



skill

Soft sKills dIgitAl Learning for the ICT workforce

Soft Skills Training Methodological Handbook



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418



Soft Skills Training Methodological Handbook

Guide to the implementation of the curriculum in ICT micro-firm environments and the boosting of digital education

The Soft Skills Training Methodological Handbook will contain instructions and suggestions on how to deliver and use the Soft Skills Curriculum for ICT Companies (IO2), Digital Soft Skills Resources for Educators (IO3), Digital Soft Skills Scenarios for Learners (IO4), Interactive Soft Skills Learning Materials (IO5), and the Soft Skills Training E-Learning Platform (IO6).

The handbook will describe the training value of teaching soft skills in the ICT sector by explaining the resources and the training methodology to be used for each resource. It will provide suggestions and tips on how to use them with learners and/or employees.

The handbook will also provide managers and trainers with specific methodologies for face-to-face lessons and online tutoring services to support the learner as they develop their soft skills when completing the outcomes of this project.

Information about SKILL can be accessed online on <https://skillproject.eu/>.



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418



Introduction to SKILL

The handbook is designed to guide educators and learners on how to use the products generated from the SKILL EU project and on boosting education digitally. It will provide an overview of the different products and tools that have been developed as part of the project, as well as their key features and benefits.

The Soft skills digital Learning for the ICT workforce (SKILL) project aims to address the soft skills gap and increase the competitiveness of ICT Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and Micro-firms. It offers an ICT sector soft skills framework and an innovative, engaging ICT soft skills curriculum with teaching and learning resources that are all freely available via a device-agnostic e-learning platform. The results of this project will have a significant impact on ICT sector SMEs and micro-firms by providing critical information to education, business, industry, and government sectors.

The *EU Skills Panorama* report suggests that the ICT industry is facing an increasing demand for highly skilled professionals, with a projected growth of 11% from 2018 to 2030. The report also states that technology and value chains will shift the balance from technical ICT skills to sector-specific knowledge and soft skills, such as management and planning.

The *Future of Jobs Report* by the World Economic Forum states that the 10 most-needed soft skills are: Complex problem solving, critical thinking, creativity, people management, coordinating with others, emotional intelligence, judgement and decision-making, service orientation, negotiation, and cognitive flexibility.

The SKILL project aims to increase the competitiveness of small and micro-sized ICT firms in Europe by developing soft skills and providing free, high quality open educational resources. The project is innovative in its approach to developing soft skills for the ICT sector, which is typically focused on hard skills, and in providing low-cost, gamified e-learning materials for skill transfer. It also brings together a diverse group of organizations with a shared interest in soft skills development for the future workforce across multiple sectors.

The SKILL project will focus on providing entrepreneurs, managers, and employees in the ICT industry with the soft skills required to effectively perform current and future job tasks using innovative pedagogies and online tools.

A needs analysis on soft skills

An in-depth study, of soft skills shortages in 4.0 ICT sector and of knowledge gaps in the target groups of actors in the ecosystem was achieved at the beginning of the project's implementation. Its results formulated the soft skills framework to guide the following steps of the project. Specifically, a report was developed to present



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418



existing best practices, national policies, validation system for soft skills and gaps between employees and/or young graduates.

More specifically, it provides a literature review regarding the definition of soft skills, the most necessary soft skills that employees and/or young graduates need to be equipped with, as well as the importance of the combination of hard skills and soft skills within the workplace. Additionally, the report delivers information on the national policies regarding soft skills and their validation on a national level. Furthermore, it shows the existing gaps on the transversal skills of graduates.

Also, the best practices and training programs provide information on soft skills on a national level. Specifically, they consider the existing best practices on soft skills including training programmes, educational tools, projects, educational platforms etc. the national policies on soft skills for ICT employees or young graduates, the certification of validation systems of soft skills in a national level and at the end the gaps between ICT employees or young graduates regarding their soft skills.

The main purpose of the research phase of the project was to identify perception, understanding and needs regarding soft skills of trainers, mentors, and leaders, employer, academic. The results of this research conduct facilitated in the development of a framework that guide the design and development of the soft skills curriculum.

Most of the participants in all 5 participating countries stated that the general skills that are most required in a professional domain are: interpersonal skills and social skills, adaptability, take initiatives, willingness to learn, communication and linguistic abilities, self-awareness, ability to be responsible, organizational skills.

Participants rated the skills that they consider important in a professional setting. Results showed that most of the participants considered fairly and very important all soft skills presented below:



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418

Curriculum Guide

The curriculum was devised based on preliminary research conducted among students, teachers, trainers, staff, managers and executives. Interviews were conducted based on real-life learning scenarios taking into account questions such as: What do students encounter? How do trainers/coaches view soft skills? What needs do students/employees have? What skills would they like to develop?

These scenarios were also presented to stakeholders to process their feedback in the creation of the course.

Based on those replies, different scenarios were drawn up to simulate and also test future activities within the work field or school environment. These learning scenarios are intended to master soft skills through various media, such as audio-visual means and gamification.

Course 1 - EU Soft Skills

The target audiences for SKILL are ICT personnel, managers and trainers who work within micro firms and require training to incorporate ICT skills in their work settings, and educators who will act as reference points within educational centres to spread the knowledge and methodology. These educators must be also trained via a train-the-trainers course that will help them contribute to building the capacity of ICT skills.

The virtual learning content can be reorganized to fit specific needs or organizations or repurposed for additional audiences.

The categorization of soft skills with their attributes has been done according to the prioritization that was derived from the needs analysis conducted, as well as the World Economic Forum (Final Report, 2020, p. 36) for the top ten skills of 2025.

The top skills rated for ICT micro companies include Communication and integrity, Problem-solving, Teamwork, Learning mind-set, Creativity, Leadership, Strategic thinking, Customer service, Innovation, and Risk management.



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418

Learning needs

Sources of information on learning needs	This information is based on a formal needs assessment that was conducted via interviews and focus groups.
Size of audience	The target audience is widespread, referring to a variety of stakeholders in the industry 4.0 ICT sector.
Connectivity and devices	The course is designed to be accessed by computer or mobile phone. Internet connection is available in learners' settings but it is recommended to also provide downloadable resources that can be accessed offline.
Language	The main language is English; however, most of the resources are available in Greek, Slovenian, Italian and Dutch.
Existing and pre-requisite knowledge	Although the SKILL course is user-friendly it would help users to understand the importance of soft skills in the ICT sector. This information can be provided by trainers or tutors who are administering the course.
Depth/type of learning required	According to the learning objectives of the course, learners will not only establish and deepen information about and definitions of soft skills, but they will also analyse and apply those skills in learning scenarios and simulations that can be then seamlessly transferred to real-life work situations.

Modality

This course will involve a combination of self-directed, self-paced bite-sized online modules offering micro-credentials which will cover the core concepts. Trainers can divide the course into weekly virtual workshops, through which learners will conduct problem-based learning tasks in small groups. At the end of each module participants will complete an individual assignment that will involve applying the skills learned in the course to their specific work and socio-cultural/national context.

Effect

Global competencies are multidimensional and require sustainable lifelong learning. As McKinsey reported in its 2012 "Education to Employment" survey, companies were having difficulty filling job vacancies even though 75 million youth were unemployed. According to 39 percent of companies surveyed, the main reason was "lack of skills." Today, although 70 percent of educational institutions believe students are prepared for work, only 42 percent of companies think so (Stanford, 2021). Thus, there is a need for learning solutions that involve viewing topics from various perspectives, revisiting ideas, and material to reinforce retrieval and apply knowledge in real



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418

cases with critical thinking. This results in adaptable and meaningful learning which can be equally useful in unpredictable contexts.

Duration

It is recommended that the learners complete 5 modules in approximately 15 hours, spread over a five-week period. The time frame can be adjusted to accommodate the trainers' and learners' needs.

Assessment:

- **Formative assessment:** There are instant quizzes that provide ongoing feedback to the learner about their progress. The results are not included in the “grade” of the course provided by the platform. Reflective assignments are also included.
- **Summative assessment:** There are assignments for each of the five modules, corresponding with the identified learning outcomes, that will define the final grade of the course. They assess the depth of learning through real-life scenarios and simulations. Reflection will assess higher order skills such as analysing, evaluating, or creating.



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418

Pedagogical strategies

- **Role playing and simulation-based learning:** an active experiential learning process by which the learner cultivates knowledge of real word processes through artificial representation.
- **Problem/ project-based learning:** a student-centred pedagogy in which students learn through the experience of problem solving.
- **Reflection learning:** reflective practice is 'learning through and from experience towards gaining new insights of self and practice' (Finlay, 2008) and follows a cycle of processes that needs to be repeated; reflection learning encourages learners to take responsibility for their learning and engage in the learning process.
- **Game-based learning:** training and educational tools for motivating and engaging learners, and reaching hard-to-reach learner groups; interesting narratives, interface responsiveness, dynamic feedback mechanisms, and maintaining the illusion of choice or control (“agency”) are some of the techniques used in gamified learning; the sense of achievement, the personalization of the context, the micro interactions with animated characters and the countdown that creates a sense of urgency, create a setting of real story and at the same time of adventure that helps the learner delve into the learning experience; the end-goal and the rewards such as badges contribute to the metacognitive awareness; quiz games, role-play games, strategy games, and word games can be used in this course.

Course outcomes

After the completion of this course, the learners will be able to:

1. identify the components and general applicability of soft skills.
2. determine the importance of soft skills in the workforce.
3. use soft skills to handle real-life scenarios at work.
4. apply their problem-solving skills in a creative manner.
5. enhance the ability of emotional intelligence in facing work situations.
6. improve their self-management and resiliency in managing conflicts.
7. familiarise with effective communication methods and strategies for the workplace.
8. apply good communication practices for building trust in groups.
9. demonstrate empathy in group collaboration.

Modules

1. Introduction to Soft Skills -

<https://rise.articulate.com/share/gDWy96ZMwpK5MhWkQfzcusYwufb9auq2>



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418

In this module, you will explore the notion of soft skills and align them with today's requirements of the workforce. You will consider the developments of the 4th Industrial Revolution and discuss the changes in hiring processes and performance assessment. You will also learn some strategies to explore your own strengths and understand the purpose of constant improvement of your soft skills. Lastly, you will explore some curricular approaches for soft skills training and get ready to delve into specific categories of soft skills in the subsequent modules.

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- List the main components of the notion of soft skills.
- Provide examples of the changes in the current employment landscape and what constitutes job quality.
- Reflect on the difficulties of recruiting specialists for various jobs.
- Create guidelines for soft skills training and assessment.
- Evaluate the importance of soft skills in real-world work settings.

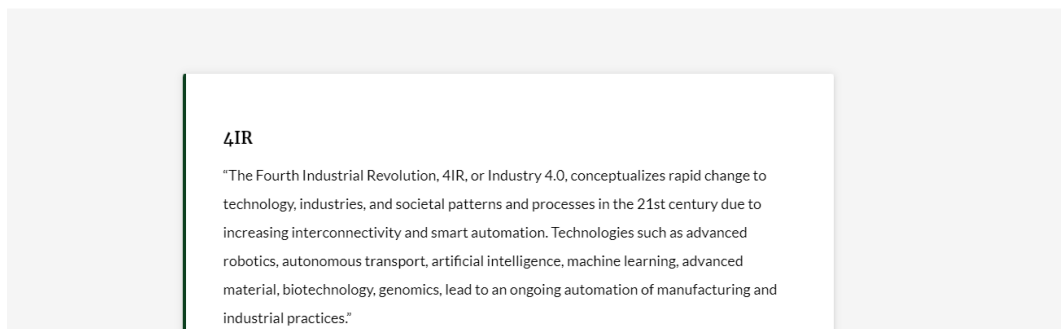
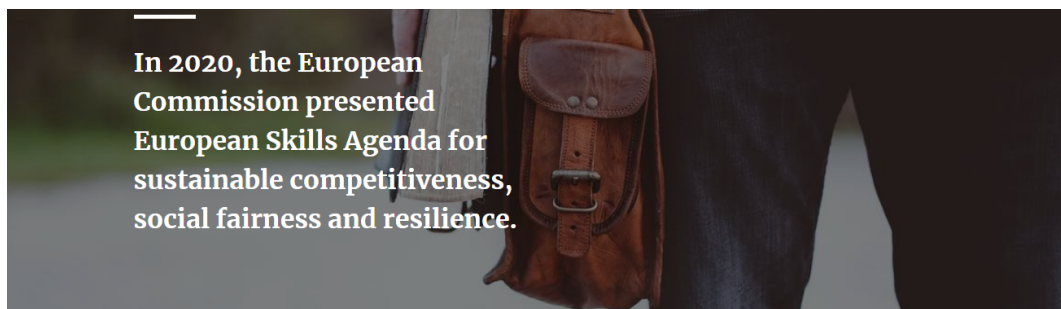
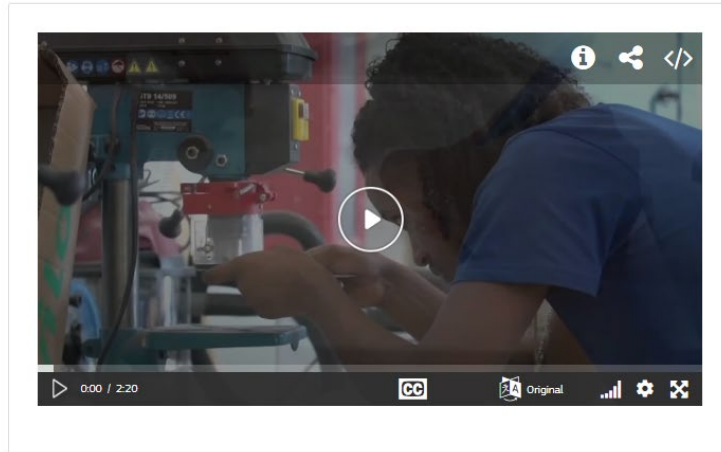


Figure 1 Snapshot of Module 1 - Introduction to Soft Skills



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418

Watch the following video to explore the recovery plan to support youth employment through vocational education and training on soft skills.



2. Problem-solving fundamentals -

https://rise.articulate.com/share/ZrIj7Dvg_YqAiKn42g1wcZo_BXI4Umlx

Have you ever known someone who seems to have an answer for any challenge? No matter what life throws their way, they take it in stride. While some people may just be talented in problem-solving, the truth is that anyone can develop strong problem-solving skills.

In this module, you'll start with a five-step problem-solving process anyone can use. Then, you'll learn some strategies and behaviours to make problem-solving easier. You will be provided with tips for rising above challenges and barriers that will inevitably come your way and learn how to apply them according to the nature of the problem. You will also get familiar with the notion of creative problem solving and practise its application in teamwork cases. Finally, you will explore elements of crisis management and learn when to seek help from the HR department.

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

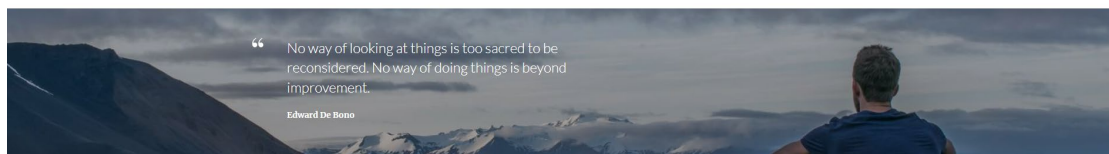
- Apply critical thinking skills to complex problems.
- Apply a model for solving problems and pose questions to further understanding of specific problems.
- Apply appropriate problem-solving and decision-making processes.
- Identify common obstacles to effective problem solving and decision making.
- Use analysis, synthesis, and positive inquiry to address organisational problems.
- Evaluate solutions and anticipate likely risks.
- Plan and create innovation to solve complex problems.
- Develop a plan for your own creativity development.



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418

Problem-solving is a strategic process. You identify an issue and then determine the best actions to solve it.

Although the problem-solving process can seem time-consuming, it will save you time in the long run. When you make informed decisions, you'll get better results.



“ No way of looking at things is too sacred to be reconsidered. No way of doing things is beyond improvement.
Edward De Bono

Figure 2 Snapshot of Module 2 - Problem-solving fundamentals

Which step should you take first to solve the problem described above?



Email Adam, copying your boss. Be sure to include a rundown of the tasks you've already completed. That way your boss will know you're not the one holding up the project.



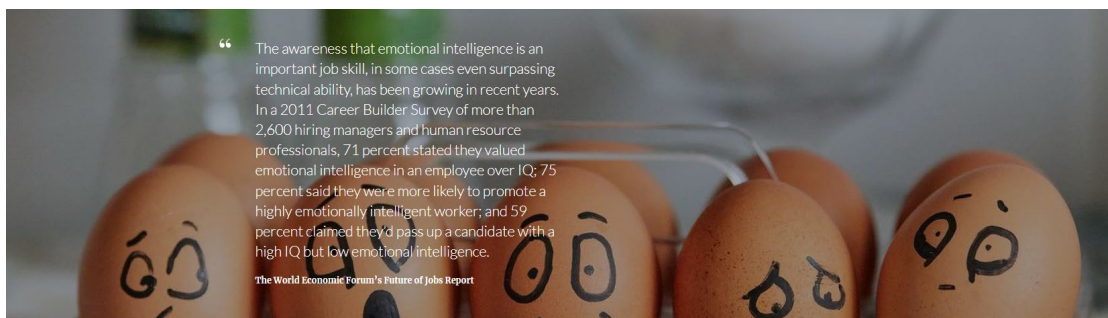
The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418

3. Emotional Intelligence - <https://rise.articulate.com/share/CS8l9ASc-GArsXuysciyAOjxlkB1g16>

In this module, you will learn about the notion of emotional intelligence and its effectiveness in the workplace. You will get familiarised with the four pillars of emotional intelligence, namely, self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. You will explore the five elements of self-regulation and practise your empathy skills. Finally, you will learn strategies to help you overcome barriers to healthy work relationships and delve into real-life scenarios to reflect on your own practices.

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Distinguish the notions of EQ, IQ, and personality.
- Explain the importance of emotional intelligence in the workplace;
- Recognize your own emotions and the consequences of your actions.
- Make good decisions based on being self-aware.
- Analyse the five characteristics of self-regulation.
- Identify the four elements of self-motivation.
- Distinguish the different types of empathy, benefits, and barriers.
- Classify flow states and their benefits.
- Explain social skills and their benefits for collaboration, teamwork, and trust.
- Create a plan to boost social skills.



What's Your Reaction?

When you're stressed, aggravated, or overwhelmed, how do you typically react?

- ☐ I panic. If my emotions are running high, I feel anxious and unnerved.
- ☐ I calm myself down. I take a deep breath and practice self-calming techniques.

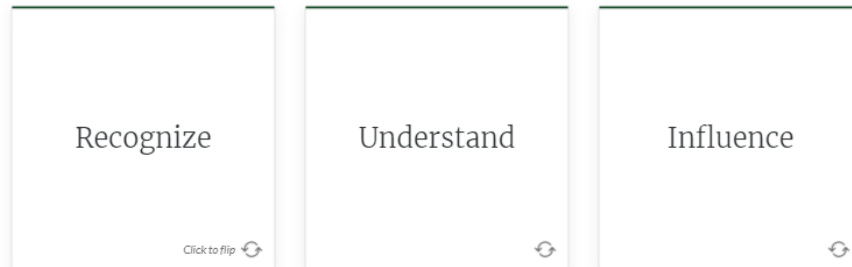
Figure 3 Snapshot of Module 3 - Emotional Intelligence



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418

What Is Self-Awareness?

As the cornerstone of emotional intelligence, self-awareness covers three components. Flip the cards below to learn more.



I UNDERSTAND

Self-awareness is understanding how the external world influences your internal reality. It revolves around recognizing your emotions and their effects.



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418

4. Working with people -

<https://rise.articulate.com/share/dmJloLHTfzDOK6rYHrpQ13c2VugHjnHZ>

By the end of this module you will be able to:

- Describe different types of communication and how they are used in the workplace.
- Recognise the skills required for effective communication.
- Understand the impact that communication can have on how people are perceived by others.
- Identify how effective communication can overcome challenges in the workplace.
- Reflect on current personal communication skills and how these can be developed and used more successfully.

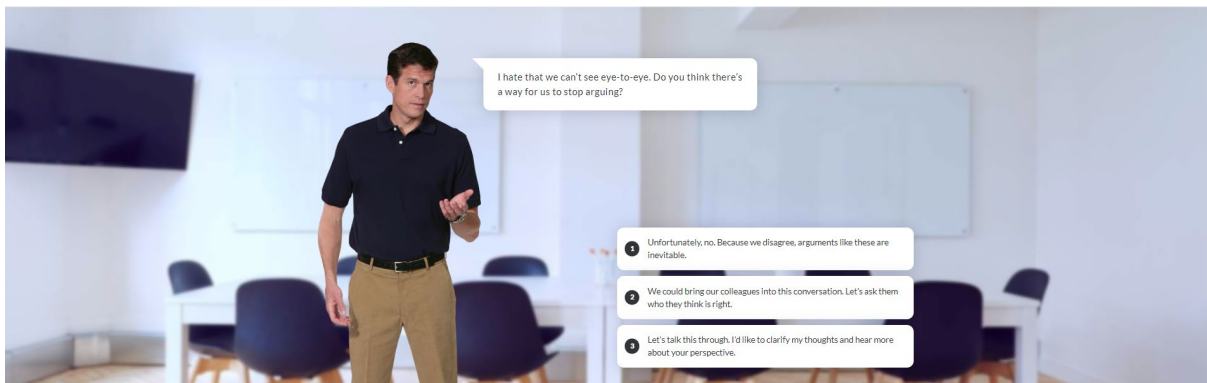


Figure 4 Snapshot of Module 4 - Working with people



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418

Stephen Robbins has given "conflict" the following definition: "A process that begins when one party perceives that another party has negatively affected or is about to negatively affect something the first party cares about."



5. Soft Skills for Technology Use -

<https://rise.articulate.com/share/1ibsqx6FOZ9bUvGRLD1jH1PkcRDkB1zr>

In the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) the use of soft skills in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) by workers will be increasing. As a result, ICT workers must be trained on using soft skills since they interact with other individuals to complete projects and to provide service. The individuals the ICT worker interacts with could be from different sectors, with different technology expertise levels, and different age groups. Hence, the ICT worker must have appropriate soft skills to relate to these sectors to be successful on the job. The ICT worker must apply good digital citizenship and online netiquette, follow good well-being and mental health strategies, use digital dexterity to be successful on the job, and use appropriate communication skills when working in teams or one-to-one basis.

In this module, you will be introduced to the notion of digital dexterity and digital citizenship through specific examples and tools. You will learn which factors influence your wellbeing at the workplace and how you can maintain your digital wellbeing throughout hectic periods. Finally, you will set some guidelines for digital behaviours and online netiquette, as well as for communication under the circumstances of remote working.

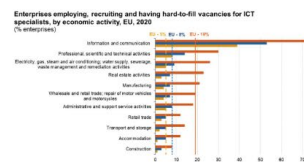
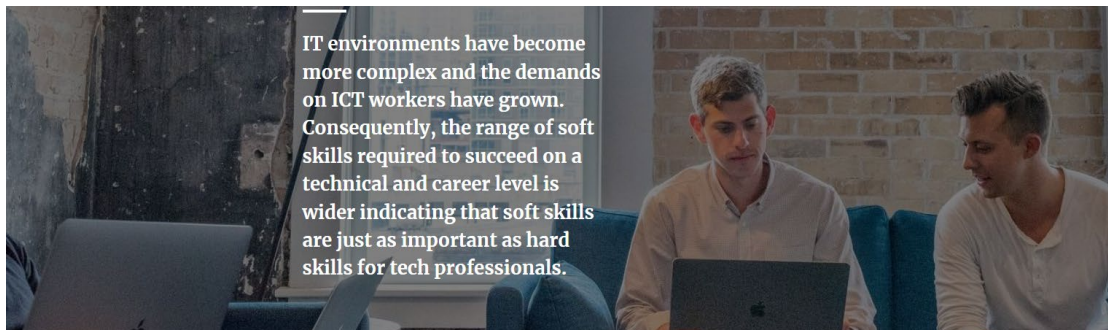
By the end of this module, you will be able to use soft skills appropriately when using technology. Specifically, you will be able to:

- Define digital citizenship and list the 9 Key Ps of digital citizenship.



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418

- Describe “digital dexterity” and its impact on business success as a factor of increasing ROI.
- Explain the importance of technology in work settings.
- Maintain strong relationships in a digital setting.
- Work safely, responsibly, and ethically maintaining good digital citizenship.
- Follow guidelines for digital behaviours to maintain personal health, safety, work-life balance, and digital wellbeing of employees.
- Describe how to check online netiquette and reputation on the internet and protect it.
- Use technology appropriately to prevent stress and maintain good mental health and well-being.



Employment and recruitment of ICT specialists

"In 2020, 19 % of EU enterprises employed ICT specialists. Among the EU Member States, Ireland and Belgium presented the highest proportion of enterprises employing ICT specialists, with 30 % each. Italy, with 13 %, presented the lowest ratio of enterprises employing ICT specialists in 2020.

The information and communication sector had the highest proportion, with 72 % of enterprises employing ICT specialists in 2020. Apart from the enterprises in information and communication activities, the highest percentages of enterprises employing ICT specialists were observed in

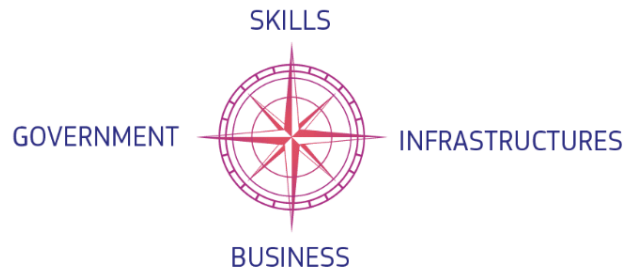
Figure 5 Snapshot of Module 5 - Soft Skills for Technology Use



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418



"One of the consequences of the skills gap and the difficulty to hire qualified ICT professionals is the very high percentage of outsourcing of ICT services, especially in some EU countries, such as Cyprus and Latvia, where ICT outsourcing is as high as 84%. The share of enterprises outsourcing their ICT function reached 81% among large enterprises, compared with 69% for small enterprises in 2019".



Source: ec.europa.eu

The Digital Compass for the EU's digital decade evolves around the above cardinal points and presents a vision and routes for Europe's digital transformation by 2030. To pursue these digital ambitions, the Commission will adopt concrete terms, such as targets and projected trajectories, robust joint governance framework, multi-country projects combining

Following the successful completion of each module, users will have a sound understanding of soft skills and will be in a better position to use them and to complete the rest of the course content.



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418

Adult Learners and Motivational Strategies

Adult learners are a special target group because throughout the learning process they need to know that training satisfies a set of criteria:

- Relevance to their jobs or life.
- Higher sense of self-direction and motivation.
- Real-life experiences.
- Applicability to solve problems.

The course uses the concept of andragogical teaching - providing the learner with the opportunity to have an active role in the teaching process. According to Knowles (1992), students who participate in a course through an andragogical lens, become more self-directed and, consequently, more motivated to learn. By attaining the skill of self-direction, students have the competencies of applying new knowledge to real-life problems.

Through the course, this is implemented by assignments which bring them face-to-face with case studies and problem-solving activities with the trainer taking on the role of facilitator.

The SKILL Project is based on the theories of motivation that support the instructional design throughout the combination of elements in a special and unique way for each case. The ARCS model of instruction consists of four categories - attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction.

- **Attention:** Attention can be captured early in the learning event, but it is quite difficult to be maintained throughout the training. A variety of instructional methods such as tasks, role-playing, real-life situations and a variety of instructional mediums such as videos, audio, text, animation can retain learners' attention.
- **Relevance:** Building relevance through goal orientation means answering the questions: Why do I learn this? How does it help me? We answer these questions by creating connections between activities, learning objectives, job competencies, organisational goals and individual goals. With this in mind, the introduction module in the "EU Soft Skills" course will present the usefulness of soft skills in ICT work settings as well as the worthiness for the future. These two strategies retain relevance and help learners understand the importance of participating in training.
- **Confidence:** When people are confident, they mobilise resources and overcome setbacks. Although enjoyment in learning is important, learning is not always easy. Maintaining a consistent schedule is important, especially in self-paced learning. When difficulties arise, learners are more resilient and look for solutions if they believe themselves to be capable of solving the problem. Confident students are better able to perform under pressure, to respond to setbacks, take risks and step out of their comfort zone. To achieve confidence, the "EU Soft skills" course clearly states the learning objectives and outcomes and provides a flexible curriculum through scenarios that will help the learners not only measure their progress but also have supplemental instructions through the activities.



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418

- **Satisfaction:** This is a positive emotion that derives from the accomplishment of the learning goals. Reflective practices in problem-based learning as well as the badges acquired from games will provide learners with challenges that will make them leave their comfort zone but only up to a point that this is not far from the level of their potential.



Digital Learning Resources Guide

The audio-visual material in SKILL provides learners with additional resources that will allow them to further develop and explore the world of soft skills.

Course 2 - Digital Learning Resources for VET trainers

The videos are divided into the following modules that complement each other and the rest of the resources available on the e-learning platform.

Users are encouraged to watch the videos and take notes of the pertinent points mentioned that will help them with their soft skills. The transcripts of each video are provided within this section of the handbook.

Module 1

1. What are soft skills?
2. Hard skills vs. Soft skills
3. Impact of soft skills on students/education
4. Possible soft skill approaches in schools

Module 2

1. Leadership
2. How to improve critical thinking skills
3. Types of Leadership in School

Module 3

1. Communication in the classroom
2. Ways to improve your communication to better support students
3. Body language

Module 4

1. What is Teamwork?
2. How to be a good team player
3. Examples of teamwork skills

Module 5

1. What are problem-solving skills?
2. 5 Steps to better problem solving
3. How to present problem-solving skills

Module 6

1. What is critical thinking?
2. How to improve your critical thinking skills
3. Extended critical thinking skills

Transcripts of videos

Below are the transcripts of the videos that can be used by trainers to help explain the videos to users.



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418



Module 1: video 1

What are soft skills?

Also known as common or core skills, they are applicable talents that can relate to how you work. Critical thinking, problem solving, public speaking, professional writing, teamwork, digital literacy, leadership, professional attitude, work ethic, career management are all examples of these skills. The term "skill" emphasises the practical aspect. The word itself has a broad definition, describing a certain aptitude to execute activities ranging from easy to difficult. In this context, a skill must be taken as the ability to master actions that are difficult to control. Soft skills are vital for almost every career, thus they are among the top qualities companies look for in candidates. Someone can have strong technical, job-specific abilities, but they may struggle in the workplace if they can't manage their time or function in a team. Therefore, candidates with soft skills can be more successful in the workplace. Soft skills are very crucial in careers where you work with other people, like teaching, because they are the characteristics of a person's interactions with others. In addition to their classroom instructional skills, the act of listening to a student and providing helpful and courteous service necessitates a number of soft skills. At school, the theme is no longer just focused on the development of students and gains a space in the routine of educators who seek to understand how their behavioural skills can lead to a more ethical and humane education for their students. We know that the role of the educator goes far beyond simply teaching theoretical/practical content.

Module 1: video 2

Hard skills vs. Soft skills

Hard skills are abilities that can be learned and improved with practice, repetition, and destruction. They are job-specific technical talents that can lead to productivity and efficiency of the employee. Talents are frequently sought by employers and Recruiters in professional resumes. Any hard talent that a person claims should be accompanied by a certificate, degree, or other certification that demonstrates proficiency. Nowadays, employers are looking for abilities that go beyond academics, sometimes known as soft skills. These abilities have been gaining traction and relevance as a result of claims that they are in short supply in today's workforce.

Hard skills are concerned with actual talents and skills, whereas soft skills, such as social and communication skills, are concerned with behaviours and personalities. Soft talents are more difficult to teach since they are less quantifiable, they are linked to a person's personality and more difficult to assess immediately. Given a certain



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418



ability and desire, hard skills are simpler to teach. In general, they follow the same set of standards regardless of the business, sector, or even society in which they are performed. The norms of soft skills might shift based on the culture of the workplace and the expectations of co-workers. The main difference between them is that soft skills are experience based, something more behavioural, non-technical and people related, on the other hand, hard skills are rule based, predictable related to tools and techniques. Hard skills are taught in schools, through literature, or through learning. Competency levels may be specified, and there is a clear path to reach them. Soft skills are not often found in the curriculum of a school or college. However, they are taught in programs that help people develop communication skills.

[Module 1: video 3](#)

Impact of soft skills on students/education

Soft skills have a significant influence on the workforce since they boost productivity, increase the efficiency of complex tasks, and improve employee attendance. Stanford Research Institute International determined that 75% of the long-term success in a given job role is based on a mastery of soft skills, and only 25% of that job success comes from technical skills. Individuals' personalities, traits, qualities, and personal behaviour are all examples of soft skills. The development of abilities has an influence not only on the small group of instructors, but also on his surroundings, his co-workers, the school board, and most importantly, the students.

A well-trained teacher will be able to comprehend their needs and also serve as an example and a key player in the development of student values, technical and soft skills. To put it another way, participating in daily activities with the teacher provides a chance to learn how to use these abilities in a specific setting. They can also increase their abilities by doing self-directed reading and participating in appropriate skill development programs and activities with teachers. It is also critical for them to be exposed to specialized training courses to assist them develop their soft skills.

Young individuals who effectively move from high school to college demonstrate needs for time management, meeting deadlines, getting along with classmates and roommates, and dealing with setbacks. They gain these soft skills through socialising, where they pick up on beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours from others. Middle school is an ideal area to include soft skill development into the school day since socialising and relationship-building are such important aspects of young teenagers' lives. Educators may help students succeed after graduation by including this key component in educational planning and classroom expectations. In a teacher's



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418



training curriculum, the target pillars must be very specific as well as the training objectives to achieve quality. This is what will make the professional able to understand students' needs and gaps.

Module 1: video 4

Possible soft skill approaches in schools

Many free soft skills training packages provide high-interest, tasks that allow students to reflect on and consider their own soft skill development. However, incorporating development into many elements of the curriculum is the most effective strategy to enhance students' soft skills. Integrity, communication, respect, responsibility, professionalism, adaptability, and teamwork are just a few of the soft skills that may readily be learned in class.

A good way to promote integrity in the classroom is by introducing group work, for example. Each group member should be in charge of a certain task or outcome. With this, students will be able to reflect on how they contributed to the work and why they deserve a part of the final grade at the end of the group work assignment.

On the other hand, to develop students' communication abilities can be done by having them write for real audiences, participate in group debates, and give a presentation to the class. As students progress through a class discussion, they should be able to display academically effective communication. When it comes to responsibility, communication is also one of the main factors to improve it. Students who fail to turn in work should be expected to explain why and what they plan to do in the future to rectify the problem. This also reflects on the professionalism of the student. Being on time and prepared, being polite to others, finishing assignments and customizing writing to the needs of others, these all help to promote professionalism.

Meanwhile, long-term, problem-solving projects to finish, boundaries and deadlines are good to improve the flexibility of the learners. These exercises will help children become more organized and focused, as well as problem-solving and self-monitoring skills.

Module 2: video 1

Leadership

Different to what many people think, titles and personal characteristics have little to do with leadership. Most people associate the word "leader" with a dominant, charismatic figure, yet leadership isn't an adjective.

Managers and leaders are two titles that are always confused. As a manager you must plan, measure, monitor, coordinate, solve, and do a variety of other tasks. On the other hand, a leader stems from social influence, from



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418



the act of leading. They also employ management abilities to ensure that their people arrive at their objective, but a good leadership comes in a diversity of methods and paths.

Leaders assist themselves and others in making the best decisions. They establish the tone, develop a compelling vision, and create something unique. It is dynamic, interesting, and encouraging to map out where you need to go to "win" as a team or an organization. A successful leader, according to the concept of transformational leadership, is someone who creates an inspiring future picture; Motivates others to participate in the idea; Manages the vision's execution; Coaches and develops a team so that it can achieve the vision more effectively. When it comes to teachers, leadership is a collection of duties, attitudes, knowledge, and abilities combined with the desire to inspire educational reform and collaborate to move beyond the status quo. Teacher leaders should not lead from the front, but rather from the side. Their focus is on the classroom and the gaze is fixed on what is achievable for everyone. A board of teacher leaders is required in every school, they are crucial in developing school cultures that guarantee meaningful and relevant changes at all times. Therefore, a teacher needs to be eager to take on the role of a leader and actively seek opportunities to make a difference.

Module 2: video 2

How to improve critical thinking skills

Critical thinking is a crucial skill in the workplace and in life as it helps people solve problems and build strategies that make them better at their jobs and make better decisions in life. Critical thinking can be exercised by using rationality to determine what to do or believe in a specific situation. People who are engaged in critical thinking are often reflective, independent, and competent, hence, it explains why this skill is one of the most important skills that employers look for. If you practise critical thinking, you will have the ability to connect ideas logically, scrutinise and evaluate arguments, find inconsistencies and errors in your work, solve complex problems and engage in constant reflection. With these abilities, critical thinkers are eventually better problem-solvers as they conceptualise outcomes.

Critical thinking is especially important in the workplace as some professions require it. For example professions in law education, research, medical, finance and more career fields. This skill is an essential facet for these industries in which their career objectives are to deduce information objectively without bias, analyse contexts, solve complex problems and come up with realistic solutions. Besides, critical thinking can help people make decisions that require a long thought process. It encourages one to conduct research, and implies objective and



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418

logical thinking throughout the decision-making process instead of using their emotional response. Also, having a long talk process can help people better understand themselves, their motivations and their goals.

Module 2: video 3

Types of Leadership in School

Several factors influence the way a teacher will lead students and present herself in front of the class. Because of this, it's possible to find different types of leadership in daily school life. One thing it's true, Teacher leadership is no longer optional, it's part of the job. Inside the school, there's no shortage of teacher leadership roles for educators. Many school administrators and non-profit organisation leaders are former teachers or were previously involved in education, therefore teacher leadership positions extend beyond the classroom. Some types of leadership are the most common seen inside schools, and all of them bring positive results in a teacher's professional performance, in the education of students. One example is the authoritative leader. It is someone who pushes their team to achieve goals while maintaining a high bar and encouraging them to succeed. They rely significantly on strategy, setting high expectations and taking calculated risks based on facts. In education, this indicates that authoritative leaders might be long-serving instructors or those with advanced degrees. Secondly, the affiliative leader is someone that their teams can rely on and feel comfortable approaching. They recognize their co-workers' efforts, foster teamwork, and encourage diversity, equity, and culturally sensitive practices. This type of leadership pushes both staff and students in the same direction of culture and principles. Another type is the democratic leader. A democratic leader always asks the team members for feedback and delegates decision-making authority accordingly. In education, this frequently involves seeking feedback from students, teachers, administrators, and families to enforce school-wide changes and regulations. Inside or outside the school, teacher leadership is an important part of shaping the education system and the future of students.

Module 3: video 1

Communication in the classroom

Communication in the classroom is divided into productive skills like speaking, and writing and receptive skills, like listening and reading. Therefore, communication can come from just one person such as in a lecture, interpersonal, and in a conversation. Inside the classroom, clear communication is one of the most important factors for a good learning environment.



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418

There are several skills that may contribute to effective communication. First, you have to understand the context and purpose of a communication; Second, formulate a clear and cohesive message. And third, pay attention to body language, and use active listening. In the educational field, the interaction between teachers and students is essential for success in the learning process. Communication is a two-way road, it is a condition of the learning process, and needs to be effective so that the exchange of knowledge can happen.

Elements of good practice for communication in the classroom include being a good role model for clear and consistent communication; always opting for face-to-face communication; and communicating with empathy and matching your words with your actions. When you begin to understand that communication is an essential leadership skill and not a set of techniques, you are developing integrity as a leader. Affectivity is an essential element for good communication, since the communication takes place in an interactional environment. Therefore, for this relationship to be efficient, in the context of teaching and learning, it is worth emphasising the importance of empathy. Don't just focus on broadcasting the content, but also commit to integrity when communicating.

Module 3: video 2

Ways to improve your communication to better support students

We need to use communication in so many contexts in our life, that we can wrongly think that we don't need to practise and develop it. A clear and effective communication needs to be developed day by day, to achieve its best form. For this, there are some attitudes that can be taken to help the process, such as having a mentor or principal's evaluator to conduct a fact-finding review. Ask for honest and constructive feedback on some specific aspects, such as clarity of your message, quality of your message, audience response, and presentation style. Use this feedback strategy and remember that this evidence of professional growth and reflection can also fuel your assessment. Once you've taken this snapshot of your communication, use it to help shape new communications. Include this review and your thoughts as part of your assessment. In any good communication, it's important to establish trust and security, without it your message can be lost, misinterpreted, or in worse case, ignored. Students who speak in a space with these characteristics will be able to express their views more clearly in context and will be more likely to tell the reality of what is happening more quickly.

Effective communication is a two-way process. Keep in mind that you will learn more when you are listening than when you are speaking, and that people will not open up to those they consider poor listeners. So, adopting a listening attitude focusing on what you can learn rather than what you want to teach or instruct is essential. Seek clarification and explanation, especially when the speaker's tone is somewhat critical. Adopt an analytical ear for sounds. Add all these skills to your school knowledge bank and use them at appropriate times



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418

to progress developmentally. Motivation is also one of the key elements of effective communication, and it is essential to maintain it to achieve your goals.

Module 3: video 3

Body language

Words are powerful but it can be stronger in an argument if body language is utilised. The integration between our words and body language can enhance our message when communicating with the audience. Whether you are aware or not, when you are interacting with others, you are also continuously giving and receiving wordless signals. All the non-verbal signals can include your gesture, your posture, your tone and how much eye contact you make.

According to experts, it was suggested that two thirds of our communication is nonverbal. And these non-verbal signals won't stop when you stop speaking either as you are even communicating nonverbally when you are silent. In teaching, nonverbal cues need to communicate a different type of leader. It can convey warmth and empathy, which may remind the students that you are approachable and is always there to help them grow. Also, teachers can use the communicative power of the body in favour of their pedagogical practices. This can make a difference in catching students' attention, as well as increasing concentration and level of all content. Having a positive body language in a classroom setting can motivate, inspire, and engage the audience, which in this case, are the students. It does not only give you the confidence to teach in front of the class, but also reassures your students that you actually know what you are talking about. It can even make your students feel safe and confident to participate in class more actively. While on the other hand, the less confident a person seems in his or her message, the more objections they're likely to encounter. It is worth mentioning that the most expressive teachers usually stand out and obtain better results. Precisely because of this, it's important to learn to move around in class, keep an open posture, establish eye contact with students and to use gestures in a natural way.

Module 4: video 1

What is Teamwork?

There once was a saying, "Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is a success." This is only possible when people with diverse perspectives get together to achieve a common goal. Individuals who work alone may only be competent at coming up with different alternatives, but practical



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418



solutions only emerge through creative brainstorming. Hence, collaborative efforts generate more outstanding performance than the efforts of individual members. In general, teamwork is when a group of people with complementary skills collaborate to accomplish a shared vision. It is often associated with the workplace, school environments, and family dynamics, where people can depend on one another's strengths to produce a favourable result. It is essential to possess good teamwork skills. Having a high level of professionalism and a positive impact on the organisation is vital in today's corporate environment.

Teamwork among the principal, teachers, and staff in school organisations is fundamental in achieving quality improvement. Not only is the skill needed in any organisation, but it is also helpful as a life skill. There are many advantages when it comes to individuals working in a team. First, problems can be resolved quickly and efficiently with collaboration with other team members. Second, gain more shared knowledge from people who strive in different fields. Third, improved job satisfaction and morale as teamwork allow individuals to have shared responsibilities and mutual recognition when a project is completed with other team members. Last but not least, recommendations made via teamwork can be implemented more efficiently.

By fostering effective teamwork, tasks can be easily achievable, and projects can be less stressful and more rewarding. However, cooperation is required in teamwork because it is imperative in any organisation, including schools. To create quality workers and high achievers, the spirit of teamwork and collaboration in the workplace was to be nurtured and developed.

Module 4: video 2

How to be a good team player

Education is constantly changing, from student demographics to teaching techniques. Whether you just entered the field or are an experienced educator, it's important to always stay on top of the trends and learn where your field is headed. Changes in the education landscape have impacted the roles of personnel who serve in schools. The factors that motivate the changes can be the number of students enrolled, teacher shortages, and more, contributing to the need for a dynamic school management system more necessary than ever.

To be successful, teachers should view themselves as part of a team in the educational process. As discussed previously, teamwork enables people to collaborate and grow professionally. For teamwork to be effective, all team members should have a clear understanding of the ultimate goal. This can be achieved through weekly meetings where everyone will discuss how each educator in the team can contribute to the planning, implementation, and reflection process. Since effective communication is important to collaborative teaching approaches, another strategy would be to set aside 15 minutes a week for a stand-up meeting where colleagues



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418



share their ideas, concerns, and questions throughout the week. The objective of doing so is to encourage educators to spend time together, get to know each other's strengths and weaknesses, and explore new ideas that can be implemented inside or outside the classroom.

Educators' skills can also be transferable and applicable when conducting classroom activities with students. It is important to have trust between team members to build a productive working environment. Trust can promote open communication, provide fair leadership, and supervise with sensitivity. All team members need to practise open and honest communication to increase awareness and build cooperation. Effective communication expresses the team members' ideas, information, and instructions that contribute to a common understanding.

Module 4: video 3

Examples of teamwork skills

Teamwork can lead to success at work; it does not matter what industry you work for or your job title. Working well with your colleagues, clients, managers, and other personnel in your workplace can help improve productivity and increase efficiency. A healthy and high-functioning workplace is often a result of having good teamwork skills. A work environment that promotes effective teamwork facilitates social relationships, and knowledge exchange can provide a mechanism to create norms of cooperation that would benefit school effectiveness. Truthfully, some jobs depend less on teamwork than others. However, teamwork or collaborative skills in a career are still applicable.

While we are working alongside others in any industry at any professional level, collaborating in an empathetic, efficient, and responsible manner may help us accomplish our career goals, build our resumes, and contribute to the organisation. Besides, it can help build rapport with others, resulting in stronger working relationships, new connections, and broader opportunities. The working world is all about personal character and professional development. It is where people will practise skills like collaboration, awareness, decision-making, communication, and responsibility. Collaboration between employees can only be nurtured if they have a high sense of togetherness. Togetherness exists when a group of individuals with diverse skills work together and help one another. With cooperation in the workplace, there is no doubt that the work performance and productivity level will increase, leading to more possibilities for more significant achievements and a better quality of school organisation. In teamwork, it is crucial to be sensitive to the team dynamic. Balance must be achieved within the group.



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418

Module 5: video 1

What are problem-solving skills?

Problem-solving skills are defined as the ability to solve problems in an effective and timely manner without any impediments. It can be considered one of the key skills that employers highly value and look for in a job applicant. It is an essential skill in the workplace and valuable for other aspects of life, such as relationship building and daily decision making. Effective problem-solving in the workplace often requires following a step-by-step approach according to a designated problem-solving framework. It requires one to quickly but calmly identify the underlying issue and implement a solution after properly assessing it. One way to improve this skill is to familiarise yourself with your industry and learn from more experienced colleagues. An individual who possesses the problem-solving skills is usually cognitively equipped to handle anything their jobs throw at them. They have the ability to observe, judge, think outside the box and act quickly when difficulties arise. Besides, problem-solving abilities also possess time-management skills. The ability to manage time wisely and focus on what's important will lead to better decision-making and business impact.

There are five main skills that play an essential role in the process of problem-solving: First, research skills help identify the cause of the issue and allow one to understand it fully. This skill involves collaborating with other team members to gather more information about the problem from online resources or consulting with more experienced colleagues. Second, analytical thinking skills are required during the research process to help distinguish between effective and ineffective solutions. It helps to understand the problems by analysing the situation and provides guidance to develop solutions effectively. Employees with this skill are capable of identifying the logical reasons behind the problem, and then generate solutions that address the problem. Third, creativity skills help to think outside the box, and generate new and different solutions. Fourth, communication skills are vital to effectively convey the problem and solutions to others. Finally, teamwork skills are essential for effective problem-solving, as it allows for the sharing of ideas and resources among team members.

Module 5: video 2

5 Steps to better problem solving

It doesn't matter what industry we are working in or what work we have; problems arising are inevitable. If the issues are not addressed quickly and effectively, they have the potential to worsen. No one likes to work in a hostile environment, so knowing how to resolve a problem appropriately is critical. Here are five steps that will make your problem-solving process go more smoothly.



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418



The first step in the problem-solving process is to analyse the contributing factors. To solve a problem, we need to identify the issue's root. However, problems aren't always easily identifiable and might require extra analysis to determine their source. Therefore, skills like data gathering, data analysis, fact-finding, and historical analysis can come in handy. These skills help gather and evaluate data, isolate contributing circumstances, and pinpoint what needs to be addressed.

Once the cause is determined, the next step is to generate interventions. We need to brainstorm and create a list of possible solutions to the problem. This can be done individually, but a group setting is advised as the more input, the better because different perspectives can lead to other solutions. Besides, devising a set of alternatives will help cover our bases and reduce exposure risk should the first strategy implemented fail. The skills involved include creative thinking, prediction, forecasting, project design and project planning.

After coming up with a list of possible solutions, it's time to put the decision-making skills to the test. Depending on the nature of the problem and chain of command, solutions are often implemented by assigned teams, who evaluate the problem and make decisions. The team members then implement the chosen solution and monitor its progress. This step is critical to ensure that the problem is solved in the most efficient and effective way possible. The skills involved include decision-making, critical thinking, and problem-solving.

The fourth step is to evaluate the results of the solution. This step helps to determine whether the problem has been solved, and if not, what needs to be done next. If the solution was successful, then the problem is considered to be solved, and the team can move on to other issues. If the solution was not successful, then the team will need to revisit the problem and either implement a different solution or revise the existing one. The skills involved include evaluation, monitoring, and feedback.

The final step is to document and communicate the problem-solving process and the outcome. This step is critical to ensure that the problem is solved in the most efficient and effective way possible. The skills involved include documentation, communication, and reporting.

In conclusion, problem-solving is an essential skill that everyone should have. It is a process that involves several steps, including analysing the contributing factors, generating interventions, making decisions, evaluating results, and documenting and communicating the problem-solving process and outcome. The key to effective problem-solving is to use the right skills at the right time to ensure that the problem is solved in the most efficient and effective way possible.

[Module 5: video 3](#)

How to present problem-solving skills



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418

Problem-solving skills are relatively important in the workplace, and they are also one of the most valuable skills that employers look for in candidates. Every business and job role has its problems. It doesn't matter which job level you are in, whether you are just entry-level hires or senior managers, every one of us will face challenges during work and in life that a quick Google search can't answer. Hence, employers prefer candidates with problem-solving skills, especially for roles requiring them to deal with complex business challenges, tight deadlines, and changing variables. As discussed previously, problem-solving refers to a person's ability to manage and find solutions to complex and unexpected situations. Individuals with great problem-solving skills have a combination of both analytical and creative thinking. They are capable of making decisions and confident enough to rise to challenges in the workplace. Since this is a skill that most companies value, put it at the beginning of your resume and cover letter, and discuss it during interviews. Consider the obstacles you have faced and problems you have solved in life, whether in academic, work or volunteering settings. Explain how you handled the problem using bullet points in your resume and highlight relevant examples in your cover letter. During interviews, be prepared to describe scenarios that you've faced in previous employment as well as how you solved them. Include the skills you applied and the results of your actions. Depending on your industry, some potential employers may ask hypothetical scenario questions during the interview and expect you to apply problem-solving skills in your answers. The purpose of this is to test your ability to think critically and come up with solutions.

Module 6: video 1

What is critical thinking?

The concept of critical thinking is gaining importance in today's society. It allows people to understand different perspectives more precisely. It is the art of objectively analysing and evaluating thinking to improve it or make a reasoned judgement. Measured steps can be taken when considering any important issue. In our daily lives, we are expected to make independent judgements, and these judgements are all based on experience and knowledge. Without the ability to think critically, every situation we encounter would have to be considered in isolation from all other cases. When new problems arise, critical thinking skills can be used to solve those problems. In some ways, it promotes self-disciplined, self-monitored, and self-corrective skills. Critical thinking skills involve asking questions, gathering and evaluating sources, and then formulating and testing conclusions. Good critical thinkers can conclude a set of information and distinguish between useful and less useful details to



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418



solve problems or make decisions. It is an essential skill that can lead to college and workforce success. It is also one of the essential soft skills employers look for in job candidates. They look for someone who can evaluate situations using logical thinking while also offering the best solution. Besides, someone with this skill can be trusted to make decisions independently and will not need constant supervision. Strong critical thinkers in education practice analysing and evaluating as they consider both short-term and long-term teaching and learning goals. To be both an efficient teacher and a strong critical thinker, you should evaluate what you have, determine what you need, and decide how and when to assess your students' progress. For instance, conducting an in-depth review and comparing the contents and resources with learning standards and objectives is vital when presented with new teaching materials.

[Module 6: video 2](#)

How to improve your critical thinking skills

Critical thinking is a crucial skill in the workplace and in life as it helps people solve problems and build strategies that make them better at their jobs and make better decisions in life. Critical thinking can be exercised by using rationality to determine what to do or believe in a specific situation. People who are engaged in critical thinking are often reflective, independent, and competent. Hence, it explains why this skill is one of the most important skills that employers look for. If you practise critical thinking, you will have the ability to connect ideas logically, scrutinise and evaluate arguments, find inconsistencies and errors in your work, solve complex problems and engage in constant reflection. With these abilities, critical thinkers are eventually better at problem-solving as they conceptualise outcomes. Critical thinking is especially important in the workplace as some professions require it. For example, professions in law, education, research, medical, finance and more career fields. This skill is an essential facet for these industries in which their career objectives are to deduce information objectively without bias, analyse contexts, solve complex problems and come up with realistic Solutions. Besides, critical thinking can help people make decisions that require a long thought process. It encourages one to conduct research and implies objective and logical thinking throughout the decision-making process instead of using their emotional response. Also, having a long thought process can help people better understand themselves, their motivations, and their goals. When you begin to deduce information to critically analyse the problem, you can begin to understand the problem and come up with a suitable solution. Critical thinking is a skill that can be learned and developed over time through practice and experience.

[Module 6: video 3](#)

Extended critical thinking skills



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418



A strong and impactful critical thinking skill often comprises several other skills like observation, analysis, inference, communication, and problem-solving. Although these five skills are essential to successful critical thinking, more soft skills can be related to thoughtful analysis, such as metacognitive, inductive reasoning, creativity, decision-making, and conceptual thinking skills.

Metacognitive skills encompass various traits that allow individuals to learn, identify tasks, address challenges, and evaluate their success. Generally, people with metacognitive skills understand the methods required to educate themselves and overcome potential learning obstacles. Therefore, they can organise and evaluate thought processes related to learning and problem-solving. Making it an important skill that helps individuals understand their learning processes and retain knowledge regarding a particular subject more effectively.

Following on, when making decisions, we always go through a subconscious process of filtering observations through past experience. This process is known as inductive reasoning. It is a logical thinking process that combines specific experiences, observations, or facts to reach a conclusion. It can even support us in identifying patterns and making better decisions in the workplace or life. Although it presents us with a starting point so that we can narrow down the assumptions and eventually reach informed conclusions, it is unfortunate that we are only able to establish these conclusions based on limited evidence and knowledge. Therefore, when using inductive reasoning, it is essential to remember that.

Trainers can use the transcripts of the videos throughout sessions for users to take notes, and to use as study materials for further assessments.



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418

Learning Scenarios Guide

The Learning Scenarios created for SKILL were a result of the curriculum that was developed based on the research done. Through the learning scenarios, users are given the opportunity to learn about soft skills within a particular scenario. This helps to enhance the engagement and involvement of the users throughout the learning process. Users are required to apply their subject knowledge, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills in real-world scenarios related to both educational and employment situations.

Users would have already improved their knowledge of soft skills by having watched the audio-visual material available on the eLearning platform.

Through scenario-based learning the user receives feedback for the decisions they make at each stage in the process, helping them to get immediate solutions and explanations to the situation presented. This allows them to acquire the necessary skills needed to deal with similar problems whether they are in an educational or work setting.

Trainers can tailor the gamification of the learning scenarios by adapting the results to real-time awards for students. Trainers can also provide their own evaluation and feedback and create their own scenarios for users in a real-life setting.

The scenarios were designed to engage and motivate the users and to take into account their transferability to different work scenarios in different countries.

Users are presented with three different and separate learning scenarios each depicting a different scene.

The first scenario concerns a situation between employees in a work situation, where two options/outcomes are possible. The second learning scenario sees students working with each other in a group, through which they have to learn with and from each other. The coach is also involved in this process, with different options. The third situation involves two managers where the target differs from one team to another, as one manager would like to know what the working principles are from the other manager.

In each learning scenario, users are asked to choose the most appropriate response according to them for the particular scene. Their responses will trigger different outcomes. At the end of each scenario, the user will receive feedback based on their replies.



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418

Transcripts

Below are the transcripts of the scenarios with the available responses to the situation.

Scenario 1: Employee-to-Employee Request

The replies in **bold** are the correct responses for someone who is using proper soft skills. The replies in *italics* are the responses by someone who is not using soft skills.

(Employee) Engineer: Good afternoon, I'm calling you on behalf of our department.

(Employee) Developer: Good afternoon, how can I help you?

Engineer: I'm calling you because the login system is not workable.

Developer: Aha, can you be a little more specific?

Engineer: Sure, we are using the 3 double verification system. We serve 5 websites. When switching to another website, we have to log in 3 times each time. This is not convenient and incredibly time consuming. I've been working overtime for days because I'm taking so long. I find it totally nonsensical!

Developer: I understand it. I get that it's inconvenient. We have built the most secure system possible to run the websites. This is in the context of security legislation. The other day we were hacked. That should not happen again! You wanted a website environment that was as secure as possible, so that's what we built.

Engineer: It's probably safe, but now I have to log in 3 passwords every time I want to change something on a website. So, with every action, keying in passwords 3 times.

Developer (a): I get that, that's not very handy.

Developer (b): I have that too! What a waste of time.

Engineer: Is there also a way to make it a little less time consuming?

Developer (a): What do you mean? Do you have an idea?

Developer (b): I have no idea. Never had this question before.

Engineer: An idea would be to have not 3, but 2 login moments per website. That would already save a lot.



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418

Engineer: *An idea would be to have not 3, but 2 login moments per website. That would already save a lot. You are the developer, aren't you?!!*

Developer (a): Ok, I understand that. Do you mean just logging in once per website with 2 passwords, or with 2 passwords for every action?

Developer (b): Sorry, I can't help you for the moment.

Engineer: Aha, what a good idea, that first idea is very tempting! If that is possible... please!

Engineer: I want to speak to your manager.

Developer (a): I can't promise anything. So, you want to log in once with 2 passwords and then be able to perform various actions without having to log in each time? I will discuss it with the team. Can I get back to you on that?

Developer (b): You can fill out the form on the intranet. It is my second day. Good luck with that. I'm really sorry that I can't help you with that.

Engineer: **Sure, in what timeframe will you know more?**

Engineer: I'm sorry for you

Developer: I'll let you know this afternoon before 4pm.

Engineer: **Very nice, do you need anything else from me?**

Developer: Yes, could you please share your employee number?

Engineer: **Yes, shall I email this?**

Developer: Happy to, then I'll have your email address right away too

(Couple of hours later)

Developer: Hello, I'm calling you on behalf of the non-workable logging (passwords).

Engineer: Hello, yes. That's me.

Developer: You requested if it is possible to log in once per website with 2 passwords

Engineer: That's correct.

Developer: We discussed this with our team, and this is possible. We can make it work for you. It takes about 2 days to accomplish this.

Engineer: That's wonderful.



Developer: Yes, we are also happy to fix this for you guys.

Engineer: So, when can we expect this?

Developer: It's Wednesday today, so Friday it will be ready.

Engineer: Great, we are moving to a more workable situation.

Developer: Yes! It will be less time consuming

Engineer: Thank you for your time and effort

Developer: You're welcome. Thank you for your patience.

Engineer: Bye

Developer: Bye

Scenario 2: Students at School

Option 1 - We see STUDENT 1 and STUDENT 2 sitting at a desk, working on a project together.

Student 1: Hello, how are you?

Student 2: I'm fine, thanks

Student 1: I don't understand the task? Do you?

Student 2: Oh, it's about programming the robot for speeding

Student 1: Aha, that's what the teacher referred to.

Student 2: Where are the other students, we are supposed to be with the four of us?

Student 1: I don't know. Student 3 is running late, she texted. But student 4, I really don't know.

Student 2: We need to deliver our scheduling today.

Student 1: How are we supposed to do that if student 4 is not around?

Student 2: I don't want to be behind. So, we are going to split the other tasks, ok?

Student 1: Let's do that

Student 2: Ok, we shall.



Option 2 - We see STUDENT 1 and STUDENT 2 sitting at a desk, working on a project together; teacher gets involved.

Student 1: Hello, how are you?

Student 2: I'm fine, thanks

Student 1: I don't understand the task? Do you?

Student 2: Oh, it's about programming the robot for speeding

Student 1: Aha, that's what the teacher referred to.

Student 2: Where are the other students, we are supposed to be with the four of us?

Student 1: I don't know. Student 3 is running late, she texted. But student 4, I really don't know.

Student 2: We need to deliver our scheduling today.

Student 1: How are we supposed to do that if student 4 is not around?

Student 2: I don't want to be behind. So, we are going to split the other tasks, ok?

Student 1: That is the easy way. That is not my preference

Student 2: Let's wait for student 3 and then we discuss all three, ok?

Student 1: Good idea!

Student 2: Yes!

Student 3 arrives

Student 3: Hello, all. Sorry for running late.

Student 1: Hi!

Student 2: No problem. We have a situation

Student 1: Yes, we need to deliver our scheduling today. We are worried. I finished, and student 2 finished. We didn't hear anything from student 4. What did you do?

Student 3: Ah, that's a good one. Well, not that much. I made a start but didn't come far.

Student 1: Good to hear you made a start.

Student 2: I understand, but we are not that far along. What shall we do now?



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418

- Student 1:** We agreed to be ready today? So, what are the consequences now?
- Student 2:** I don't know. Normally we all work on it together, but now I don't want to anymore.
- Student 1:** I worked until 3AM to finish.
- Student 2:** Yes, me too.
- Student 3:** Sorry guys, I got sick. I feel bad about it too.
- Student 1:** So, shall we ask the teacher if he can join in and help us?
- Student 2:** That would be great!
- Student 3:** Let's do that.

Teacher joins the conversation.

- Student 1:** Hi there (teacher), we've got a situation. We need to deliver our report today. Two of us finished and the other got sick, but student 4... vanished. What can we do next, and can you help us out?
- Teacher:** You have expressed that clearly. Student 3, you got sick, but what do you think? What is achievable?
- Student 3:** It would be feasible if I can get 1 extra day. Then I will work on it today and submit it to you tonight, ok? Are we allowed 1 extra day?
- Teacher:** I'll think about that. But what about student 4? Did you contact him?
- Student 1:** I'll phone him immediately. There's no response.
- Student 2:** Is it an idea that the three of us finish the assignment and divide his assignments among ourselves?
- Student 1:** Good idea
- Student 3:** I like that
- Teacher:** How can you solve this with student 4?
- Student 2:** What do you mean?
- Student 3:** We can make a note that student 4 didn't participate.



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418

- Teacher:** That is a good suggestion. Perhaps the reflection report is an opportunity for this?
- Student 1:** Yes, we should mention in the reflection report that student 4 did not participate in the research. This way we can all reflect on this situation. Do we all agree?
- Student 2:** Yes.
- Student 3:** Yes.
- Student 2:** So, let's divide the task and check if we can get an extra day to complete it?
- Teacher:** Agreed. And well done, all of you.

Scenario 3: Managers in the Workplace

The managers are interacting about the management dashboard information. How can they manage with fewer employees while still being able to perceive higher yield? One manager leads in a data-driven way and the other in a date-informed way.

Data driven: you have the exact data you need to make a decision. If you are being data-driven, you agree with this statement, "It will tell you exactly the answer you need to know in terms of what to do next."

Data informed: everyone is aware of the current performance and why the product is performing the way it is to optimise the strategies.

Option 1

- Manager 1:** Hello, did you see the data report of the new employees in the dashboard of Q3?
- Manager 2:** Yes, I did. I'm amazed! What are your results?
- Manager 1:** Amazed? Tell me, I want to know more.
- Manager 2:** Two of my best employees are away. One is absent and the other is on maternity leave, yet I've still got a proper yield in Q3.
- Manager 1:** That's good for you.
- Manager 2:** What are your results?
- Manager 1:** My results are not that high. Each day we do a daily check in. Nevertheless, the results are ok, not that good... but ok.



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418

- Manager 2:** We also do a daily check in, but we do a very short one, three times a day.
- Manager 1:** That's a joke, right?
- Manager 2:** Nope! One in the morning (what's the aim of today?); after lunch (are still on target or do we need to adjust?); and the last one (did you achieve today's aim?)
- Manager 1:** Interesting, that's a different approach
- Manager 2:** Thanks
- Manager 1:** I would really like to know how you handled that situation – having fewer employees, and still able to achieve your targets.
- Manager 2:** The team was a bit smaller than usual, so I could observe these colleagues more. I encouraged them to work on the relationship intensively.
- Manager 1:** Why did you do that, and how?
- Manager 2:** In the management training I found out that if our employees are more involved with each other, it leads to increased motivation in doing tasks.
- Manager 1:** And how did you work intensively on the relationship?
- Manager 2:** We played football in the garden; we played cards and bingo together! I prepared some gifts. It was a blast!! We had so much fun!
- Manager 1:** So, no targets, just playing and laughing, for a couple of hours?
- Manager 2:** Yes!
- Manager 1:** So, if I may rephrase... You took the time to get to know each other better.
- Manager 2:** Indeed, simple as that!
- Manager 1:** How did you manage?
- Manager 2:** They could choose the games. We did a carrousel and switched games, which helped them get to know each other fast while playing.
- Manager 1:** That makes sense. So, you invested in the relationship among colleagues?
- Manager 2:** Indeed
- Manager 1:** So, what kind of management info do we need then?
- Manager 2:** If we can manage that, our management data could be more 'data informed'?



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418

Manager 1: Never heard about that term.

Manager 2: It means that if we can let our employees take more decisions, for example: the freedom to choose the tasks (freedom of choice), research has shown that employee motivation is increased.

Manager 1: Wow! Thank you for sharing this with me.

Manager 2: You're welcome

Manager 1: Can we ask the board if they can deliver our data reports differently?

Manager 2: That's a good idea. That should be in a more 'data driven way'.

Manager 1: Yes please!!

Manager 1: Thank you. I really need to have these conversations more often!

Manager 2: You're welcome!

Manager 1: Shall we make an appointment to inform the board about what we need?

Manager 2: Let's do so. Data Informed it is... YEAH!

Option 2

Manager 1: Hello, did you see the data report of the new employees in the dashboard of Q3?

Manager 2: Yes, I did. I can't read it properly. Did you understand it?

Manager 1: No, I didn't understand it.

Manager 2: Let's compare them.

Manager 1: Good idea. What do you see?

Manager 2: I see that your results are lower than mine.

Manager 1: Yes, I can see that too.

Manager 2: Mine are better!

Manager 1: I'm going to speak to my team. Sorry, bye.

Manager 2: Oh... bye.



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418

Users are encouraged to choose the response that they believe is the most appropriate; however, they also need to keep in mind whether that would be the response that they would choose were they to be in that situation.

Trainers ought to encourage users to think about the difference between knowing the right thing to say, and actually saying it, as this will make users more aware of the importance of soft skills in different situations.



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418

Simulations Guide

Users can access the interactive scenarios at <https://skillproject.eu/e-learning-area> through their web browser on both desktop and mobile devices.

Course 3 - Soft Skills in Real Life Situations

This activity presents three scenarios that exemplify the application of soft skills in the ICT sector, in which users can observe discussions among two or more individuals. To demonstrate the versatility and applicability of soft skills in various real-life situations, three different scenarios were chosen:

1. between ICT sector co-workers,
2. between ICT teachers and their students, and
3. between ICT managers.

Each scenario presents a specific problem that the characters aim to resolve.

In the first scenario, the co-workers are experiencing a miscommunication issue with each other while they are attempting to solve a real problem.

The second scenario presents a student group struggling to complete a task, first addressing communication issues among themselves before negotiating with their teacher for an extension of a deadline.

The third scenario features two managers, one of whom receives data that falls short of their expectations and seeks advice from the other.

All these scenarios are presented in a non-linear format, with multiple possible outcomes depending on the choices made by the user. Each scenario starts with a cover page titled "Test Your Knowledge," from which users are prompted to enter their name. The gamification activity greets them in the next slide and provides general information about the scenario that is about to unfold.

Users can observe characters interacting with one another through dialogue, and the game then prompts them to act and utilise their knowledge of soft skills, by giving them the opportunity to make decisions and take actions that will affect the outcome of the scenario.

In each of these scenarios, by making decisions regarding soft skills and implementing them, users can experience the development of situations based on the differences in responses, whether to navigate a difficult conversation, delegate remote working, or facilitate creative problem solving. The feedback process in each scenario is designed to provide learners with immediate and informative feedback based on their decisions and actions. For example, if a learner makes a decision that leads to a positive outcome, they receive feedback indicating that they made the correct choice. If a decision leads to a negative outcome, they receive feedback indicating that they made an error and should try again. The feedback is also provided in the form of hyperlinks to study materials within the SKILLS e-platform should users want to learn more about soft skills.

These interactive scenarios are powerful tools that teach learners how to apply their knowledge in real-world situations, and that provide them with an opportunity to practise and improve their problem-solving and



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418

decision-making skills. They can also be used to teach learners how to handle difficult situations, such as dealing with an angry manager, or how to collaborate with others to achieve a common goal.



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418

Platform Guide

The e-learning area can be accessed on <http://www.e-learning.skillproject.eu/> <https://skillproject.eu/e-learning-area/> using a computer or mobile device that is connected to the Internet.

The platform hosts all the resources developed during the SKILL Project. It is intended as an educational resource that will be able to encourage the active participation of learners.

Each learning objective, as outlined in this handbook that is found in the e-learning area, is interactive with high quality standards to engage users during the learning process.

Moreover, users can download a certificate of attendance as a final step of the learning and assessment path.

On the e-learning platform, users can access the following courses:

- Course 1 - **EU Soft Skills** involves a combination of self-directed, self-paced online modules in bite-sized format, with the form of micro-credentials that cover the core concepts. Users work their way through the following five modules: 1) Introduction to Soft Skills; 2) Problem Solving Fundamentals; 3) Emotional Intelligence; 4) Working with People; and 5) Soft Skills for Technology Use. Badges are available for learners after the completion of each module.
- Course 2 – **Soft Skills through Audio-visual Means** allows users to get in-depth information in an easy-to-follow manner. The videos complement the rest of the learning material available on the e-learning platform, and help to consolidate the topic of soft skills. The videos are embedded on the e-learning platform and can be accessed easily. Trainers have access to the transcripts of each video through which they can prepare assessment material should they wish to.
- Course 3 - **Soft Skills in Real Life Situations** wherein users are presented with situations where they need to choose the response according to the dialogue presented. The interactive scenarios are located under the "Soft Skills in Real-Life Situations" activity, which utilises Articulate Storyline 360, a powerful tool for creating interactive e-learning content that includes features such as buttons, triggers, variables where users can have gamified interactions that make the learning more interactive.

Trainers can supplement the information found on the learning platform with additional information related to soft skills. Moreover, trainers are encouraged to use different training methods according to the needs of the group e.g. individual work, role-play, group work and discussion, etc.



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project no: 2020-MT01-1-KA226-092418