups start to think and find stereotypes about the chosen country. The all stereotypes have to be written or drawn on a paper.

Step 4: All groups expose the work they have done.

Step 5: All together speak about the essence of stereotypes, trying to focus on our own criticism.

Step 6: Debriefing, pointing out the final ideas about the exercise.

E-module II. Problem Solving Skills

Showing Initiative

An initiative is the first in a series of actions. Initiative can also mean a personal quality that shows a willingness to get things done and take responsibility.

Taking initiative means **thinking proactively** about tasks— not just to check them off a list, but to get them done well. It's about going the extra mile on the basic tasks assigned, thinking through complications, and taking on work before someone asks you to. Taking initiative means **noticing opportunities and taking action.**

WHAT IS SHOWING INITIATIVE?

SHOWING INITIATIVE MEANS:

- ↳ Makes you stand out from the rest of the competition
- ↳ Builds confidence in your professional life and personal life
- ↳ Helps with problem-solving;
- ↳ Boosts happiness and job satisfaction for you and your workplace;
- ↳ Creates better critical thinking and problem-solving skills
- ↳ Improves your chances for promotions and career growth
- ↳ Strengthens your relationship with your team members

E-module II. Problem Solving Skills

Showing Initiative

ACTIVITIES/TOOLS TO IMPROVE Showing Initiative Skills:

-  Speak up during team meetings
-  Request constructive criticism and feedback on your work
-  Tackle problems without being asked
-  Step in when someone needs help, and ask about team progress



THE MAIN OBSTACLES AND CHALLENGES:

-  **Internal:** It's all about building confidence and experience and finding your voice. You have helpful skills and perspectives to offer in your workplace. Asking questions when you're confused doesn't make you look bad or lazy. It shows that you're engaged and willing to be a team player and overcome your challenges.
-  **External:** Use your confidence to speak up and be willing to lead. If a team member or supervisor seems to be throwing up obstacles or putting you down, you need to address it.

E-module II. Problem Solving Skills

Showing Initiative

Activity 1: Zoom

Step 1: Prepare a story and divide it in several fragments.

Step 2: All the participants receive the story already split in several pieces. Their objective is to find the correct sequence and to do it they have to start to collaborate between them, making assumptions.

Step 3: Debriefing, discuss about the way they found the solutions and the proache they used between them.

Activity 2: Warp speed

The aim of the game is to pass small to medium-sized balls from one participant to another in the shortest possible time. Once a good time has been achieved, the second challenge is to halve the previous time, which means that each participant must think of a different, faster way to pass the balls.

The objective of this exercise is to show the initiative of the singular person thanks to a constant challenge and to encourage them to share their intuitions to solve the game in perfect cooperation.

E-module II. Problem Solving Skills

Flexibility

Add aMandelbaum (1978) defines flexibility as “the ability to respond effectively to changing circumstances”.

Flexibility means **having the ability to overcome stress or simply to adjust to changes quickly**. Having a high level of flexibility makes it easier for live a less stressful and hectic life. While flexibility is important, many people struggle to achieve it for a variety of reasons. Fortunately, improving flexibility skills in life and career is possible.

“Flexibility is the propensity of an actor or a system to exhibit variation in activities or states which is correlated with some other variation and desirable in view of this variation” (Jonsson, D., 2007, p.3).

Schools and training programs typically fixate on a defined career path, but most people’s careers do not follow such predictable paths. **The ability to be more flexible in a career means that you can learn new skills and assume responsibilities outside of your original position.** This can lead to promotions and greater possibilities in your career.

Being flexible within a training programme is very beneficial because it allows you to **overcome your limits and to go outside the box**, not just by passing the tests that are offered to you but by **creating your own personalised life path**.

**WHAT
IS**

FLEXIBILITY?

E-module II. Problem Solving Skills

Flexibility

FLEXIBILITY MEANS:

-  Mentor must learn to improvise and adapt practice to suit the situation and the novice's learning.
-  Mentor needs to be flexible in his or her craft, both in terms of established ways of teaching and in terms of character.
-  Mentor must follow the approach with the evolution of the trainer and his/her needs.
 -  **Flexibility is essential in the construction of a mentoring programme because as it has been said before the guidance is always changing at the same rhythm of the mentee's knowledge.**
-  For mentees is extremely important since to grow up and improve it is necessary to challenge his/herself in situations where we do not have so much confidence.
-  The mentee has to start building up a set of skills and objectives on which he/she can rely in order to face the various challenges proposed by the mentor.

E-module II. Problem Solving Skills

Flexibility

ACTIVITIES/TOOLS TO IMPROVE FLEXIBILITY SKILLS:

-  Be open minded;
-  Stay calm and plan ahead;
-  Learn from your mistakes and use them to build your own path;
-  To Allow the mentees to work from home or flexible hours, providing training or new processes and being understanding when things go wrong.



THE MAIN OBSTACLES AND CHALLENGES:

-  Emotions can influence the ability to adapt and adjust to new situations and embrace new challenges;
-  Lack of a stable and concrete identity;
-  To not be open to change;
-  The big challenge is to transform changes in new opportunities, identify and act in the proper time can determine the success of the job.

E-module II. Problem Solving Skills

Flexibility

Activity 1: Last word response

The activity consists in an improvisation game with the purpose to increase the mental flexibility of the participants.

This improvisation games work with two or more participants; one participant starts saying one sentence and then the next participant has to create a new sentence using as first word the last word of the previous sentence.

This exercise underlines the importance of listening actively to react to one another action; in this way participants improve how to be more flexible in relation with other people.

Activity 2: Cards Masterpieces

Step 1: divide all participants in groups of two people and give them one deck of cards.

Step 2: Each group has to create one construction for participant of the group with the cards; The two partners do not have to see the procedure to build the construction of the other partner, so it is better to use some folders barriers.

Step 3: All partners show the final masterpiece.

Step 4: Now it is time to destroy the constructions and to rebuild; The partner "A" now gives instructions to the partner "B" to recreate his construction. The partner B has to strictly follow the instructions.

Step 5: Invert the roles and watch the differences.

Step 6: Debriefing, every partner shares their impressions and suggestions.

E-module II. Problem Solving Skills

Adaptability

Adaptability is the ability to **deal with something new**, unexpected that change the situation presenting new challenges (Martin, A. J., 2010).

Thus, adaptability is nothing more than the skill that allows a person to **be able to adapt to a changing environment**, thus facing the challenge that every change brings.

WHAT IS ADAPTABILITY?

“Adaptability’ is formally defined as the capacity to adaptively regulate cognition, emotion, and behavior in response to new, changing, and/or challenging conditions and circumstances” (Martin, A. J., 2010).

This is why mentoring is so important, as behaviour and the control/understanding of emotions are fundamental to successful training. It is extremely important that the mentor and mentee get used to and adapt to each other's behaviour and evolve together to overcome the challenges of the training.

E-module II. Problem Solving Skills

Adaptability

ADAPTABILITY MEANS:

-  To mentor handle all the different personalities of their mentees.
-  Mentor to guide their mentee, stimulating them to improve themselves and to do this they need to understand their behaviour and personality.
-  Mentor must continually have the ability to adapt to changes in the mentee throughout the training.
- 

All parties involved in the training must change and grow simultaneously and always adapt to the new situation that arises.
-  The mentee during a training is continually stressed and challenged on aspects that may be new and complex to understand. For this reason, adaptability is crucial for the success of the training.
-  The mentee has to gain a true position of leadership and guidance from the mentor.

E-module II. Problem Solving Skills

Adaptability

ACTIVITIES/TOOLS TO IMPROVE ADAPTABILITY SKILLS:

-  Accept and learn from your mistakes;
-  Accept and face directly the changes;
-  Learn from your mistakes and use them to build your own path;
-  Explore and study the unknown environment without any fear of making questions;



THE MAIN OBSTACLES AND CHALLENGES:

-  Lack of acceptance and refusal to be in control of the situation;
-  Lack of commitment to opening one's horizons and studying new changes causes considerable problems for the person who wants to improve his or her adaptive skills.
-  Mental and emotional blocks that do not allow the person to adapt to a new reality that makes them feel afraid and uncomfortable.

E-module II. Problem Solving Skills

Adaptability

Activity 1: Change your look

Step 1: Divide all participants in pairs.

Step 2: Ask the participant to define one that will be the observer and the other one making changes.

Step 3: One participant close his eyes, while the other one change some aspect of his outfit.

Step 4: The observer closes his eyes and the other one start to do 5 changes.

Step 5: The observer has 30 seconds to understand what it changed.

Step 6: Invert the roles and repeat the exercise.

Step 7: Repeat the exercise doing 10 changes.

Step 8: Debriefing, all participants describe their feelings after the changes.

Activity 2: Changing seats

Step 1: Ask all participant to switch seats.

Step 2: Ask several questions regarding the change.

Step 3: Repeat step 1 and 2.

Step 4: Debriefing.

E-module II. Problem Solving Skills

Learning Quickly

Learning quickly is that certain skill with which people manage to have a **reduced time in acquiring a certain knowledge**. This ability can be either an innate ability or a style obtained through hard work. In fact, there are various methods to improve one's attention and understanding. This style is essential for both mentors and mentees.

WHAT IS LEARNING QUICKLY?

LEARNING QUICKLY MEANS:

- ↳ For a mentor is a pivotal competence that allows him to understand the needs of the students.
- ↳ To facilitate the implementation of other skills like adaptability and flexibility.
- ↳ The mentor's performances radically increase, creating a perfect synthon between the teaching approach and the trainee's behaviour.

With regard to mentees, the relationship with the mentor is extremely important to set the new skills and to create a proper form of criticism. In particular the competence to learn quickly underline the effort of the mentee and increase the satisfaction of the mentor that automatically intensifies his commitment as a guide.

↳ The mentees performance gets a big improvement thanks to his/her new commitment to the training, showing new important competencies as:

- ↳ Being punctual; auto-discipline; self-awareness
strengthening your knowledge; objective oriented.

E-module II. Problem Solving Skills

Learning Quickly

ACTIVITIES/TOOLS TO IMPROVE LEARNING QUICKLY SKILLS:

-  Do not forget to take notes and to design scheme of the lesson;
-  To study and collect several kinds of trainings;
-  Take notes and schemes of all your trainings and improvements.
-  Try to understand and to apply the resources the mentor gave to you and try to focus on the applications and examples that the mentor showed.
-  To observe all the characteristics of the mentees and mentors;

THE MAIN OBSTACLES AND CHALLENGES:

-  As far as mentors are concerned, many may be confident in their abilities and may not devote more time to studying new teaching techniques or may judge students in categories that do not allow for the development of individual personalities.
-  As far as mentees are concerned, the biggest obstacles are undoubtedly laziness and lack of passion for the work to be done. In addition, arrogance is often added to these two problems, which prevents the mentee from following the mentor's instructions to the letter, thus making the training ineffective.

E-module II. Problem Solving Skills

Learning Quickly

Activity 1: Memory game

Step 1: Make all participants watch a sequence of images. Once it is finished all participants have to recreate the order and do a little description of the images.

Step 2: Make them watch a second sequence of images; this time the participants have the opportunity to take notes. Then, they have to put in order the sequence and do a little description of the images without watching the notes.

Step 3: Debriefing, all participants speak about the differences of results between step 1 and step 2.

Activity 2: Memory competition

Step 1: Each participant writes a story.

Step 2: In a random order each participant read loud the story

Step 3: All participants can use every methods to memorize the stories.

Step 4: At the end of the all stories, a facilitator will start to do several questions.

Step 5: The person that get the biggest score win the game.

E-module III. Transversal Skills

“Transversal skills are those typically considered as **not specifically related to a particular job, task, academic discipline or area of knowledge but as skills that can be used in a wide variety of situations and work settings** (IBE 2013). These skills are increasingly in high demand for mentees to successfully adapt to changes and to lead meaningful and productive lives.

WHAT ARE TRANSVERSAL SKILLS?

Examples and Definition of transversal skills:

- ↳ Critical and innovative thinking
- ↳ Inter-personal skills
- ↳ Negotiation skills
- ↳ Communication
- ↳ Teamwork
- ↳ Language using attitudes
- ↳ Collaboration

↳ **Intra-personal skills** (e.g. self-discipline, enthusiasm, perseverance, self-motivation, etc.)

↳ **Global citizenship** (e.g. tolerance, openness, respect for diversity, intercultural understanding, etc.)

↳ **Media and information literacy** such as the ability to locate and access information, as well as to analyse and evaluate media content (UNESCO 2014)”.

E-module III. Transversal Skills

TRANSVERSAL SKILLS MEANS:

For a **mentor** *Critical and innovative thinking* is a very important skill for the trainer as depending on the conditions and requirements of the trainer it can manage appropriately and create an interesting, familiar and accessible climate. At the same time, innovative thinking, enables the trainer to respond in a creative way to emergency situations and crisis management.

Inter-personal skills they determine to a large extent the ability to maneuver and adaptability of the trainer in all circumstances that may require interaction, communication with partners- trainers, in cases where the use of another language is needed and certainly the ability to create drivers, tips and exercises for the trainer who will act effectively in the learning process and create a more interesting atmosphere.

Intra-personal skills are for the most part factors of the very character of each trainer and at the same time skills such as enthusiasm and self-motivation arise from the Feedback they receive from the workplace, partners, the efficiency that mentees have, etc., but they are very important for the appearance of the trainer as they encourage the learning process and enhance the positive atmosphere required during it.

Global citizenship - the ability to locate and access information, as well as to analyse and evaluate media content. The trainers having these skills have a picture towards their trainees and are able to respond to their integration in the modern social context and its requirements.

E-module III. Transversal Skills

TRANSVERSAL SKILLS MEANS:

→ For a **mentee** *Critical and innovative thinking* is a very important skill for the mentee, as in the long term he can participate comfortably in activities, discussions, etc. and have the ability to both judge and be able to express his own opinion but also innovative ideas, combined, however, with the necessary knowledge and the firm information and training he has received.

→ **Inter-personal skills** is one of the most important soft skills that the trainee must acquire to respond to all circumstances at a professional and social level in general. Indeed, in combination with the intra-personal skills such as self-discipline, enthusiasm, self-motivation, etc. create a complete and perfect appearance for the trainee and at the same time the confidence to move comfortably on an individual and within the group, level, to have a mood on the objects he is working on and constantly renewable motivation.

→ **Global citizenship** - Media and information literacy such as the ability to locate and access information, as well as to analyze and evaluate media content. The above two transversal skills are related to what has been mentioned above in terms of critical thinking and innovative ideas, which a mentor possesses tolerance, openness, respect for diversity, intercultural understanding and the ability to locate and access information, as well as to analyze and evaluate media content it has the whole package that includes the globality of thought and the expression of innovative ideas through the critical thinking it possesses.

E-module III. Transversal Skills

ACTIVITIES/TOOLS TO IMPROVE TRANSVERSAL SKILLS:



Conflict Resolution Scenarios

The trainer creates his own scenario of a problematic case, which to be solved, the mobilization of soft skills that he examine is needed.

- Ask the mentees to create their own scenario. They can discuss a problem they face – but in this case, it should be a scenario that represents most of the participants. This is a better option for small groups, or groups that have worked together for some time.

- It can also be a scenario directly related to the specific working space. This adds relevance and usefulness but takes away some of the fun. You can choose this with older age groups.

- Example: you are assigned a specific task, but you are not sure how to proceed. Your mentor is busy at the moment. What do you do?

The trainer creates *simulation conditions*, as an execution of a theatrical performance that depends on the judgment of the trainer. This technique allows the trainer to enter the process of cultivating through the action their soft skills and at the same time to see in which cases they need them, according to the various scenarios suggested by the trainer.

- The simulation can have role-playing elements if the participants are feeling comfortable. If the scenario is work-related, the mentees will have to execute the various roles of the scenario (i.e., client, employee, HR manager etc.).

- The last step is not only to agree on the most suitable solution, but also come up with 1-2 back-up plans.

This helps with the flexibility and problem-resolution skills as well, as in reality things do not always go as planned. In the end of the exercise have a discussion with the whole team.

E-module III. Transversal Skills

ACTIVITIES/TOOLS TO IMPROVE TRANSVERSAL SKILLS:



Empathy-Building Personal Anecdotes

Trainers share personal anecdotes that create soft skills in the field of training and help mentees empathize with their classmates, teachers, possible professional partners, and the trainers themselves.

Sometimes all it takes is a story to emphasize the importance of understanding, communication, and compassion. The participants see things from a different perspective and learn about the coping mechanisms and motivations of others.

For example, the angry classmate who attacked you may have had a bad day - their way of coping with stress was to break out to the nearest employee. Your anecdote shows mentees that there are always two sides to the story. Listening to the client's needs and trying to empathize with their situation can work wonders.

You can also encourage them to submit their own personal anecdotes as well. Everyone has unique knowledge to share based on their life experiences. However, as in the first exercise, you have to make sure that everyone in the group feels comfortable and that most of the participants are represented.

What did they feel in the specific situation? How did they express it? Did their emotions become understood?

In the end of the exercise have a discussion with the whole team.

E-module III. Transversal Skills

ACTIVITIES/TOOLS TO IMPROVE TRANSVERSAL SKILLS:



Team work Collaboration

Divide mentees into groups and assign them a common training problem or topic. For example, they need to evaluate a work-related task and figure out what soft skills should be used.

In addition to how they can build each skill to improve their performance, they can create a presentation for a common topic, i.e., an imaginary campaign about a new product.

Another approach is to give them a complaint, coming either of HR or from fellow workmates, and ask them to determine the best course of action. What steps should they take to achieve the desired result? The complaint can be about themselves, about a workmate or about the company. What strategy should they use in each case?

Each team will have to present their solution to the rest of the group. Then, all participants will discuss which idea they think is the best and why. In the end of the exercise have a discussion with the whole team.

THE MAIN OBSTACLES AND CHALLENGES:

- ✘ 2 factors: The **time** allocated to the educational process and the **program** provided for, as the implementation of various activities, the discussion, the reflection, the evaluation during the conquest of soft skills.
- ✘ Introverted character, Lack of self-confidence, Low profile can act as a brake on the effort to acquire skills such as tolerance, openness, respect for diversity, intercultural understanding.

E-module III. Transversal Skills

Activity 1: Adaptability - Serious Games

- Get the A3 paper and design a path with boxes next to each other (think of Monopoly). In the middle of the board, you will place **3 stacks of cards**.
- There are 3 card categories in total: **“anger”, “patience” and “get help”**. You can draw a specific symbol for each category, or simply use the letters A, P and GH.
- Then **you write one action on each card**, according to the category. For example, on the “anger” cards you can have actions such as “I yell at them”, “I cannot explain any further, so I leave” etc. On the “patience” cards you can have actions such as “I try to talk to them a second time”, “I ask if there is something else bothering them”, etc. Then on the “get help” cards you can have actions such as “I cannot find a solution, so I call my supervisor”, “I ask a colleague” etc.
- Mark the board boxes with the symbols/letters, alternating them. It can be A / P / GH / A / P / GH etc.
- **How to play:** one mentor starts telling a story about a mentorship experience they had. It can be a real or an imaginary one.
- They throw the dice and move as many boxes as the total.
- They must pick up a card according to the box’s symbol/letter and read it out loud.
- **If you are playing with more than 1 player, the next player must continue the story** (after the action card has been read) and throw the dice again. If you are playing with one player only, the same player continues the story.

The game ends when they reach the final box. What was the outcome?

Conclusion: Have a discussion with the participants. In which points did the situation got out of hand? Why? What would they have done differently if they could?

E-module III. Transversal Skills

Activity 2: Open Quizz

- For this exercise the mentors will have to answer questions about the mentees, trying to understand them and communicate with them more effectively.

Examples of questions: **what do the mentees feel like when they are being yelled at? What exactly is going through their mind? What do they want to do afterwards?**

Discuss the different types of personalities a mentor can encounter and the best way of dealing with each. How can you bring out the best qualities in a team?

Other questions may include more specific situations. You can use an example of a real situation at the workplace, involving the mentors and their mentees. It can also be a memory of the mentors when they were mentees themselves.

What happened? Why?

The participants must now ask questions such as “Why?” and “How?” to try and explain the situation the best they can.

After the implementation of the above Guidelines and Exercises it is important that participants enter a process of self-evaluation regarding

the skills they have acquired, to what extent they conquered them, they could have done or thought better which would help them, in what other cases may be helped by a corresponding skill etc.



E-module IV. Time Management Skills

Time management is the ability to **use your time productively and efficiently**. The aim is to organize your tasks and use your time effectively to get more things done each day. This can help lower stress levels and improve productivity both at work and at home.



**WHAT
ARE
TIME
MANAGEMENT
SKILLS?**

Time management skills encompass a wide number of skills, which facilitate the better organization and management of one's time. Some of the pivotal time management skills include organizational and prioritizing competences and meeting deadlines. Now let's focus on:



**Organizational Competences;
Prioritizing Competences
Meeting deadlines**

E-module IV. Time Management Skills

Organizational Competences

Constitute **practical knowledge about delegated responsibilities**; on how to identify the urgent tasks; on how to elaborate successful action plans, including preparing strategic decisions, and managing teams; and how to effectively delegate tasks in order to achieve the goals and objectives of the company to save money, time and efforts.



Organizational competences include the ability to identify and remind others their own responsibilities; the ability to perform several tasks or to work on different projects simultaneously dividing time and resources appropriately; the ability to develop positive, healthy coping techniques; self-awareness on deadlines; and reduction of sources of stress in the work environment.

Planning as an essential element and a base of the organizational skills can affect the goal meeting and the results of any activity. A plan can be simple or complex, but what matters more is how it will be implemented and will generate better results. Some of the most important skills required when it comes to planning include: **Analyzing; Data evaluation; Decision-making and Scheduling.**

The **physical organization** does not only include a clean and organized desk. This also comprises the layout of the working space and the overall appearance of an area. A poorly organized working space can lead to wasted resources, physical discomfort, and lowered productivity levels.

To organize and manage a **team** and in order to ensure its performance it is essential that this relevantly small group that is called a team is sharing common goals, shares rewards and responsibilities for achieving them, has a certain trust within the group, works in conditions that encourage to openly express ideas, opinions, disagreements, and feelings. It is also fundamental to have an atmosphere of a mutual support within the team.

E-module IV. Time Management Skills

ORGANIZATIONAL COMPETENCES MEANS:

↳ Poor organization usually means **less productivity and missed opportunities** and can lead to increased procrastination and stress. When poor organizational skills are present in the workplace, the level of productivity and efficiency will be adversely affected.

↳ **Poor organizational skills hamper your focus.** "Poor organizational skills are a hindrance to productivity. Instead of being able to get work done, poor organizational skills will leave you rummaging through documents and attempting to carve out a clutter-free area on your working space. Spending all of this time being non-productive causes your efficiency to suffer, which will not look good to your boss." It is crucial to promote good organizational skills to make things done in an efficient and productive way.

↳ **Poor organizational skills can affect time management** can affect how things can be completed on time. Since time is a valuable factor for every business, this should be given an adequate value. However, when things and processes are not organized, time can be wasted and may affect the company's resources. With poor organizational skills, you will not be able to fulfill your tasks, meet deadlines, prioritize urgent tasks, and complete your daily tasks. The result: lower productivity rate and poor work results.

↳ **Poor organizational skills can also affect your health.** When you have poor organizational skills, you are more likely to acquire stress and anxiety. Your mood can be affected by a workplace that is poorly set up. Eventually, these stress and anxieties may contribute to the risk factors of having adverse health conditions. As advised by Health Life Magazine, "...just keep in mind that organization is a crucial lifestyle choice that impacts your productivity, alertness, focus, mental and emotional health, and stress levels. It is important to understand that you deserve to be stress-free, and organization will help you on the road to more relaxation." Lack of organizational skills can cause you to forget to take care of your health, such as getting proper sleep, eating healthy foods, and promoting an active lifestyle.

↳ **Poor organizational skills impact your professional growth** halt you from creating professional growth and career enhancement. When people become less efficient and productive, they can't adapt well to a fast-changing world. Your clients and customers may find it challenging to deal with you because you may often miss deadlines, confuse dates, mix up tasks, and become unreliable.

E-module IV. Time Management Skills

ORGANIZATIONAL COMPETENCES MEANS:

In case of poor organizational skills of the mentor or rather if they are lacking behind in the organizations, the mentee will be invariably affected as well as all aspects of the working and personal processes.

The **mentee's** own organizational skills are also essential for the mutual work and learning. Proper communication and preparation can improve the process. This as part of the planning is also a matter that concerns directly the mentee and his/her abilities.

- ↳ A good example of organizational skills and their application can be very positive for the mentee's own development in this direction;
- ↳ Lack of clear end point (results and outcomes of the performed tasks) can reduce the involvement of the trainee/mentee.
- ↳ Planning and performing small clear tasks with feasible result can be more motivating, when going together with the overall clear goal of the activities;
- ↳ Good organizational skills of the mentor/leader can fundamentally support the level of involvement, wellness and lack of stress during the activities as well as the final results that are expected from the mentee.
- ↳ The lack of awareness on behalf of the mentor about the abilities and needs of the mentee can cause performance opacity and ambiguity.

ACTIVITIES/TOOLS TO IMPROVE PRIORITIZING COMPETENCES:

- . Brainstorm a list of everything you would need in order to complete a task. Start your day with a plan and stick to it;
- . Keep your goals and always gear towards development and being productive;
 - . Arrange the task list into priority order in a time sequence;
 - . Instill discipline in everything you do;
 - . Use time management apps and tools;
 - . Declutter your desk and whole workspace;
- . Make use of your idle time by creating a work-life balance;
 - . Avoid stress and being overwhelmed.

E-module IV. TIME MANAGEMENT SKILLS

ORGANIZATIONAL COMPETENCES

THE MAIN OBSTACLES AND CHALLENGES:

- ✘ The obstacles that can be pointed out for improving the organizational skills may start from the roots. The most important thing for starting the improvement of any skill is to be aware of the lack of it. Often people, employees, mentors, trainers and other collaborators are too focused on their routine to think about improvement. In some of the cases it happens so that we tend to work harder and not smarter. Therefore the first obstacle that can be listed here is the awareness that an improvement is needed, as well as the proper understanding of the soft skill as well as possible results that it can bring to our daily and professional life.
- ✘ Therewithal, it is worth mentioning that the lack of time and proper designated moments for improvement of the skills of mentors or employees outside the professional duties is always a problem.
- ✘ The open approach towards learning and obtaining new skills (or rather improving them), may not be intuitive for everyone. Some people due to their experience or character may not accept the changes in their daily routine.

E-module IV. TIME MANAGEMENT SKILLS

ORGANIZATIONAL COMPETENCES



Activity 1: Create a MAP!

Below you can find an exercise that will help you organize tasks in a short or long term. For the exercise you can either use lists and categories or the MindMap, depending on how it is easier for you to imagine the entire picture. For some people is easy to extract information and essentials from a list/table and they have ordered thread of the thought, while others need to have rather dispersed organization of the elements which helps them for better and quicker elaboration of the information. In the second case the tool of mind mapping is rather useful. In its essence it places an idea/project/task/process in the middle of a white piece of paper and then in a free, brainstorm-like process adding all elements that are related to the central/core concept. Different colors, shapes, images and fonts can be used in the creation of such map, which helps the visual perception of the elements easier and more intuitive.

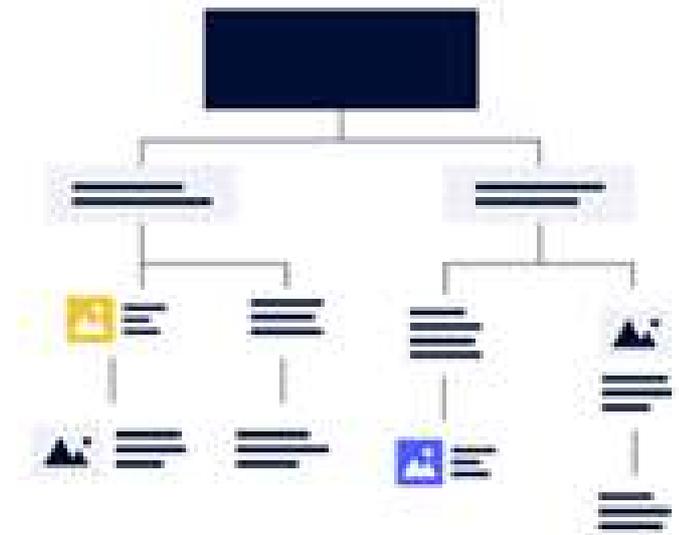
There are differences between the two different tools thus both can support the planning, strategic thinking, tasks identification, delegation and prioritization.

Task: Using either of Mind Map or Conceptual Map try to complete the following steps:

1. Brainstorm a list of everything you would need in order to complete a task.
2. Arrange the task list into priority order in a time sequence.
3. Decide who will complete the task.
4. Estimate how long it would take to complete each task, given your existing workload.
5. Establish any additional resources you may need.
6. Set a deadline for each task.
7. Transfer tasks into a daily task list in your diary.

E-module IV. TIME MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Activity 1: Create a MAP!



Mind map

- They focus on a single concept or idea.
- Radial or node-focused structure.
- They show a general concept and the concepts that depend on it.
- Drawings and images are the most important thing.
- They serve to display a topic.

Vs.

Conceptual map

- They can have more than one general idea.
- Hierarchical structure.
- They break down the content further in a hierarchy from the most general to the most specific concepts.
- Words are the most important thing.
- They serve to extract information or memorize.

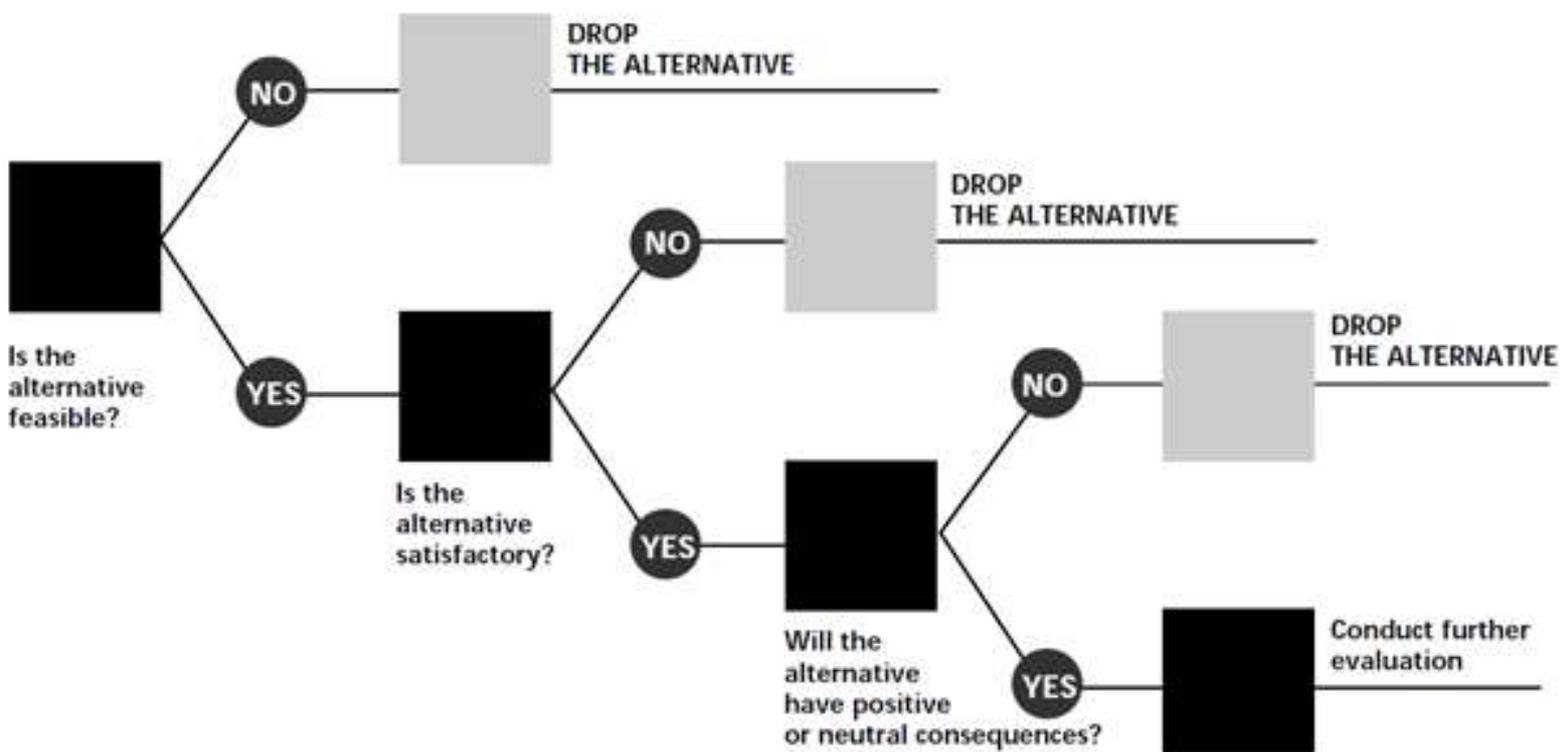
E-module IV. TIME MANAGEMENT SKILLS



Activity 2: Decision making exercise

Steps to complete the exercise:

1. Write down the decisions or type of decisions which you take and whether this decision making is routine or ad hoc.
2. Verify the perception of formal authority in the decision making process. Is there within your organisation a recognised process for individual and collective decision making?
3. Describe in writing a decision to be made – one sentence – and then apply the decision making questions of the model.



E-module IV. Time Management Skills

Prioritizing Competences

Prioritizing competences consist of the knowledge on how to **take judicious decisions** in order to manage work-flow; on how to control and manage interruptions or changes; on how to analyze situations, takes risks and decisions in risk situations; and on how to evaluate the priority of tasks and work in every situation.

These competences **contain the ability to** identify own tasks and roles; to adapt and renegotiate roles and responsibilities; to identify the top priorities of the team; to determine timetable for achieving organizational goals; to establish priorities; to set and meet deadlines; to build individual capacity; and to achieve correct work distribution.



E-module IV. Time Management Skills

PRIORITIZING COMPETENCES MEANS:

- 

For mentor making the very best use of their own efforts and those of their teams helps to create calmness and space at work so that they can focus their energy and attention on the things that really matter.
- 

Stay focused on daily routine tasks while managing mentee's performance/progress. Allow the trainers to find the balance between implementing the roles of being a worker and mentor who share his/her experience and knowledge with the mentees in a sufficient way.
- 

Higher satisfaction that they contribute to organizational wealth. Allows the mentor to implement the roles of a worker and guide for the mentees in the same time thus strengthening his/her confidence that he/she is a valuable worker with high professional capacity and contribution to organisational goals.
- 

For mentee less stress and increased productivity. Knowing that they don't have to finish all tasks at once or in a single day, gives them a time to focus on the most important things first and to understand and implement them better.
- 

Time to check the accomplished tasks and to make revisions if needed. Ensures that the mentee allocate sufficient time not only to complete the tasks but also to make necessary changes if needed in order to save time and become more productive.
- 

Helps to avoid procrastination and Keeps them motivated. When they know how to prioritize their tasks and see positive results, they will become motivated to handle even more tasks.

E-module IV. TIME MANAGEMENT SKILLS

PRIORITIZING COPENTENCES

ACTIVITIES/TOOLS TO IMPROVE PRIORITIZING COMPETENCES:

 **Q1: Do first!** covers unforeseen events and pressing problems (crises, deadlines, problems). We have to deal with them immediately in order to avoid serious consequences. Although some of these issues are unexpected, we can reduce the number of them by proper planning and proactive behavior before they have become urgent (see Q2).

 **Q2: Schedule!** This is the quadrant where we should spend most of our time as working on strategic, high-impact tasks. They will bring more value to the business where we are working but also contribute in a high degree to our personal and professional growth.



 **Q3: Delegate!** This time management matrix deals with such minor but urgent tasks such as interruptions, meetings, activities. Although it's impossible to avoid these issues entirely, we should try to reduce their number. One possible way to do so is by delegating them to someone else on the team. If this is impossible, we could consider doing smaller tasks in batches. For instance, allocate an hour for answering incoming emails instead of replying instantly to each message.

 **Q4: Eliminate!** These tasks are neither important not urgent (timewasters, pleasant and trivial things). Small amounts of trivial activities help us to relax and refresh our body and mind. Better cut activities from Q4 to a minimum till the time we are able to enjoy them.

E-module IV. TIME MANAGEMENT SKILLS

PRIORITIZING COMPETENCES

THE MAIN OBSTACLES AND CHALLENGES:

- ✘ **Not dedicating time to prioritization.** Prioritizing the tasks and projects requires a dedicated amount of time to complete, just like the tasks and projects themselves. If you don't sit down to clearly prioritize the work that you have, you'll have no chance to prioritize effectively - thus you're flying blind and hoping that your random allocation of tasks will fall in a way that favors your business. In effect, prioritization should be your first priority, how you accomplish this is up to you.
- ✘ **Getting distracted by the little things.** You might have a dozen high-priority items on your list, but if you're flooded by emails and phone calls all day, you'll never have time to complete them. From one perspective, these little things are distracting you from your top priorities, from another - they are replacing your top priorities as new top priorities. In most of the cases, these little things can wait. If you have a project or task that truly demands your attention as the highest priority, set everything else aside. Disconnect from the Internet and turn off your phone if you have to.
- ✘ **Not delegating.** Being a mentor means that you have to deal with more tasks but you shouldn't allow an abundance of tasks hinder you to complete the most important ones. Know what you do best and demonstrate trust in your mentees by delegating work to them.

E-module IV. TIME MANAGEMENT SKILLS

PRIORITIZING COMPETENCES

Activity 1: Time to write!

Think about all the things that you are doing in one day. Write a list of activities and try to categorize them in the following categories:

- **Personal** • **Hygienic** • **Practical** • **Basic** • **Work related**
- **Developing** • **Learning**

Try to write what is the result of the activity will bring up.

Activity	Category	Result

E-module IV. TIME MANAGEMENT SKILLS

PRIORITIZING COMPETENCES

Activity 2: Secret Box!

Use the list of the activities/tasks that you listed in exercise 1. Then, put each of them in the respective box in the time Management Matrix below, considering their importance and urgency. **Did you actually follow the same order of executing the tasks, as the matrix suggests?**

How important is the task?	Important			
	Not important			
		Urgent	Not Urgent	
		How urgent is the task?		

E-module IV. Time Management Skills

Meet Deadlines

The ability to meet deadlines incorporate the **knowledge on how to respect schedules and deadlines and being on time**; on how to avoid distractions and on how to maintain time sensitivity; it is also related to delivering timely results.



These consist of the ability to act as a good timekeeper when working in groups; to recognize time management weaknesses; to avoid procrastinating; to remain focused and on-task; and to do several different tasks at the same time.

Deadlines are an integral part of people's working live and a source of relentless and worrying pressure. They are important for almost any task and any role, and they are essential for the smooth running of an organization or business.

E-module IV. Time Management Skills

MEETING DEADLINES MEANS:

- 

For mentor making to ensure that the mentees complete their work. It is easy to delay or to forget a task that has no agreed end point to complete it. Deadlines help to avoid this.
- 

To encourage a smooth flow of work. Deadlines help teams to collaborate toward achieving a shared goal and allow the leader to keep complex, multistage activities and projects on track.
- 

To set expectations. Deadlines make clear what is expected to be delivered and when. This means that the leaders can take control of their teams work, free of confusion and misunderstanding.
- 

For mentee meeting deadlines means punctuality that shows dedication and seriousness about ones work.
- 

It is one of the crucial factor on which a person is judged.
- 

Tells a lot about ones personality and self-discipline.
- 

Even for student, deadlines work as motivating force to accomplish a task.
- 

Deadlines can even be made by student themselves while planning their work.

E-module IV. TIME MANAGEMENT SKILLS

MEETING DEADLINES

ACTIVITIES/TOOLS TO IMPROVE MEETING DEADLINES:

-  As a beginning, it is essential that both the mentee and the mentor are clear on agreed upon deadlines and expected outcomes. If one of them has the feeling that they are not on the same page, mentees should ask for clarification. This can be achieved through a conversation or by emailing to the mentor a brief outline noting mentees' understanding of due dates and expectations and ask for confirmation.
-  In order to keep track of all of the projects and activities that the person is responsible for, it is useful to make a list indicating the deadlines and to keep it handy.
-  To make large projects more manageable, break them down into smaller pieces/steps. Have a start and finish time for each step.
-  It is a good idea to build a cushion into your project timeline. If unanticipated things or delays occur, a cushion will help to ensure that you are still able to meet your deadline. Additionally, you want to avoid the downfalls associated with waiting until the last minute. Procrastinating on important tasks often results in stress and lower quality work.
-  Be sure to regularly set aside blocks of time to work on the assignment. If possible, avoid taking calls or checking emails during this block of time. Focus all of your attention to a concrete task will enable you to make more progress and do better quality work.
-  If mentees negotiate an extension, they should be sure to meet their new due date.

E-module IV. TIME MANAGEMENT SKILLS

MEETING DEADLINES

THE MAIN OBSTACLES AND CHALLENGES:

- ✘
Poor organization. Organizational skills are equally essential for higher productivity in your professional and personal life. Without learning such new skills, your productivity will suffer — which may hinder your professional growth, leading to lower employee satisfaction. Additionally, there is a correlation between organizational skills and your mental and physical health. Being disorganized leads to increased stress and anxiety levels, culminating in physical symptoms like headaches and back pain.
- ✘
Not setting priorities. Prioritizing tasks is vital in effectively managing your time. You can't hope to improve your productivity with poor decision-making. A lack of prioritization is a common challenge people face and is one of the most prevalent causes of wasted time. If you are unsure of how to start your workday, you won't be able to allocate sufficient time to its completion., Prioritization is crucial for achieving long-term goals.
- ✘
Being a perfectionist. While striving for excellence is a good idea, don't let it come at the cost of your productivity. As an employee, it's important to remember that every new project you tackle could present a new set of obstacles to overcome. Aim to complete the project to the best of your ability, but keep in mind that you don't have the time required to complete every task perfectly.
- ✘
Not saying no. Time is the most valuable resource we have, and occasionally we simply don't have the time to complete a task. In such situations, it's okay to let your team know you can't do it. If you are used to replying 'yes' to most things, this can seem challenging at first.

E-module IV. TIME MANAGEMENT SKILLS

MEETING DEADLINES

Activity 1: Creating a to-do list

Creating a to-do list sounds simple enough, but if it is not used properly, it won't be effective. Some of the key points to keep in mind include:

- 

Only include tasks, not goals and objectives: Goals and objectives are larger aspirations that require more than a day's work to accomplish.
- 

Don't put too many items on the list: This tends to have an adverse effect, making you feel like you have too much to do.
- 

Reward yourself: Don't forget to award yourself with something pleasant for completing tasks (take a coffee or something sweet, listen to music or favorite song, have a short chat with a colleague, go out of the office to take some fresh air and moving).

E-module V. Business Etiquette Skills

Business etiquette refers to the requirements and expectations of social and business behavior, practices and conduct that are prescribed by social convention, and a code of ethical behavior among professionals.

WHAT ARE BUSINESS ETIQUETTE SKILLS?

It basically boils down to demonstrating good manners. As so-called common courtesy becomes less common, manners and etiquette are essential components of career success. It's not just about rules and telling people what they can or can't do, it's about ensuring that people are treated with respect.

3 main dimensions will be focus during this Module:

-  - Work ethics
- Leadership
- Management skills



E-module V. Business Etiquette Skills

WORK ETHICS

According to Marriam-Webster, work ethic is **“a belief in work as a moral good”**. In the modern business world, work ethics are known as **transferable or “soft” skills**. While everyone comes from various backgrounds and carries different views, the company they work for is just as responsible to offer and promote certain professional standards, in order to create a good work atmosphere.

WORK ETHICS MEANS:

-  **For mentor get to engage in a dialogue with the students.** And this dialogue is important because it is not related to a specific topic or material, but to the general learning experience.
-  **To lay their standards** for having fruitful training in a natural way.
-  **To get the opportunity to hear** what students would expect from the training.

It allows both parties (trainer and trainees) to come to an agreement as to what would constitute a learning experience that would be productive for all. 
-  **It allows students to focus on their progress** without this being at the expense of others' success
-  **To explore both the strengths and weaknesses** that they have in their approach to work
-  **To be exposed to practices** that could guide them in becoming better professionals without sacrificing their integrity

E-module V. Business Etiquette Skills

WORK ETHICS

ACTIVITIES/TOOLS TO IMPROVE WORK ETHICS SKILLS:

-  **Lecturers** that encourage students to communicate their views and the logic behind their choices. Students can do this in small groups or just by facing the student in front of them.
-  **Lecturers should not judge or criticize their students' opinions;** rather, they should encourage them to express their actual views and to think critically.
-  Ambiguity and differences are expected to appear in students' arguments.
-  **To summarize the discussion and explain to students that they needed to learn more about ethical leadership** in order to resolve the ambiguity and differences expressed, such as the leader's ethical responsibility, the importance of ethical leadership in making a leader effective, how to make ethical decisions, and how to promote ethical leadership.
-  **To make decisions in specific circumstances** while also considering the ethical implications of actions from the perspective of others. Lecturers may create their own cards and tailor the exercise to their own needs, goals, and circumstances.

E-module V. Business Etiquette Skills

WORK ETHICS

THE MAIN OBSTACLES AND CHALLENGES:

- ✘
Natural resistance. Employees may associate ethics and compliance training negatively. Focusing too much on the repercussions of failing to act ethically might cause them to tune out altogether. A better strategy would be to highlight the benefits of an ethical workplace, such as a more collaborative work environment, improved morale, higher productivity, and increased job satisfaction.
- ✘
Training precision. Many companies seek to establish an ethical and compliance training program that is "one-size-fits-all." The issue with this strategy is that you are likely to cover stuff that is irrelevant to some employees. One option to tailor training to different sections of your business is to provide access to job-specific online training courses.
- ✘
Holding attention. Certain issues, particularly those dealing with laws, rules, and regulations, might be fairly dry in nature. Making training more interactive is a wonderful method to engage employees and keep their attention. Using learning means that demand group participation and feedback, such as role-playing and case study analysis, may be particularly effective teaching strategies.
- ✘
Session duration and updating materials. Shorter sessions devoted to certain themes are definitely the way to go. These sessions should be kept as brief and to the point as feasible. Don't have your employees spend an hour of their time on a topic that can be addressed in 15 minutes. When students study your revised training materials, they should discover new, fresh content that was not previously present.

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WORK ETHICS



Activity 1: Leader's View

This exercise invites students to learn more about ethical leadership by inviting them to turn their attention inwards and critically examine their existing leadership views. The teacher may ask students to complete the following questionnaire either in class or before arriving, and then lead a class discussion focusing on the questions. Students should carefully consider each of the following items and record whether they agree or disagree with it. Indicate whether you believe your peers will agree or disagree on each item.

1. Overall, it is better to be humble and honest than to be successful and dishonest.
2. If you trust someone completely, you are asking for trouble
3. A leader should take action only when it is morally right.
4. A good way to handle people is to tell them what they like to hear.
5. There is no excuse for telling a white lie to someone.
6. It makes sense to flatter important people.
7. Most people who get ahead as leaders have led very moral lives.
8. It is better not to tell people the real reason you did something unless it benefits you to do so.
9. The majority of people are brave, good, and kind.
10. It is hard to get to the top without sometimes cutting corners.

The questionnaire is adapted from Richard Daft's The Leadership Experience (p. 166; see References in Key issues section of the Module).

To see a table version of this activity you can visit the following source: University Module Series: Integrity & Ethics

E-module V. Business Etiquette Skills

WORK ETHICS

Activity 2: Decision Cards



Distributing cards to students, asking them to decide in which "box" to place the cards considering the choices made. The lecturer could provide students with the **following instructions:**

- Please read the decision cards distributed and decide in which of the 4 boxes you would like to place each card. The boxes are titled as follows: "in all cases", "in most cases", "in some cases" and "never".
- Once you have decided in which box to place each decision card, write the number of the card in the selected box.
- After you complete the task, compare the selections of the student sitting next to you with your own selections and identify any differences.
- Focusing on the differences in your selections, discuss with your fellow student the reasons for your respective selection decisions. Following the discussion, feel free to change your selections. Please show your changes by drawing an arrow to the new box. Take note of the number of cards you changed.

RESULTS:

.Card 1 It is wrong for leaders to accept gifts from followers.

.Card 2 Leaders must consider the consequences of their actions and the effects they will have.

.Card 3 Leaders must always be role models for all followers.

.Card 4 Under all conditions, leaders must ensure that all followers participate in the decision making.

.Card 5 It is enough for leaders to become an expert, as human relationships do not matter.

.Card 6 Leaders must act in accordance with the principle of equality.

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LEADERSHIP

In W.C.H. Prentice's article from 1961, we can find the following high-level definition of leadership: **"the accomplishment of a goal through the direction of human assistants."**

Following the "Harvard Business Review" analysis of this article there's another definition that we should take into consideration, which is the one of a successful leader: **"one who can understand people's motivations and enlist employee participation in a way that marries individual needs and interests to the group's purpose"**

This also maps well on Daniel Goleman's comment on company conducted studies, which have proven that "the top 10% of performers displayed superior competencies in emotional intelligence, rather than in purely cognitive thinking."

LEADERSHIP MEANS:

"Great Leaders and Great Trainers Have a Lot in Common", as the title of a 2016 article by Dale Ludwig readers, which encapsulates the essence of the **relationship between leadership and training**: "trainers apply strong leadership strategies and skills. They just apply them in a narrower field than the people at the top."

Greater leadership skills allow mentors to identify the most effective and efficient method of delivering information, facilitating change, and developing personnel. Their work is laser-focused on individual learners' needs, perspectives, and resolving the hesitation that trainees might have about their learning experience.

E-module V. Business Etiquette Skills

LEADERSHIP MEANS:

- ↳ **Confidence** - whether leading a school project with your class-mates or a work project with your colleagues, leading starts with having confidence in your own abilities to do so. And having training that leads you through practices that allows you to recognize and develop your leadership potential is a great way to build confidence.
- ↳ **Role Models** - in general, the better and more students are able to connect with quality role models, the greater positive influence this will have on their career and development. Leadership training allows students to better understand the things that they should look up to and the qualities that they should strive to cultivate for themselves.
- ↳ **Networking** - the very essence of leadership is about recognizing that truly big achievements are the result of well-organized social endeavors. It is also about knowing and having access to the right people that are willing to go in a shared direction. Leadership training points to the fact that leaders need to know a lot of people. In school these may be teachers, faculty members, school staff and other students. At work this pool grows even further and while students are not expected to know "everyone", having the skills to connect with people and having the vision of going beyond one's own ability is something that can be taught.
- ↳ **Problem-Solving** - as a professional leader, you are usually entrusted with guiding your team through a seemingly endless series of challenges. Fortunately, the responsibilities of maintaining a demanding course load, dealing with personal obligations, and effectively performing your role as a leader provide an excellent opportunity for you to hone your problem-solving skills while improving your multi-tasking ability before entering the real world. And while it is impossible to prepare for every possible problem that may occur, students can at least be aware of best practices and strategies that they can use when things get hairy.

E-module V. Business Etiquette Skills

LEADERSHIP

ACTIVITIES/TOOLS TO IMPROVE LEADERSHIP SKILLS:

-  **Model the way.** Providing guidelines for how people (constituents, peers, colleagues, and customers) should be treated and how objectives should be achieved. Leaders set high expectations for themselves and provide a good example for others to follow. They may refer to signposts, to support individuals whenever they recognize that they might feel unsure where to go or how to get there. Leaders provide opportunities for achievement.
-  **Inspire a Shared Vision.** Leaders are capable of captivating people with their charm and eloquence. They make their ideas come to life and encourage others to see new possibilities for the future.
-  **Challenge the Process.** Searching for opportunities to challenge the status quo. As a result, they experiment and take chances. Because difficult change has the potential to overwhelm people and stifle participation, leaders create intermediate objectives so that staff may achieve little triumphs while working toward greater ones. Leaders also see setbacks as opportunities to progress because they recognize that taking risks and learning implies making mistakes and failing.
-  **Enable Others to Act and encourage the heart.** Encouraging collaboration and the building of teams, empower others by making each person feel capable and powerful. Leaders appreciate the contributions that individuals make in order to keep hope and determination alive. They know to celebrate each team members' victories, and encourage everyone to share their achievements.

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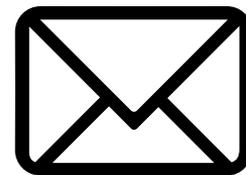
LEADERSHIP

THE MAIN OBSTACLES AND CHALLENGES:

- ✘
Context & Relevance. Leadership training that is not made relevant to the student's context might be considered a waste of time and resources. Learners must have enough chances to practice, and that those opportunities are the correct sorts of practice - the one that they will make good use of in their career.
- ✘
Technology. Technology should enhance a learning program rather than simply make it more cost-effective. Having people talk to one other in a lesson and exchange ideas is still the best method. Blended learning, on the other hand, may offer just the right fix. Self-paced microlearning can give initial exposure and practice, while apps can provide practice scenarios to reinforce learning over time.
- ✘
Custom content. Off-the-shelf content may not be the most effective strategy to build leaders. Giving students a tailored learning path rather than a vast library where they have to guess what they need results in better outcomes.
- ✘
Impact measurement. Leadership training starts with making sure that you have your organization's short- and long-term goals clear. Metrics such as execution measurements or student satisfaction may be included. Then, determine the impact of leadership quality on those metrics and evaluate how the individuals' behaviour has changed.
- ✘
Strategic alignment and resources. Ensure that educational curriculums and company goals are strategically aligned. Reverse-Engineer what your goals are, what people do you need to know and do to reach those goals and do you have the right resources in place today?

E-module V. Business Etiquette Skills

LEADERSHIP



Activity 1: Leadership Envelopes

PARTICIPANTS: 5 to 30 p. are divided into 3 to 5 teams.

TIME: 30 - 90 minutes.

SUPPLIES: 5 leadership-principle envelopes. Write a leadership principle on the front of each envelope. Response cards. 5 index cards for each team. Timer.

ROOM SETUP: Tables arranged in a roughly circular format with chairs around each table.

FLOW: Organize the participants and divide them into 4 teams of 3 to 7 members. Teams should be approximately the same size.

Brief the participants. Review the 5 leadership principles. Explain to participants that the activity requires them to translate these principles into everyday on-the-job behaviors. Distribute the supplies. Give one leadership-principle envelope and four index cards to each team.

Conducting round 1.

- Ask team members to discuss the leadership principle on the envelope they received
 - Ask to identify how the principle can be applied to real-life work decisions and behaviours.
 - Tell teams to write short sentences describing these application examples on an index card.
 - Announce a time limit of 3 minutes and encourage the teams to work rapidly
 - After 3 minutes, announce the end of the first round.
 - Ask each team to place its response card (the index card with its application examples) inside the envelope and pass the envelope, unsealed, to the next team.
- Instruct the teams not to open the envelope they receive!

Conduct the evaluation round & present the results. Each team announce the leadership principle on the envelope they have and read the application examples on each card, beginning with the card that received the least number of points. After reading all 4 cards, the team should announce how it distributed the 100 points and briefly explain the criteria used for distributing the points.

E-module V. Business Etiquette Skills

LEADERSHIP

Activity 2: DRAW, START, STOP, CONTINUE

Materials: Sheets of paper and Markers/Pens



PART 1: The first part of the activity is back-to-back drawing.

- First, split participants into pairs and have them sit back-to-back.
- Give one person paper and pen; the other gets an object.
- The person with the object describes it without naming it, and the other person draws it.

Variations

- You can ban additional words and identifying phrases from being mentioned.
- You can assign participants in groups of three or four, where the third person follows for the just execution of the activity, and the fourth person takes notes on the interaction between the person describing the object and the person drawing the object.

PART 2: This part of the activity is about the 2 original parties giving feedback to one another. It uses the words "stop", "start" and "continue" to guide the feedback messages.

Step 1: Best case scenario, groups should have at least some experience working together, as a basis for giving feedback.

Step 2: Give the instructions: "Write down the name of the person you are addressing. Complete the following two sentences for that person. Use the principles for effective feedback. Sign it with your name."

**"To _____:

- My strongest impression of you up to this point is...
- Something I am curious about is... Signed, _____"

Consider the following prompt: "What impression I think I've made on you so far..." This prompt helps participants reflect more deeply on student's perceptions of their own behavior.

Step 3: In each smaller group, each participant completes the above sentences using one post-it for each participant in the group. Once all participants in a group are done writing, they deliver the feedback, one-by-one, verbally, handing the post-it note to its addressee afterwards.

E-module V. Business Etiquette Skills

MANAGEMENT



Looking across definitions for management, a common statement that we can extract is the following: **organising, conducting and controlling an endeavour.**

MANAGEMENT MEANS:

For mentor better organization of the training;
 Anticipating the needs and reasons for education;
 Better tailored content;
 Better tracking of the achieved results;
 Better ability to adjust the learning path as the training unfolds;
 Better ability to address the specific student needs as the training unfolds;
 It allows the educator to make decisions based on results dictated by the management system they create, instead of conclusions that may be perceived as personal opinions.



For mentee more **opportunities and financial knowledge**: an often underappreciated aspect of management training is that students may learn how to look at money differently.

Autonomy: A professional equipped with both practical know-how and organizational know-how can be a lot more independent, proactive and self-driven in their work.

Monitoring: students with management training can track better their progress on task and anticipate possible issues.

Vision: students who go through management training are also capable of setting goals and understand the importance of setting management systems in motion.

E-module V. Business Etiquette Skills

MANAGEMENT

THE MAIN OBSTACLES AND CHALLENGES:

- ✘
Mindset. The majority of first-time managers are promoted as a result of their success as individual contributors. At one moment, they are a star performer, exuding confidence in their ability to do their work. Then suddenly, they must motivate, engage people, motivate them and have difficult conversations. This transition may be challenging. If new leaders are not properly instructed and mentored on the "dos and don'ts" of management, they are likely to commit a number of mistakes. This is why manager training programs should start with the basics to help first-time managers establish a leader's mentality.
- ✘
Former associates. Many new leaders are now in charge of former classmates and friends, some of whom they may have competed with for their new management post. New leaders are not required to "unfriend" their former associates or to overcompensate in their new role. One approach educators may follow to help young managers be prepared for these scenarios is to put them through a "series of simulated exercises" that address management dynamics.
- ✘
Skills gaps and training format. New managers have previously honed their technical talents as high-performing individual contributors. However, leaders require great emotional intelligence as well. They need in in order to recognize both their intrinsic leadership capabilities as well as which elements of management they may prefer to "shy away from", but need to actually lean into in order to improve their leadership skills. Because of that, management training is to emphasize the transferable "human skills" that are necessary for students to expand their professional capacity.

E-module V. Business Etiquette Skills

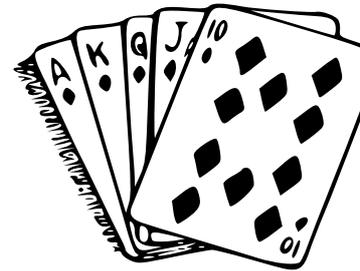
MANAGEMENT

Activity 1: "MANAGE" A DECK OF CARDS

This time management training game is very useful for participants to understand the importance of planning and delegating, in order to achieve a task in the shortest amount of time.

Items You Will Need for This Training Game

As a trainer, for this time management activity, you will need as many decks of playing cards as there are groups and a stopwatch or another timekeeping device.



INSTRUCTIONS

1. Divide the class into groups of 3 to 5 people.
2. Give each group a deck of playing cards (make sure that each deck of cards is shuffled before the exercise).
3. Explain that each team must place the cards in the same order as you previously shown. (For this, you may use a PowerPoint presentation containing a photo of the cards or a deck of cards already set up on a table.)
4. Explain that the cards must be stacked in neat rows that do not overlap.
5. Inform participants that the team that does the task in the shortest amount of time will be the winner.
6. Allow 5 minutes for the teams to strategize and do any required practice runs. Explain that teams may use any accessible materials in the room to help them.
7. After the first 5 minutes, start the first actual round. Play for three consecutive rounds. The idea is for each team to improve with each round. The team that manages to finish the task in the shortest amount (among all three rounds), wins
8. Begin a dialogue at the end of the game by asking players, 'How did you complete the task?'
Strategising, planning and delegating should come out, from the discussion, as key elements to managing time successfully.

E-module V. Business Etiquette Skills

LEADERSHIP

Activity 2: CIRCADIAN SYNCHRONISATION

This activity can help your students to synchronize their tasks (and homework) with their body clock.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Explain what circadian rhythms are: you can learn about circadian rhythms from the following two sources:

Circadian Rhythms: National Institute of General Medical Sciences

Circadian Rhythm: What It Is, How it Works, and More

2. Give each participant a graph sheet with the hours of the day, similar to this.

3. Ask each player to jot down their daily routine in hours. Starting from waking up to going to bed

4. Each participant should label each block with the following features: 'on fire,' 'vibrant,' 'cruise control,' 'at 70%', 'distracted,' 'slowing down,' 'tired,' 'hungry' indicating how they felt during the activity they were doing.

5. Ask the participants to connect their hourly blocks to time management at the workplace and discuss the following points.

Once completed, consider the following topics for discussion:

What is the most active part of your day 'on fire'?

What is the most 'distracted' part of the day?

During which part of the day is it better to complete the hardest/most manageable tasks?

When is it best to take a break?

Who has similar working/relaxing rhythms in your team?

Consider tips for optimising the student's productivity.

Conclusion

Through this manual, the **mentor** and the **intern** have the answers on which competencies and skills they should adopt to play a good role in a professional context and within the scope of a mentoring process.

In case of mentor the answer for the question **"WHAT SKILLS SHOULD YOU HAVE?"** and returning to the subject, to be a Mentor it is necessary to have some skills, which during the Mentoring process will facilitate the performance, according to Tammy D. Allen and Mark L. Poteet, the "ideal Mentor" should possess a wide range of skills and areas of expertise. The authors developed a study with experienced Mentors and Mentors in order to understand which characteristics, skills and values are necessary to be the ideal Mentor. So the Mentor must have:

- . **Ability to listen and communicate;**
- . **Have patience;**
- . **Have knowledge about the business segment in which the Mentorship is inserted;**
- . **Be honest, upstanding and trustworthy;**
- . **Have a genuine interest – both in relation to the Mentorship and in relation to the Mentoring process;**
- . **Ability to favor the creation of a relationship of trust;**
- . **Be available to share what you know;**
- . **Know how to teach;**
- . **Be open to receiving feedback;**
- . **Be objective;**
- . **Be clear about your role, expectations and jointly outline feasible goals;**
- . **Availability to give feedback;**
- . **And, last but not least, enjoy the Mentoring relationship.**

In case of the mentees **"HOW TO DEVELOP SKILLS DURING INTERNSHIP?"**

Be proactive. An essential behavior for the intern is proactivity. In addition to fulfilling their role, it is important that this professional offers more and is willing to develop extra projects and activities. In the vision of the company and the team, a committed intern is synonymous with a successful professional. That is, the more proactive the intern is, the closer he will be to becoming effective.

Do networking. It is also very important that the professional develops a good relationship with the team during the internship period. Having good communication and being empathetic with company colleagues are beneficial and very important factors. Therefore, it is important that the intern is always open to learning. This posture is essential for your personal development.

Be Responsible. It is also essential that the intern feels responsible for the correct execution of his work. Even being an initial function, acting responsibly makes the professional more competent and shows his commitment to the company.

Show interest in execution. Finally, a valuable tip is for the intern to show daily that he is interested in continuing in the company as soon as his contract ends. Interest is the first step towards effectiveness.

As main conclusion, this manual summarize the **main skills that every professional and intern should have**, namely:

Assertive communication. Good communication is based on knowing how to listen. Active listening contributes to the message being correctly understood, avoiding rework and conflicts due to misinterpretation. This skill also requires empathy, respect, objectivity and consistency between what is said and what is done.

Continuous learning and adaptability. The market is constantly evolving and professionals need to keep up with the changes. Gaining pleasure from learning and developing the power of adaptability is the surest way to ensure a sustainable career.

Emotional intelligence. It is related to the ability to know how to control and express emotions, especially in the work environment. This skill facilitates the professional's ability to relate and helps with mental health, which is increasingly important today.

Criativity and innovation. Having creativity and innovative thinking is the only way to survive in a changing world and professionals with these characteristics are even more valued in the market.

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