



Comp-Up

MOTIVATE ADULTS
TO IMPROVE BASIC
COMPETENCES



Co funded by the
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Comp-Up

MOTIVATE ADULTS TO IMPROVE
BASIC COMPETENCES

*motivation support
empowerment*

*basic skills
personal development*

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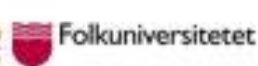
IO4. COMP-UP Motivation Toolkit

Project number: 2019-1-IT02-KA204-063179

Project duration: 01/11/2019 – 31/12/2021

Financial support: European Commission, Erasmus+ programme

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Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union





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Introduction

According to the PIAAC Survey of Adult Skills, approximately 70 million Europeans struggle with basic reading and writing, calculation and using digital tools in everyday life. The lack of these skills, makes various necessary everyday activities difficult and represent a barrier to social- and work inclusion. The importance of Digital Literacy, as one of the eight key competences that every European citizen should master, is even highlighted by the European Commission's 2010 Digital Agenda for Europe.

As a response to this need, the European Council adopted the "Recommendation on Upskilling Pathways" in order to help adults acquire a minimum level of literacy, numeracy and digital skills through the development of high-quality and accessible services.

In this context the COMP-UP consortium, according to its experience with disadvantaged and low qualified adults, suggests that updating competences of Adult Education Professionals (AEP) who support adult learners is a reply to improve the literacy, numeracy and digital skills of this target group.

Engaging and motivating low-skilled adult learners is another key aspect of the COMP-UP project. Motivation is defined as a psychological process responsible for initiating, maintaining, supporting or stopping a behaviour. It is in a way the force that drives us to act and think in one way or another. There is a consensus that motivation is based on the interaction of intrinsic (or internal) and extrinsic (external) factors. While intrinsic motivational factors are specific to the individual, that they relate to his or her perception of self and of the situation, to the pleasure and satisfaction he or she derives from an activity, extrinsic motivational factors refer to the learning context, to the means that can encourage the learner to achieve a goal.

Therefore, adult educators have a complex task to accomplish on this regard: to animate their adult learners to enrol in an educational or training programme, motivate them, triggering their intrinsic, primary motivation for learning, help them overcome their aversion to learning and changing, maintain them in education, persuading them that education is about acquiring social power and a way to construct their future (including a future professional career).

Adult education professionals have to adapt courses and activities to their learner's analysed needs and may need to develop tailor-made measures to attract adults back to learning. Not only are personalised, tailor-made learning offers crucial, but professionals have to pay special attention to the needs of different vulnerable groups of adult learners.

In order to attract learners to education and maintain the motivation of low-educated learners, it is crucial to get to know them and their life stories. This way, they can be advised before, during and after the implementation of the workshop. Remembering their names right from the start and reacting to what they say is essential.

The aim of the COMP-UP Motivation Toolkit is to provide AEPs with detailed instructions and a collection of resources to implement motivation workshops during IO4 (and also afterwards in their daily work), in order to motivate adult learners to improve their literacy, numeracy and digital skills.

Thus, the Toolkit will effectively support adult education professionals working with low-qualified and low-skilled adult learners in the organisation and implementation of motivational workshops by providing them with step-by-step instructions on how to carry out the activities, as well as resources, techniques and materials they can use directly during the workshops' implementation. Furthermore, the workshops described take into consideration the possible participation of adults with specific backgrounds or disadvantages such as people with migrant background, disabilities, etc.

The Toolkit is structured in five sections and, at first, it focuses on the importance of establishing a bond and a trustful relationship with the target group of low-qualified adults as this is the first, and most important step motivating them throughout their learning processes. Tools and tips are provided in the following 5 areas:

- 1) ICEBREAKERS – to allow participants to get to know each other, to encourage communication and interaction, to build-up trust among group members;
- 2) COMMUNICATION – to make participants explore their own styles of communication (verbal and non-verbal) in order to help them appreciate their skill set and understand the effect of their communication style on the others;
- 3) BARRIERS – to make participants reflect on their barriers and fears in taking part in learning and empowering them to overcome these barriers;
- 4) TRAINING NEEDS – to allow participants to discover their training needs and to identify the gap between current and required level of knowledge, skills and experience. Here also the literacy, numeracy and digital skills assessment tools identified in IO1 will be supplied to participants;
- 5) LEARNING STYLES – to allow participants to discover their preferred learning style (verbal, visual, kinesthetic, social) and to make them aware of the fact that they learn best when information is presented in that specific learning style.

The Motivation Toolkit has been based on the first two products developed within the project, the COMP-UP Tool Collection, as well as the COMP-up Training Curriculum.

It is available for download on the COMP-UP project website in all partner languages EN, IT, DE, PL, ES, RO, HU, SE to maximize its further use among educators.

1. ICE BREAKING

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1.1 Short introduction on the aims and background information of the section

Starting a course or a motivation workshop is always a new situation including new challenges. The group of people mainly don't know each other and have different backgrounds. It takes time to get used to each other. As the title suggests, these sections deal with methods and approaches to "break the ice" for the participants. On the one hand the trainer gets the possibility to discover the different personalities, on the other hand the participants have time to get to know each other. The goal of implementing ice breakers at the beginning of a course/workshop is to prepare an informal and comfortable setting for becoming more familiar with the course mates or workshop members.

Ice breaking can be more than just implementing a presentation round including the name and age of the participants. Adapted to the aims and duration of the course there can be creative, funny or active methods implemented to the first session. In particular, when the trainer plans to offer a wide variety of didactical approaches (not only traditional teaching style), a trusting cooperation among the participants should be aimed.



On the next pages you will find approaches and ideas for the implementation of ice breakers. Beside needed resources and a step-by-step-implementation, the flexible and varied implementation of those methods will be presented. As already mentioned, the used methods should be customized to the personal training style and the aims and duration of the course/training.



1.2 Resources needed

This section lists possible materials and utensils that can be used to implement the methods. It can be said in advance that all activities can also be implemented without any resources. Thus, the ice breakers can also be carried out spontaneously or at short notice in the course planning. The methods can be mixed and structured customized to the personal training style and the aims and duration of the motivational workshop.

Possible resources can be:

- a small ball
- a ball of wool
- a picture-set (which shows different places, activities, quotes, items, ...)
- paper and pens in different colours



1.3 Duration

- Activity no. 1: approx. 20 – 25 minutes
- Activity no. 2: approx. 20 minutes
- Activity no. 3: approx. 20 minutes

When all those activities should be tested during the motivation workshop, 1 hour and 30 minutes should be planned. As the activities take about 1 hour, 30 minutes should be reserved for questions, uncertainties and talking about different varieties and their assets and drawbacks.



1.4 Step-by-step instructions to the trainer on how to implement the activities

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Activity no. 1 – Sociometric position

Total duration: approx. 20 - 25 minutes; **Group size:** 10 – 50 participants

- (5 minutes) Ask participants to get up and meet in a circle for listening to the introduction: the participants should form a row sorted by their first name from a – z
- (5 minutes) (given time for the participants to form the row)
- (5 minutes) all participants tell their front name to evaluate, if everybody found the right position
- (5 minutes) introduce the participants to form another row concerning their birth dates with ascending order (including time for the participants to form the row)
- (5 minutes) all participants tell their birthdate to evaluate, if everybody found the right position



Activity no. 2 – # Hashtag

Total duration: approx. 20 minutes; **Group size:** 5 – 15 participants

- (5 minutes) tell the participants to find 3 words, which describes themselves the best. As they would present themselves on social media, they should find 3 fitting Hashtags. In this time, the trainer should also prepare the 3 hashtags for himself.
- (5 minutes) ask the participants to sit in a chair circle
- (10 minutes) take a ball in your hand and tell your name and the 3 hashtags (which describes you the best) and throw the ball to another group member. Take care, that all participants get a turn.

Activity no. 3 – Best place

Total duration: approx. 20 minutes; **Group size:** 5 – 50 participants



- (5 minutes) prepare a set of pictures with different places on a table and tell all the participants to have a look at the pictures and then everybody should take a picture
- (15 minutes) ask the participants to get together in a circle and show them the picture you have chosen. Tell them in a short way what you like at this picture and why you would like to be there right now. Then all participants can describe their *best place*.
- (5 minutes) ask the participants to give the pictures back to the table. Additionally, you can offer the participants to keep the picture of their BEST PLACE as a motivation for the course/training.

1.5 Variations (how to adapt the activities to specific target groups and possible risk-factors during the implementation)

As already described in section 2 (*resources needed*), there are many variations possible to implement. It makes sense to adapt the ice breakers regarding the personal training style, the duration of the training as well as the target group. Every activity will now be reflected concerning their flexible usability.

Activity no. 1 – Sociometric position

- If the first task (building a row concerning the first names) is far too easy to practise for the participants, you can make it more difficult by forbidding the participants to speak during the following exercise.
- There are far more ways to answer questions than building a row. You can fix two points in the room which are related to “Yes” and “No” and let the participants answer questions by walking to the points.
- Another option is to put an item (e.g. ball, book, hat, ...) into the middle of the circle and let the participants answer questions by standing near the item or far away (e.g. work experience, today’s motivation, ...).
- This exercise is meant to get people moving. Take care, if there are any participants which have disabilities or health-problems and can’t move that easy.
- If there are participants who have troubles with the language, remember to use an easy-to-understand-language or combine the tasks with pictures/pictograms (e.g. happy and sad face).

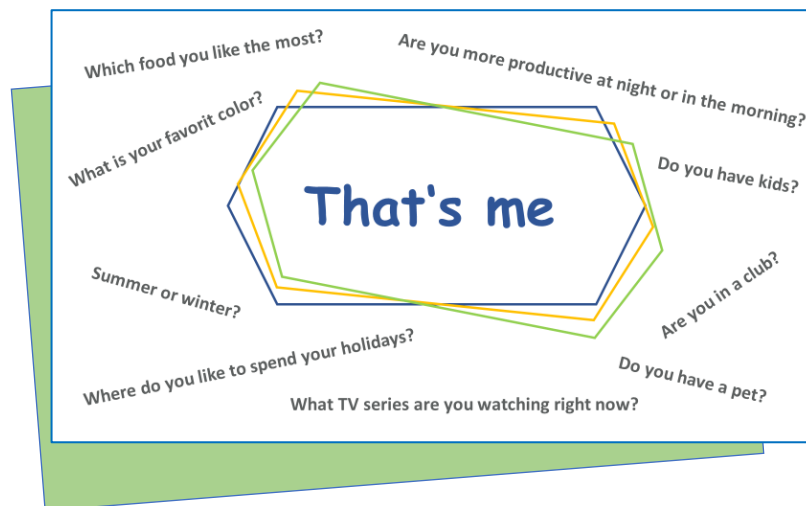
Activity no. 2 – # Hashtag

- You can use a ball of wool for the presentation part. Every participant who passed the task takes the wool in his hand and throws the ball ahead. In this way you build a net until the end of the exercise. Due to the fact that all participants must hold the piece of wool, they remain concentrated.



- If you think, the target group may have troubles with finding words to represent themselves, give them examples or questions to answer (f.e. show some possible questions on a flipchart or powerpoint slide).
- If the word Hashtag sounds too fancy, you can use some other names like *That's me*, *About myself*, ...

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Activity no. 3 – Best place

- You don't have to use (only) places. What do you think about food, sportive activities, paintings, famous people?
- If you don't want to use pictures, or just have no time to prepare some, ask the participants to close their eyes and tell them to think about their favourite place. How does it look? How does it smell like? Is it warm or cold? After giving time to think about it, they can present their chosen place to the group.
- Do you like experiential educations? You can perform this exercise also outdoor. In this case you can also let the participant search for an item they like and let them show it to the group and why they have chosen it.

1.6 Useful tips and suggestions for trainers

Follow this link to find a collection of *ice breaking* questions you can use:
<https://conversationstartersworld.com/icebreaker-questions/>.



2. COMMUNICATION

2.1 Short introduction on the aims and background information of the section

The ability to communicate is both a key skill in everyone's life and a fundamental element of the learning process. Communication is responsible for the exchange of information (especially in the teacher-student relationship), but also for the exchange of emotions that accompany the conversation.

In order for you to be able to convey knowledge in the best possible way in your work, you need to understand how different people communicate. Communication with trainees may require different communication approaches (more or less formal). Pay attention to the verbal message but also the body language that goes along with it.



Learning communication skills is a hard craft and different people may have varying predispositions for this. Remember to respect different communication styles and adapt to their requirements.

2.2 Resources needed

- Paper and pen
- Flipchart



- Markers
- Cards with jobs [You can use various free online resources and print them out. For example: <https://7esl.com/jobs-vocabulary/>. You can also always prepare them yourself. Write the different job names on a piece of paper, print them and cut them out. It is also a good idea to add pictures of occupations to their description. This will help people with language problems. Remember to adapt this material to your group]
- Cards with figures
- Description of communication styles (You can find it here: https://www.uky.edu/hr/sites/www.uky.edu.hr/files/wellness/images/Conf14_FourCommunicationStyles.pdf)

2.3 Duration

- Activity no. 1: approx. 60 minutes
- Activity no. 2: approx. 50 minutes
- Activity no. 3: approx. 60 minutes

The time of each exercise may change depending on the number of trainees and their level of participation.

2.4 Step-by-step instructions to the trainer on how to implement the activities

Activity no. 1 - Job interview

Total duration: approx. 75 minutes;

Group size: 5 – 15 participants

- a. The first task for each participant will be to write their strengths on a piece of paper. Tell the participants that knowing their strengths and being able to present them is very important, especially in their professional lives. Give them a sheet of paper and a pen and inform them that the skills/personal characteristics they write down can refer to absolutely everything. Finally, ask participants to share 3 of their strengths with the group. (10 minutes)
- b. The next task will be group work. Prepare a flipchart on which you will put all the do's and don'ts regarding the interview. Start with a brainstorm session with participants where the ideas are not evaluated and then once you have prepared all the do's and don'ts focus on discussing them and if necessary removing them from the list. (20 minutes)
- c. The previous two tasks were designed to prepare participants for the third task, which involves role-playing a job interview. Participants know their strengths and the rules they should follow at a job interview. They are prepared to have an actual interview. Write the names of different jobs on cards and let each participant draw one and give them 5 minutes to prepare for the interview. Then act out one scene with each participant. During this time, the rest of the group makes notes of remarks and mistakes they have observed in the conversations. Finally, you discuss common mistakes in behaviour and look for solutions. (30 minutes)

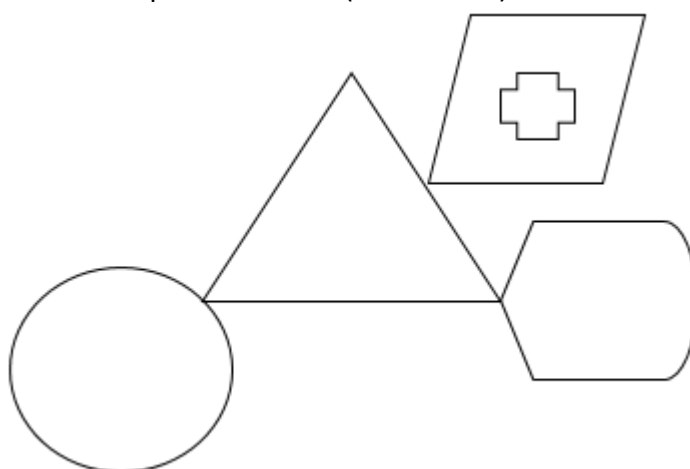
Finally, it is useful to discuss with the participants what problems occurred during the preparation of this activity. Was it for example related to describing their strengths? Maybe acting out the scene in front of the class was too stressful for them? (15 minutes)

Activity no. 2 - Active listening

Total duration: approx. 50 minutes;

Group size: 5 – 15 participants

- Warm-up exercise on active listening. Put the participants in a circle and then play a game of [Chinese whispers](#) together. One participant makes up a sentence and then passes it on until the last person repeats it out loud. (15 minutes)
- Put the trainees into pairs. One person will have to talk briefly about himself/herself and the other will have to listen to this and then present this person on the basis of what he/she has heard. Then confront what they said right with what they said wrong. Afterwards, one person from the pair presents to the rest of the group what he/she has found out about the other person. (15 minutes)
- Prepare a collection of geometric shapes on sheets of paper (example below), then match participants in pairs. One person from the pair stands facing the flipchart and the other person from the pair stands behind him/her and receives a sheet of paper with the figures drawn on it. The task of this person is to tell his/her friend how to draw the figures (what size they are, how they are positioned in relation to each other). One of the difficulties is that he/she cannot repeat his/her statements and the drawer cannot ask clarifying questions. This exercise is to demonstrate the importance of both correct communication and active listening. This exercise can be done by one pair as an example for the class or can be done by all participants (use different designs). Each new pair doing the exercise will have a better start and will be able to communicate better based on the mistakes of their predecessors. (20 minutes)



Activity no. 3 – Different communication styles

Total duration: approx. 60 minutes;

Group size: 5 – 15 participants

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- a. Make a brainstorm with the participants and think about what communication styles you are able to distinguish. Maybe someone you met had a particularly distinct way of expressing themselves? Write down the different characteristics of the speakers on a flipchart. These could include how they gesture, how they behave during a conversation, how assertive they are. (15 minutes). Participants can also start this exercise by taking a test/quiz to check their communication style. The Internet is full of various ready-made examples. Choose the one you like best. Examples:
 - a. <https://www.leadershipiq.com/blogs/leadershipiq/39841409-quiz-whats-your-communication-style>
 - b. <https://www.glassdoor.com/blog/quiz-whats-your-communication-style/>
 - c. <https://personalitylingo.com/free-communication-style-quiz/>
 - d. <https://visme.co/blog/the-4-communication-styles-quiz/>
- b. Present to the participants the names of the different communication styles (use for example this resource:
https://www.uky.edu/hr/sites/www.uky.edu.hr/files/wellness/images/Conf14_FourCommunicationStyles.pdf)
 Consider together what qualities each of the communication style will have and write them on the flipchart. Consider how you would react to a conversation with a person who has a different style. (20 minutes)
- c. Think about what barriers and problems might occur in communication and try to write them out on a flipchart. Then try to match the communication style with the barriers and problems it can generate. (25 minutes)

2.5 Variations (how to adapt the activities to specific target groups and possible risk-factors during the implementation)

Among the main risk factors is the possibility of unwillingness to participate in the presented exercises and the lack of commitment of the participants. Most of the exercises are structured in such a way that participants have to communicate with each other and if at least one side is reluctant, the implementation of the exercises may not be effective.

A very good way would be to do some ice-breaking exercises beforehand to make the participants more active and daring to give answers.

If the group has language problems, you should focus on the non-verbal version of an activity (example: pantomime).

2.6 Useful tips and suggestions for trainers

The duration of each exercise may vary depending on the number of participants in the group.



If the group has an uneven number of participants, you play the role of a participant so that everyone has a pair.

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2.7 Handouts to be distributed to the participants

Among the materials to be distributed are:

Communications styles

https://www.uky.edu/hr/sites/www.uky.edu.hr/files/wellness/images/Conf14_FourCommStyles.pdf

Cards with jobs

Cards with figures

3. OVERCOMING BARRIERS

3.1 Short introduction on the aims and background information of the section

Barriers are as natural in the path to learning as roots, streams and the occasional boulder are on a forest trail. The expectancy of barriers to learning and positive apprehension thereof can be reached through methods of perspective change and learn-to-learn skills. Such a shift can make learning barriers a meaningful and interesting aspect of the process, just as the roots, streams, and boulders are part of what makes hiking enjoyable. The overcoming of barriers and fears as presented in this toolkit entails two facets that will constitute the two blocks.

1. Amassing motivation to break barriers through clarifying why, imagining the consequences of doing it, and “flipping fears”.
2. Providing learn-to-learn skills, including the splitting of tasks, the 15-minute rule, and basic problem-solving.



The skillset provided is firmly rooted and validated in scientific psychology. In clinical psychological science, the overcoming of barriers and fears to increase adaptability and well-being is the core task. The skills provided here have been tried out on a variety of populations facing barriers of all and any kind. Beyond facilitating learning, they will be of use in facing any problem and thus provide the target group with well-needed abilities which will help them orient more successfully from the position they're in. The “Why” tasks focus on having students elaborate on the meaning of them doing difficult activities. It makes students remind themselves of why overcoming goals are meaningful, thereby increasing motivation.



3.2 Resources needed

Students: Pen and paper

Teachers: The “Teachers Resource” - PowerPoint presentation is the main tool for the workshop (it is downloadable from the project website). Whiteboard/chalkboard or other presenting space is also required.

3.3 Duration

- Block 1: 60min
- Block 2: 75min

The two blocks take approximately 2 – 2,5 hours to complete.

3.4 Step-by-step instructions to the trainer on how to implement the activities

Block 1 - Shifting focus (60min)

Activity no. 1 – “Why?” (PowerPoint slide 1-7)

Total duration: approx. 15 min;

Group size: <40



The teacher should use the attached “Teachers resource” PowerPoint as a detailed guide on how to introduce the material, not as a presentation to show the students. Teachers should make variations according to their knowledge of their students (see 3.5. Variations). Detailed instructions on what to say and what discussions to prompt are attached in the PowerPoint, but the general principles are the following.

- 1: On the whiteboard or chalkboard: present the cases of Anna and Luigi who are stuck in negative thinking. These cases are to be used during the entirety of the workshop
- 2: Ask students why Anna and Luigi do what they do even if they experience a lot of negatives.
- 3: Present how the positives overweight the negatives in Anna's and Luigi's cases.
- 4: Ask students to come up with something difficult they do, use your own example as inspiration for them. Ask them to write down the cons.
- 5: Ask the students to come up with the pros of doing what they do, start with your own example.
- 6: Summarize, and ask students to think about the pros of something they ought to do.

Activity no. 2 – Imagining success and positive goal story (PowerPoint slide 8-10)

Total duration: approx. 15 minutes; **Group size:** <40

Building on activity 1, the teacher presents the imaginative thinking task on the whiteboard inspired by the PowerPoint.

- 1: (Slide 8) Present that negative thinking gets over-attended and possible positive consequences rarely focused on.
- 2: Talk about Anna's reminiscing and fears of failure (slide 9), ask students how they think it influences motivation.
- 3: Ask how Anna could focus on positive outcomes, referring to her desired goals with learning Spanish.
- 4: Ask the students how this pertains to Luigi.
- 5: (slide 10) Make the students think of how things would be if they mastered something difficult they're currently trying or wishing to do. Discuss.
- 6: Make the students write down or think out a story of how they overcome a barrier or master something difficult, including a happy ending.
- 7: Sum up reminding the students not to forget about the desired outcomes while overfocusing on the undesired ones.

Activity no. 3 – Flipping fears (PowerPoint slide 11-14)

Total duration: approx. 15 minutes; **Group size:** <40

The "flipping fears" helps in understanding why things that are important cause fear, and subsequently shift focus from the fears to the importance.

- 1: (slide 11) Tell the students how fear is often an indication of something important going on
- 2: (slide 12) Go back to Anna's "cons" of learning Spanish and look at how they're influenced by learning Spanish feeling important for her. Ask students the questions attached.
- 3: (Slide 12) Tell students how focusing on fears makes Anna lose sight of the overarching goal

of learning Spanish

4: (Slide 13) Ask the students to analyse Luigi's presented "cons" to see what conditions of importance need to be fulfilled for these cons to be of value. Use attached examples to facilitate.

5: (Slide 14) Make the students think of "cons" they feel concerning important tasks, and how the importance influenced their cons.

6: Summarize by reminding students of how Annas and Luigi's fears only distort them from reaching their real goal which causes their fears.

Activity no. 4 – Putting it all together (PowerPoint slide 15)

Total duration: approx. 15 minutes; **Group size:** <40

The last task of block 1 strives to integrate the three techniques into a package.

Tell students: Imagine that next semester you'll begin a job which is perfect for you, that you really want. However, the job is quite difficult. You get 3 months to prove yourself, if you do well you get to keep the job, otherwise, you don't. To begin with, take a minute to first think of what kind of job that could be for you, then you'll get some tasks. If you have difficulties coming up with something, think of your last period of work or studies that challenged you.

- A) The first week, you feel fear, stress and really don't want to mess up. Why do you still continue? Think of what's the positives? Write them down.
- B) Imagine the positive consequences of succeeding and getting to stay after the three months, imagine how it would feel and what it'd change for you.
- C) The fear, stress, and wish to not mess up you felt the first week, what did you care about that made it so important and that made the fear and stress pop up?

Hopefully, these three tasks can help you focus more on the positive aspects and meaningful parts of whatever you're facing while understanding why it can also cause stress and negative feelings. This is the end of block 1,

Open question: What do you bring with you from this exercise?

Block 2 - Not getting overwhelmed and solving problems (75min)

Activity no. 5 – Four-step problem solving (PowerPoint slide 17-22)

Total duration: approx. 60 minutes; **Group size:** <40

Introduce the four-step problem-solving model as per slide 17. Be sure to mention that it is the best model there is! The following steps constitute the model, and are presented in order. See PowerPoint for detailed information.

Step 1) Identify the problem (slide 18) Make sure you know as well as possible exactly what the problem is. Exemplify through Luigi and Anna.

Step 2) Brainstorm (slide 19), have the students brainstorm possible solutions for Anna and Luigi, moderate the discussion to emphasize and make sure that no judgement whatsoever is to be given at this stage.

Step 3) Evaluate the pros/cons (Slide 20)

Students are to evaluate the pros/cons of possible solutions presented for Anna and Luigi at step 2, first for 7 minutes individually then in general discussion in both cases.

Step 4) Do it! + evaluate (slide 21) The students are to make up a quick action plan for Anna and Luigi on how they're to go about implementing the solution.

Summarise by saying that these four steps should bring the students closer to a solution of whatever problem they're facing, and mention that in case the problem remains, they are to return to step 2.

Lastly, have the students try themselves (slide 22), by identifying a problem they have in learning or work and then go through the four steps.



Activity no. 6 – The 15-minute rule and wrap up (PowerPoint slide 23-24)

Total duration: approx. 10-15 minutes; **Group size:** <40

Introduce the 15-minute anti-procrastination rule as per slide 23. To finish, have them book up their upcoming anti-procrastination session.



Sum up (slide 24): Quickly recap what skills the students have tried out today and have them spend some time thinking on when they could use which one, finish off with a general discussion and ask for feedback.

3.5 Variations (how to adapt the activities to specific target groups and possible risk-factors during the implementation)

Teachers may, after studying the material, form examples like Anna and Luigi that are more relatable to their student group. Anna and Luigi serve only as vessels for facilitating understanding and are thereby interchangeable to examples more related to the context in which the material is implemented. The skillset is intentionally broad in order to encompass many aspects to breaking barriers, the blocks are however separate. If students have difficulties grasping the concepts, studying one block over more time and omitting the other is recommended.

Risk-factors: Low-skilled students may have patterns of automated “I don’t know”-responding or learned helplessness. The teacher may therefore need to scaffold, facilitate answers and give further examples.

3.6 Useful tips and suggestions for trainers

Spend some time beforehand thinking of examples and possible scenarios in each task for your type of student group, these principles need to be related to the learning contexts and social contexts in which the students are, teachers understand these contexts better than anyone else. Doing these activities will be far easier, more inspiring and better memorized if you can provide students with relatable ideas and examples.

4. TRAINING NEEDS

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4.1 Short introduction on the aims and background information of the section

To assess the training needs is, first and foremost, a process—a process that can help educators at all levels successfully identify, understand, and better address education challenges. Needs assessment is generally defined as a systematic examination of the gap that exists between the current state and desired state of an organization and the factors that can be attributed to this gap. Assessing the training needs is an important first step in improving the effectiveness of education investments that lead to better outcomes for students.

This is especially relevant when we work within education for low-qualified adult learners. In this section of the motivation toolkit we will present you 3 different assessment tools that will help educators to analyse literacy, numeracy and digital skills of the adult learners in a more engaging way.

4.2 Resources needed

To implement this section of the toolkit you will need the printed-out material which you will find as handouts that are downloadable from the project website.

4.3 Duration

- Activity no. 1: Literacy assessment – Line it up – 30 min.
- Activity no. 2: Numeracy assessment – Trio – 30 min.
- Activity no. 3: Digital assessment – 30 min.

4.4 Step-by-step instructions to the trainer on how to implement the activities

Activity no. 1: Literacy assessment – Line it up

Total duration: approx. 30 min. **Group size:** min. 5 people (works best with large groups)

Retelling the sequence of events in a story is an essential way to measure reading skills and story comprehension. With a little creativity it can transform a boring recall activity into an interactive game.

Pre-work: In advance, choose various stories that have storylines which might be interesting for your students. To play, write key scenes and plot points from the story onto note cards (you can also print them out before class).

Shared reading (5-10 minutes) Pick one of the stories that you have prepared and read it out loud to all your students. We recommend to apply “shared reading” as explained in Best Practice

21 of the Comp-Up Tool Collection.

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Game (5-10 minutes) After reading the story, tape a card onto each student's back. Students will have to work together and ask each other questions to find out which scene is taped to their shirts. Once they've determined what point in the plot they represent, students can line themselves up in an order that represents the sequence of events in the story. If this sounds complicated, the game can be modified for all age groups and ability levels.

Variations If your students have language difficulties, they can break into groups of three students to sequence the beginning, middle, and end of a story. If you consider they are advanced readers, you can get the whole class involved in ordering the numerous events of a Shakespearean play.

Assessment: This game provides the educator different situation for informal literacy assessment. While applying Shared Reading the educator will be able to assess reading skills and pronunciation of the students. During the game the educator will be able to observe how the students talk to each other and if they comprehend the storyline. The educator can easily adapt the level by choosing a different story.

Repeat with different stories as many times as you want.

Activity no. 2: Numeracy assessment - Trio

Total duration: approx. 30 min. **Group size:** 5 – 15 students

Assessing basic numeracy skills can be really boring. In the following you will get to know a board game that will help to assess basic addition, subtraction, multiplication and division skills.

Pre work: Before the assessment session you only need to print out the number cards from 1 – 50 attached as Annex II and optionally the 49 numbers from 1 to 9 (Annexes are downloadable from the project website).

Preparation (5 Minutes) To play, draw a square with 7 x 7 numbers from 1 to 9 in a random way. (see example below).

3	7	3	5	8	4	9
5	1	8	6	5	2	7
8	6	2	4	9	1	9
2	6	4	7	5	5	3
7	4	3	2	1	6	3
2	1	4	8	3	9	5
1	8	6	7	2	4	6

You can also use printed out numbers and pin the 7 x 7 square on the backboard. After that, shuffle the number cards from 1 – 50 and leave them upside down on the table.

Game (20 minutes) To start the game, one of the students draws one of the shuffled number cards from 1 – 50 and shows it to all the other students. Now all the students have to look for a calculation on the 7 x 7 square that results in the drawn number. The calculation must consist of 3 numbers that are next to each other: either horizontally, vertically or diagonal. Whoever finds a correct calculation, shouts out “Trio” and shows the calculation to the other students. In the example below, the number 40 was drawn by the student. There are 3 examples of right calculations.

3	7	3	5	8	4	9
5	1	8	6	5	2	7
8	6	2	4	9	1	9
2	6	4	7	5	5	3
7	4	3	2	1	6	3
2	40	4	8	3	9	5
1	8	6	7	2	4	6

If the answer is correct, the student obtains the number card. If the answer is not correct, the student will be blocked until the next number is drawn.

Variations If your students are having problem finding the calculation, you can also use number cards from 1 – 20 only and apply only addition and subtraction.

Assessment (5 minutes) The student that obtains the most number cards, wins the game. During the game the teacher has the possibility to observe students’ basic addition, subtraction,



multiplication and division skills. This will help to define the training needs of the students.

Activity no. 3: Digital skills assessment - Essential digital skills checklist

Total duration: approx. 30 min

Group size: 5 – 15 students

In an increasingly digital world, information and communication technologies (ICTs) play a key role in everyday life. There is a vital importance of meaningful connectivity to people's livelihoods, employment, health and wellbeing, education, and social participation. One of the main barriers to greater uptake is a lack of skills required to use digital products, services and content. In order to upskill peoples' basic digital knowledge, educators need to carry out a training needs assessment. The following checklist will help to do so.

Pre-work: Before the assessment session it is necessary to print out the essential digital skills checklist attached as Annex II (it is downloadable from the project website). Each student will need one copy.

Preparation (5 minutes) To warm-up, students are asked what they understand by digital skills. Educators can use the checklist to trigger discussions about the different fields of digital skills.

Activity (15 minutes) Students are given a printed copy of the essential digital skills checklist (which should have been already printed). They are told to fill out the checklist depending on their own opinions and on whether they can complete the task developed in the first column. They can choose among "I can do this", "I can't do this" and "I want to learn how to do this".

Assessment (10 minutes): This checklist will provide the mentor different knowledge and students' points of view, as whether they are motivated to learn a specific item of the list or even whether they already know how to fulfil that task. Once the educator has this information, he will be able to adapt the training to the students and to programme the digital training in a more detailed manner.

4.5 Handouts to be distributed to the participants

All the handouts are downloadable from the project website.

5. LEARNING STYLES

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5.1 Short introduction on the aims and background information of the section

Ever have learners lose their focus during some parts of a lesson, but stay alert during others? This may be attributed to their learning style or preference. Although learners may have a preference of learning style, it doesn't mean that educators need to separate their students into groups and teach their lessons in different ways. Some people may find that they have a dominant style of learning, which they use throughout all their learning processes, whilst others may find that they use various styles in different circumstances. Nonetheless all that is absolutely right as it is. There is no right or wrong mix. Nor are individuals' learning styles fixed, therefore these may adapt according to the learning situations a person finds him/herself in. Consequently, there is no single, universal set of learning styles, educators should use a set that works well for their group. It has been found, that in formal learning as traditional schooling, linguistic/verbal and logical teaching methods are usually used, alongside a limited range of teaching techniques which rely on book-based teaching and much repetition. In non-formal learning though, while dealing with low qualified adults, the teaching style should be adapted to the desired learning styles, which should almost always be a mix of the different styles.

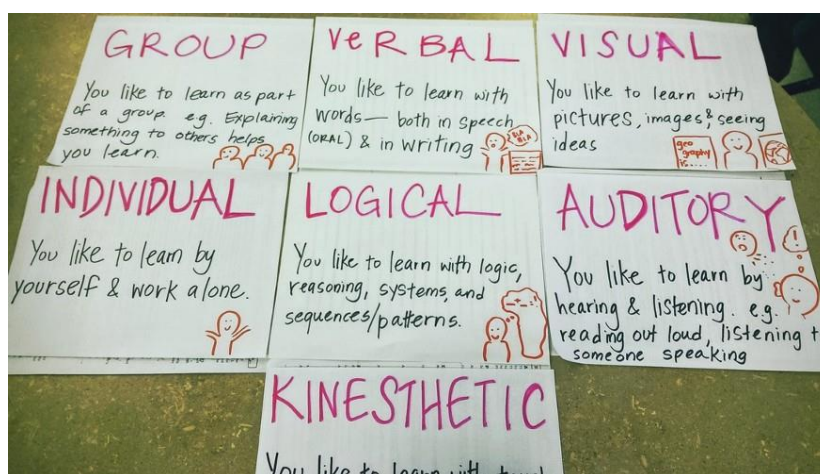


Photo Source: <https://medium.com/erika-harano>

Therefore, the question arises, — how might educators/facilitators – integrate more effectively all learning styles into the learning environments they are working in?

There are three goals of this part of the Toolkit:

1. Learn about learning styles
2. Discover that there are many learning styles
3. Discover how our learning styles can improve how we learn.



By answering all these questions, you'll be able to structure and prepare your lessons in a way, that is most suitable for your learners and best results can be achieved not only on individual level, but also as a group.

5.2 Resources needed

To implement the following activities, you will need the Handouts with the different learning styles definition prepared in advance (they are downloadable from the project website) / it can be also done through a quick online research; pen; paper; laptop; projector; flipchart; post-its, internet connection, tape, scissors.

5.3 Duration

- Activity no. 1: Learn about learning styles - Introduction to learning styles; *How to identify your learning style?* - 60 min
- Activity no. 2: Discover that there are many learning styles - *Gallery Walk* – 60 minutes
- Activity no. 3: Discover how our learning styles can improve how we learn - *Building a Bicycle* - 60 minutes

The total duration of this section is 180 minutes. It is advisable to be implemented as a one-day session, all three activities at the same time.

5.4 Step-by-step instructions to the trainer on how to implement the activities

Activity no. 1 – Learn about learning styles

Introduction and identification of the Learning Styles

Total duration: 60 min;

Group size: 15 – 20 participants

Pre-work: Prepare in advance handouts/pieces of paper (Annex 1) which might be posted around the room. Have one learning style on one separate sheet of paper/post-it.

Print out Annex 2 – Learning styles questionnaire.

Warm-up – 10 min: As an opening activity, have students find a pair. Initiate a discussion among the pairs related to the question: "What is one thing you have learned recently and how did you learn it?". After the discussions, have some volunteer students share the thoughts and what they've found out with the rest of the group. Explain that these examples show different learning styles (i.e. how we learn things).

Introduction to the learning styles - 20 minutes:

Note that there are many different ways to learn and highlight also that learning happens all the time. Briefly introduce the different types of learning styles on the basis of the handouts/post-its you prepared in advance and can be found around the room. Have students volunteer to read each style out loud, and then ask other volunteers to try and find concrete examples of how

each learning style works.

For example: for a visual learner, watching YouTube dance videos might be the best option, logical learners though might need/want to make a timeline or a map.

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Find out your own learning style - 20 minutes:

Use Annex 2 – Learning Styles questionnaire and hand out for each learner. Have them complete and reflect on what they've found out. Let learners volunteer and present their own learning styles and find out together if they were aware of that is the finding correct from their perspective, did they know about these styles?

Review and discuss key Points – 10 min:

Within the group, reflect on the following:

- There are many different learning styles.
- Each person uses various learning styles- not just one. We might each identify with some learning styles more than others, but it is likely that most of us have more than one learning style. Some styles are about how we obtain information, some are about how we collaborate, and some are about how we express information.
- Learning is a constant, ongoing process. Learning styles matter because learning happens all the time. This tells us about a fundamental way of how we interact with the world. Additionally, knowing about your learning styles might help you maximize success in the classroom because you'll develop strategies/tricks to learn better.

Activity no. 2 – Gallery walk

Discover that there are many learning styles

Total duration: approx. 60 minutes

Group size: 15 - 20 participants

Brief introduction of the activity: 5 minutes

In this activity, learners will further build self-awareness of their personal learning styles and they will identify and deepen their knowledge about the diversity of learning styles within the group.

Have your learners walk around the room and review each learning style once again. Have students write their names on post-it notes and stick them on each learning style with which they identify themselves. Give them 5-10 minutes to implement this activity.

Reflection – 45 minutes

After learners finish putting their names to the learning styles, come back as a group and go through the learning styles once again.

Discuss the following questions:

1. What did you notice about the learning styles you picked? Did you discover something new?
2. Did you learn something new about your peers' learning styles?



3. In your opinion are some learning styles “better” than others? Why or why not?

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Trigger a discussion about the questions below in regards to the different learning styles.

Review and discuss Key Points – 10 minutes:

- All learning styles are important and valid! No single learning style is better than others. However, we might notice that some learning styles are favoured in learning settings like classrooms, lecture halls, etc.
- It's good to know what your learning styles are, but don't get stuck on labelling yourself or others. It's good to be aware of our own learning styles, though we should be careful not to get stuck on labels and categorizations.

Activity no. 3 – Building a bicycle

Total duration: approx. 60 minutes

Group size: 15 – 20 participants

In this activity, learners will start to understand how the diverse learning styles which they became acquainted with will support problem solving and the learning processes within their everyday life. In the debrief discussion, they will explore how their learning styles affect group success.

Brief introduction of the activity – 10 minutes:

Ask learners if they have ever built a bicycle before. If, within the group there are a number of students who have already built one before, then you should choose a different item to focus on – such as a house, a car or a boat. The idea is, that they are dealing with something they have never done before. Ask them to imagine that they have to build a bicycle.

Explain them to identify the first three steps they would take in order to start the process.

The following questions might help them starting off:

- Would they draw a blueprint first?
- Would they map out the steps?
- Would they write a plan?
- Would they build a model before starting the “big” work?
- What else would they do?

The building process - 30 minutes:

Make sure to have smaller groups of 3 – 4 learners. Give them a few minutes to figure out their approaches. Hand out materials they can work with. Make sure to provide pen, paper, tape, scissors, etc. Give students enough time to plan their steps and implementation process. After they finish, each smaller group presents its plan to the bigger group.

Debriefing, questions – 10 minutes:



Make sure to generate discussion about the following questions:

1. What kind of learning styles did you use in developing your plan? How did you recognise the styles?
2. Did you have any similarities with the other people's plans? If yes, give an example.
3. During this activity, did you face any limitations in developing your plan to build a bicycle? What were they? How did you deal with them?

Review and discuss Key Points – 10 minutes:

- Sometimes we might think that it's hard for other people to understand us because, as we are different individuals, we have different learning styles. It is important therefore, to be aware of our different learning styles, as this will certainly remind us, about the fact that different people need to receive information differently in order to receive it properly.
- When you're struggling with learning something new, it's most probably not because you're not capable. It depends really much on the approach you chose. For some of us, it's hard to learn in a classroom. For some of us, it's hard to learn by ourselves. In life, we will constantly find ourselves in situations that aren't adapted to our learning styles, so it's our responsibility to find ways that work best for us. Sometimes that will take extra work, but make sure to encourage your learners to find what works for them. This will surely bring huge benefits in their future lives.

5.5 Variations (how to adapt the activities to specific target groups and possible risk-factors during the implementation)

Related to possible risk factors the possible reluctance of learners to getting involved in the learning process could be mentioned. Given the background of the low qualified adults, this may differ but as a trainer you should take into account that some topics might not be comfortable for some learners. Try to avoid these, or just talk their concerns through with them in more detail.

In case you are not implementing the entire session at once, do not forget to bring icebreaker/warm-up activities to each session in order to get the group dynamic first and make learners feel comfortable within the group. In this way they will be more cooperative and it is much more likely that you'll reach your goal with the activities. Make sure to explain, answer questions as many times as needed and always remember your learners. Keep in mind that their background might draw barriers to their learning processes and try to address these. Be patient and empathic.

5.6 Useful tips and suggestions for trainers

Annexes are downloadable from the project website. Therefore, in case you think that having online activities suits better your learner group, do not hesitate to use those. You can find brief descriptions and further reading at the links below, as well as the questionnaire for determining own learning styles.



Further reading:

<https://www.learning-styles-online.com>

<https://www.mindtools.com/mnemlsty.html>

<https://www.tejedastots.com/teaching-different-learning-styles/>

<https://blog.mindvalley.com/types-of-learning-styles/>

Defining learning styles online questionnaire:

<https://www.learning-styles-online.com/inventory/questions.php?cookieset=y>

Introduction to VARK – Visual, Auditory (Aural), Reading/ Writing, and Kinesthetic modalities for learning (Fleming and Mills, 1992)

<https://vark-learn.com/introduction-to-vark/>

5.7 Handouts to be distributed to the participants

Handouts are downloadable from the project website.