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LEARNING PACKAGE

for a "training skills-course" for seniors

Learning Unit 1–6

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AGE HETEROGENEITY

Learning Unit
1

1 Age heterogeneity

1.1 The introduction

Demographic change presents humanity with new challenges. The population is getting older and older, and birth rates are falling. This increases the importance of learning from each other, with each other, and also about each other, across generations. This results in new responsibilities for all; combining the potential of the younger generation with the experience of the older generation and using it for society. This is, in short, the idea behind intergenerational learning.

It is impossible to imagine today's society without intergenerational projects. The interaction of young and old is omnipresent. Young people help older people with the latest technology or social media, while older people show them how to make jam, plant a garden or install winter tyres.

The following learning module explains **what intergenerational learning means** in general, **how important** this social exchange is, **what benefits** can be gained from it, and **how to organise** the exchange of knowledge in the best possible way. For this, we need background knowledge about the different generations and their characteristics, how far they are different from each other, and what they have in common. And in case things don't work out as smoothly as we would like, we learn **how to deal with the issue of conflict** and how to resolve it in the simplest way possible.

1.2 Intergenerational learning

Learning across several generations reduces the isolation of older people from younger people. By getting to know each other, prejudices, scepticism and stereotypes can be reduced, and cooperation can be established. By solving problems together, society stays innovative. The aim is to **preserve the social capital of society** through this.

In order to manage this project successfully, **understanding, communication and mutual acceptance** are needed. The basis for this is created through opportunities for informal encounters where young and old interact and recognise a chance for togetherness. Success is achieved when committed people take the initiative and share the responsibility.

> **Definition**
>
> "Intergenerational learning (IGL) is where people of all ages can learn together and from each other" (EPALE, 2020).
>
> **inter** – focuses on the dimension of exchange, relationships and reciprocity
>
> **generational** – an aspect which consider the different fields of experience and mentality formed in time between representatives of different ages
>
> **learning** – the result of exchange of experiences
>
> The decisive factor for this is that intergenerational - thus age heterogeneous - teaching and learning takes place at eye level, from each other, with each other and about each other

When different levels of learning are involved in the intergenerational learning encounter, they prove to be particularly effective. We distinguish between 3 levels:

The **professional level** is used to impart expertise, experience and knowledge. This can be done both from old to young and from young to old. In order to achieve learning goals, it is helpful to structure the learning process in advance and to include knowledge of didactics and methodology.

The **relationship level** is used for dealing with each other and the respectful attitude towards it. The focus is on building relationships between young and old. The positive emotional environment influences learning success and supports the willingness and motivation. There is no knowledge gap between old and young, no "right" or "wrong", what matters are experiences.

Joint action, actively working on something, such as cooking together or doing manual work, is the **level of action**. It reduces barriers, promotes a good working atmosphere and makes successes visible.

Successful intergenerational activity is characterised by a good cooperation between the professional, relationship and action levels.

Why is it so important to learn from and with each other? What are the goals of this project and what are the benefits for the participants?

Sharing experience and knowledge gives a satisfying feeling, both for older and younger people. Experience that is "in demand" enables contact and exchange between the generations, getting to know each other and the understanding that leads to this creates a harmonious cooperation between young and old.

Older people appreciate being engaged in social activity. This on the one hand promotes change and social contacts, and on the other hand it leads to confirmation and recognition. Young people, in turn, benefit from the experiences of the older generation and gain knowledge very early on, through interaction that they may only be able to experience in the course of their lives. This knowledge advantage allows them to compare their own knowledge with those of the elder generation, but experience has to be gained by oneself and cannot be transferred or spared.

This kind of learning also helps to reduce stereotypes and prejudice against each other. Through contact with other generations, there is a lively exchange of knowledge, which, among other things, keeps up the cognitive performance of the older persons; people stay mentally active and oriented.

However, there are several factors that can **complicate the joint learning process of intergenerational learning**.

> **Important**
>
> The basic trust in the own abilities of each participant is the basis for successful learning together.

One important aspect is the **own learning experience** that each person involved brings to the project. People with little positive learning success can be just as unenthusiastic about subsequent learning as people who shy away from or even reject social contact with others, emotional exchange with strangers or the intellectual test of strength with others.

One factor that needs to be taken into account is the **difference in learning strategies**. The time each person needs to gain knowledge can have a negative impact on the speed of learning. The **knowledge stock** at the beginning of an intergenerational learning unit shows large differences. To avoid this, it can be helpful to work on new topics that all participants do not yet have any basic knowledge of.

In order to accommodate all generations, it is helpful to **build up the curriculum with commonly designed open spaces**, so that each generation can set its own focus, which can be worked on in depth. By bringing together the common - intergenerational - competences, something completely new can emerge from this, which can be designed as a project goal.

The **place of learning** could also lead to problems in the learning process. There are places that are avoided by the young, there are places that do not suit the older generation. Therefore, it should be

considered to choose a place of commonality - a place of encounter - that covers the needs of all people involved and creates a pleasant learning atmosphere.

There are **different methods to facilitate this teaching-learning exchange**. From school we know the classical lecture of the teacher in front of the group. But **learning can also take place in a different way.**

Whether you read a book, take part in an educational trip, visit a museum or attend a lecture, all these activities will broaden your intellectual horizons and therefore fit under the heading of education. The realisation that learning does not only take place in institutions created for this purpose, such as school, university or further education academies, and ends with a formal qualification, has led to a difference being made between **three different types of learning**.

Formal learning	Target-oriented learning in an educational institution, with a certificate of completion (certificate, diploma, master diploma, etc.). Learning objectives and learning time are clearly structured.
Non-formal learning	The learning objective and learning time are specified, final documents are handed out, but the learning takes place outside an educational institution. Examples are courses, in-house further education or private language courses.
Informal learning	Learning in everyday life, within the family, among colleagues, in leisure time. It is not structured and does not lead to a certificate of completion.

When talking about adult education or further education, we usually mean the part of the field where people of different generations come together to learn together **on the basis of their interests, of their own free will**. A classic example of non-formal learning is language courses, which are attended for professional development or private reasons, such as preparation for a holiday.

This type of learning offers a **wide range of opportunities to meet many different needs**. The primary purpose is to share and **transfer knowledge**. Along the way, barriers between generations and the distance between different age groups are broken down.

Intergenerational learning is and was (and still is) considered **informal** as it mainly takes place within families or similar groups. It is regarded as the oldest form of informal learning. Nowadays however, the family alone is no longer able to transmit knowledge as it did in the past and knowledge exchange takes place outside the family. Thus, intergenerational learning is becoming **topical for formal and non-formal education.**

Let's have a look now at how you can make the most of generational differences.

1.3 Positive benefits of age heterogeneity in teaching-learning processes

Teaching and learning in intergenerational groups is a challenge for young and old. Different ideas about the teaching-learning method, biographical differences, different experiences and differences in advanced knowledge are three examples that can make it difficult for generations to learn together. The aim is for all generations involved to interact with each other both as teachers and as learners and to learn from, with and about each other.

This involves finding common priorities and to establish them in a committed manner.

> **Hint**
>
> **Heterogeneity** comes from the Greek language and means "**diversity**". Everything that is different from the norm is heterogeneous.

Every person is different, individual, unique, fundamentally diverse, incomparable. In society, the term heterogeneity is often referred to as diversity, although both mean the same thing. It refers to the **diversity of our society**. Regardless of gender, age, religion, sexual orientation or origin, everyone should receive the same appreciation and recognition.

It is not just about highlighting differences, but rather about what we have in common, what unites us. People may have different nationalities, different worldviews, but still practise the same religion, be heterosexual and have the same physical limitations. All that connects.

Diversity aims to unite the different characteristics of several people and to break down the hierarchical relationships often created by differences and to put everyone on an equal basis.

Age heterogeneity is also coming along with **diverse benefits for all generations** involved. Persons at different age have different experiences to exchange. Furthermore, on the one hand traditional knowledge is forwarded to the younger generation e.g. cultural heritage, customs, recipes etc. and on the other hand the younger generations brings in new aspects e.g. knowledge of advanced technology.

While in socio-political terms, thanks to the law, equality is legally regulated, in the pedagogical context it requires the willingness of each individual to **deal respectfully with the diversity** of fellow human beings, regardless of rules and norms.

In the pedagogical context, this diversity refers primarily to the talents, age, gender, social and cultural background of the people in a learning group.

> **Hint**
>
> The difference of the people participating in the learning situations, especially in intergenerational teaching and learning, is primarily **the membership of different age groups**.

Diversity and flexibility have become the central theme of education policy. For many teachers, heterogeneity has become an **opportunity**. It offers the opportunity to make an important contribution to the community's and the generations' cooperation by dealing with diversity in a meaningful way. Learning together from, with and about each other is an opportunity for everyone involved to be encouraged and enriched.

Nevertheless, all beginnings are difficult. The educational work between young and old is demanding and requires the acceptance of each individual member. The individuality of each person is important, needs acceptance and appreciation. At the same time, however, norms and standards must be observed that enable cooperative learning, allow cognitively demanding teaching and provide the opportunity for qualitative pedagogy.

Recognising different learning needs can take place in different dimensions. It is important to question own perceptions and become aware of them.

Questions like these can help:

- What is the value of age, ability, gender, cultural background, etc.?
- Which support possibilities do I have in mind?
- Which of them do I see as an opportunity, which as a challenge?

The learning person, whatever age, takes in new things and processes them through connections between nerve cells. Information is stored and processed in them. What is learned is linked to the already existing mental potential and is interpreted on that basis. **Learning is therefore an ongoing process**. The decisive factor for success is the **level of education** that you personally bring with you.

Let's look at the different generations and their characteristics.

1.4 Acknowledge differences, seeking similarities

It is undisputed that there are **differences between different age groups**.

To this effect, let us look at how the **generations are named and characterised**, and what differences there are:

What does generation mean? This term includes all people of around the same age with similar social orientations and corresponding views of life.

Let us now compare the typical characteristics of the individual generations:

Traditionalists (born 1925 – 1945)	Characterised by the end of the economic crisis, social security, new technologies like cars and radios. Typical are custom, respect for authority, law and order, frugality, austerity and values like security and richness.
Babyboomer (born 1955 – 1964)	Shaped by the economic miracle, the Cold War, the 68 and the peace movement. Typical are high career goals, adaptability, drive, and the attitude "I live to work".
Generation X (born 1965 – 1979)	Shaped by welfare, computer technology, Chernobyl, the birth control pill and rising divorce rates. Typical are individualism, search for meaning, drop-out mood, work-life balance, and the attitude "I work in order to live" are typical.
Generation Y (born 1980 – 1994)	Characterised by welfare, e-mails, mobile phones, freedom, end of compulsory military service and

	parents for whom it is important that the child does what makes him or her happy. Typical are love of freedom, egoism, self-realisation first - family planning only afterwards, living in the moment; the attitude is: "First life, then work".
Generation Z (born 1995 – 2009)	Characterised by fear of losing welfare, smartphones, social media, parents as best friends, permanent crisis, and terror. Typically dating apps and social media, addicted to feedback and recognition, fear of the future, indecision, trust is created via ratings and likes. The attitude is "here's work, there's my life".
Generation Alpha (born 2010 – 2024)	Shaped by smartphones and tablets from babyhood, Alexa Google and Siri, climate change and water shortage, environmental disasters and mass migration. Typically, many of them are already social media stars (YouTube, Instagram) as children. How the use of smart devices will affect this generation remains unclear.
Generation Beta (born ab 2025)	These are the children of generations Y, Z and Alpha, we are looking forward to it.

Let's first look at what generations X, Y and Z have in common. The values of family and friendship are set very high. The topics of bonding, security, self-worth and pleasure gain connect all 3 generations with each other, only the time of emphasis depends on life phases.

The greatest differences within all generations exist with regard to the topics of communication, respect, ecology, commitment and work-life balance.

What does this mean in detail?

Communication: Who still waits weeks for a letter today when an email, SMS or WhatsApp message can reach the recipient within seconds? The result is impatience. While generations Y and Z are characterised by fast life, the previous generations know the exchange by letter, fax and fixed telephone.

Respect: In former times, age, knowledge and experience were guarantors of respect. This respect has been lost through a different education. Respect for knowledge and experience has become obsolete through permanent access to the internet. Today, respect is earned by those who set an example and meet their opposite number at eye level. This different view, which usually goes hand in hand with a curt "hello" as a greeting for young and old, is often seen as disrespectful and alienating by people aged 45+.

Ecology: People don't separate waste, but sustainability is important to them? Since 2019, the year of Greta Thunberg, at the latest, the young generation has realised that rapid action is required with regard to environmental/climate protection. Expectations towards decision-makers (teachers, politicians, parents) have increased. The pressure of young people on political decision-makers is increasing. While waste separation was the ultimate ecological progress in the 90s, today's youth demands much more. Topics such as upcycling, unpackaging and sharing are at the top of current environmental protection programmes.

> **Excursion**
>
> **Upcycling** means reusing waste or old products to create something new. For example, fashionable handbags are made out of unused old jeans.
>
> **Unpacked** makes it possible to buy loose food in order to avoid packaging waste. Customers bring their own containers, such as glass jars. They bring their own containers, such as glass jars, which are refilled in the shop.
>
> **Sharing** means the organised, communal use of existing resources such as cars, tools, food, etc.. The term is also used in the context of the "Sharing" concept.
>
> However, also old knowledge is requested nowadays again from young people:
> *Old craft becomes popular again for upcycling and DIY (knitting, sewing, etc.)
> *interest in self-made products is rising (e.g. making your own homemade jam)
> etc.

Commitment: Generation Z's greatest difficulty is making decisions. Endless possibilities present themselves, which is why young people do not want to commit and decide spontaneously. It is very unlikely that young people will keep their appointments, especially since these digitally made agreements are not considered binding.

Generations Y and older think differently, because what they have in common is that appointments and verbal contracts are valid. In these social groups, it was and still is important to keep one's word and to stick to agreements, even if one doesn't enjoy it.

It is completely normal to be different. Everyone will agree with that, but in everyday life it often works differently, because hardly any of us have learned how to deal with different ways of seeing and living.

What generational conflicts can arise and how can they be resolved?

Conflicts arise when different generations stand in a relationship of dependency to each other, and different ideas, expectations and preconditions clash. However, this also creates a relationship, because people have measured each other's strengths and therefore get to know their opposite person better. Since only a few people can stand negative tensions for long, the road towards each other usually goes faster than you think. This creates a feeling of solidarity.

> **Remember**
>
> Conflict is the confrontation of different views/opinions/interests, leading to discord or disagreement, between at least two people or groups.

Let's take a look at a few examples:

Example

Overtime at work:

For the baby boomer generation, overtime is something taken for granted. Gradually, Generation Z is now moving into the labour market. People of this generation have a completely different attitude towards it. Free time is more important than overtime. I am not prepared to work longer hours, if necessary, I will quit.

Climate change/climate catastrophe:

"Friday for future" activists demand that politics, business and society treat resources with more respect, because life as it is now will lead to collapse. Older generations recognise the importance of the topic, but demand that the younger ones stand up for it in their free time and not use their school days to go on strike for it.

Progress:

Young people are learning to use new media/machines in a playful way. People over 50 fear this rapid progress and feel useless and at a vulnerable position. To counteract this, there is a need for respect on both sides and an offer of intergenerational learning in the form of mentoring or coaching.

Smartphones:

Today's 16-year-olds cannot comprehend what life was like without the internet, without social media. People over 60, on the other hand, do not understand why the mobile phone always has to be with them, always at hand, and how one has to move in the digitalised world in order to be accepted.

Communication:

Older people prefer to communicate face to face, looking for the personal conversation. The younger generation, who have grown up with the latest communication channels such as Facebook or Instagram, choose the electronic form of communication. This is much faster, but also carries the risk of being misunderstood, as the direct exchange with the other person, and thus facial expressions, gestures and speech melody are missing. Apart from that, digital messages can overwhelm the older generation because of the fast speed.

Politics:

Today's youth want to help shape politics and therefore their own future. New youth organisations actively engage in events and demand acceptance and respectful use of their voices. Older people

are often of the opinion that performance must first be made, both in terms of education and by paying taxes, before they are allowed to influence political events.

These different perspectives on life are the salt in the soup of intergenerational cooperation.

What are the 4 types of conflicts and how can they be successfully resolved?

Disagreements, misunderstandings or misconduct can destroy many things. Often friendships that have lasted for years come to an end, relationships break up, families go their separate ways or love relationships are on the point of breaking up.

For harmonious cooperation, it is important to identify conflicts at an early stage and to counteract them.

"I don't know what it is, but something is wrong".

More information on the topic of conflicts, how to deal with them successfully and how to resolve conflicts can be found in Learning Unit 6.

The following chapter shows how to optimally support the exchange of knowledge.

1.5 Learning from each other

There are many definitions of learning; however, what they all have in common is the fact that **learning is a process that is meant to change**. Learning together often happens by chance and without a system, so it is particularly important to prepare for intergenerational learning.

In this regard, the quote of Pearl S. Buck, a US-American writer, shall guide us in the following chapter:

"Let the young go their own way, but a few guides will not hurt."

What is the benefit of learning from each other?

Community-based, intergenerational learning **helps to broaden horizons by bringing in individual potentials**. The cooperation of young and old supports the understanding of each other, reduces prejudices and creates solidarity between the generations. The traditional cooperation between generations is to be transformed into a cooperation that is able to work out, cope with and solve social challenges together.

The basic conditions for this are openness and commitment on the part of all those involved. In addition, in an intergenerational context, the social climate as well as the personal and social competence of the individual persons are important. They are crucial for the success of the learning process.

How do people get into conversation with each other?

In contrast to homogeneous groups, special skills are needed in the learning group of intergenerational teaching and learning participants.

Many older people bring basic communication experience with them, but it is still important to clarify which requirements are useful in order to get along well with the other person.

Let us now look at the **most important features of intergenerational communication**:

What do we need to be able to communicate successfully:

- Ability to contact
- Authenticity
- Mutual Openness
- Empathy
- Acceptance
- Frustration tolerance
- Being able to tolerate differences

Using an example, we would now like to make you familiar with the individual characteristics:

Based on a day trip of a school class of grade 11 together with a group of people in the age group 55+ to a local history museum.

Ability to contact: During the joint bus ride, the older and younger people already got into conversation. The condition for this was the willingness of all participants. It is important to clarify the right close-distance relationship.

Authenticity: Everyone stays authentic, no one tried to imitate their opposite person. The differences in communication and perception could therefore be worked out very quickly. It is important not to try to please everyone, but to stand by oneself.

Mutual Openness: Through mutual openness, the intergenerational group was able to get used to each other very quickly and an interesting group dynamic developed. It is important to listen and to ask questions even if something uncomfortable happens.

Empathy: In the museum, some wanted to be on their own, others were looking for a conversation within the age group, others were looking for a conversation with older people in order to question their experiences. Here, all participants showed a lot of empathy in dealing with the others. It is important to put oneself in the role and perspective of the other person.

Acceptance: In the following discussion about the past, different opinions came up, nevertheless everyone remained tolerant and respectful in the discussions. It is important to treat the other person's differences with respect.

Frustration tolerance: Much of what the 55+ generation brought with them in terms of knowledge generated a lack of interest among the younger ones. The willingness to share more details about life before this generation did not lead to the expected success. It is important to be able to tolerate the fact that a wanted goal cannot be achieved.

Being able to tolerate differences: Even if there was sympathy for each other, there were still differences of opinion, especially on the topics of technical progress, environmental protection and politics. It is important to be able to accept the differences and still stay in harmony.

> **Hint**
>
> The ability to connect with other generations can be developed through practice.

Let us now look at the motivations that can lead to the desire to learn together.

On the one hand, learning together leads to a lot of recognition on both sides, on the other hand, earning success is a common goal. The voluntary nature of participation in the exchange with the respective other generation offers informal access. The educational benefit strengthens self-confidence and offers the people involved a deeper insight into and a change of perspective on already familiar topics.

Educational activities like this help to prevent learning disengagement among older people and raise their motivation to work. The health-specific aspect is the protection of mental and physical health. The development of new contacts and the extension of the social network prevent isolation and a life on the edge of society. Being together in the course strengthens the personality and makes it easier to cope with crisis situations in life.

The most important reasons for being motivated to share one's knowledge with others are acceptance, meaningful use of time, personal development, building new contacts and getting to know and accepting the viewpoint of a counterpart from another generation.

In order to be able to reach the common goal - continuing education - a plan is needed.

In the following we will deal with the necessary steps to be able to start the teaching-learning process and the question of where you can get support in this regard.

Ideas often arise very spontaneously, out of a situation, for example by looking at others and comparing how you would have done it. But how do you get from the idea to the finished teaching concept and what exactly do you need to make your teaching successful?

Step one should be to think about **WHAT** exactly you want to share, if you already have enough knowledge, if you need further literature, and what other things are needed.

Once the material question has been clarified, it is time to deal with the how and where.

The **HOW** depends on the teaching content. While manual work is primarily taught practically, and often requires machines, theoretical knowledge requires a properly comprehensive curriculum.

Regarding the location **WHERE** the project should take place, it is important to consider the technical requirements and it is helpful to get in touch with different institutions locally or in the near surrounding area.

We will deal with the creation of a training manual for your training measure in the next learning unit. Before that, however, we would like to give you a little support on the way from idea to action.

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Where can one find suitable rooms, work instructions, training material, practical tips?

Where?

Just as important as the script is the place where you want to teach. Depending on the project, several locations are possible, or perhaps only one specific one, such as a wood workshop, depending on WHAT you are going to share.

Ask at the magistrate's office/municipal office which public spaces can be offered to you. Educational institutes are also happy about new offers, contact the different providers directly. They can usually help you with tips and tricks on site.

Many educational institutions are happy about new ideas and suitable educational offers. Communicate your idea, often rooms and workshops are made available free of charge. According to the preparation time for the semester programme, it is a good idea to start planning early and get in touch with the provider as soon as possible.

In many social institutions such as pre-schools, youth centres, schools or retirement homes, group rooms are available during the day, in the evening or at weekends and can be rented. Enquire about this at your municipal office or magistrate's office.

Not only school gymnasiums or municipal sports facilities are suitable for sports events; often the municipality's own park or other outdoor areas are suitable as well.

In return for the consumption of guests, many catering establishments offer opportunities to meet for educational get-togethers, afternoon games for bridge or chess rounds, etc..

How?

Almost every town has a public library that is open to anyone interested in reading for a little fee. Your research should begin there. If you do not find what you are looking for there, check the internet for possible material.

You will find larger public libraries in all university towns. Many of them also offer inter-library loans.

Here are a few links to help you find what you are looking for:

www.openlibrary.org/

www.gutenberg.org/

digital.library.upenn.edu/books/

You can also get support directly in training measures with the title "Train the Trainer". Take part and learn how to do it, or how you want to do it, or how not to do it. 😊

1.6 Summary

In Learning Unit 1, we dealt with maintaining a vibrant life for young and old through the **interaction of different generations**. Demographic change, technological progress and socio-political challenges require the cognitive exchange of knowledge in both directions.

Learning is an ongoing process that accompanies you throughout life, regardless of where you are or what you do. For example, informal learning is considered to be **any kind of knowledge acquisition** that happens incidentally, completely unstructured, through friends or family, through media or in the company of others. This is distinguished from the other two forms of formal and non-formal learning, those types that are consciously engaged in.

You know that **learning is structured in three parts**: on the **subject level** through the exchange of knowledge, on the **relationship level** through interaction and on the **action level** through doing things together.

In the section "The Diversity of Generations", from the Baby Boomer Generation to the Beta Variant, you learned that many **needs have changed, disappeared or completely new ones have been added**. It is important to respect these needs when planning a cross-generational project in order to enable friction-free, relaxed cooperation. You already know the characteristics of **intergenerational communication methods** and can implement and guide them accordingly.

Tolerance, openness and enthusiasm for learning in a heterogeneous group are basic requirements for success. Emerging conflicts serve to broaden horizons and are solved professionally - with the help of Learning Unit 6.

Concluding this learning unit, you will find **support** regarding **your course** location, the required literature and your working materials.

In the next learning unit we address the question, what happens after the idea. What does it take to become a successful teacher?

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AGE WISE

DISCOVER YOUR TEACHING POTENTIAL

Learning Unit 2

AGE WISE

2 Discover your teaching potential

2.1 The introduction

How important is the quality of the presenter's work?

In addition to the task of imparting knowledge, the presenter also has the role of a trainer. Those who manage to present their enthusiasm for the topic and the content in a credible way and use their effect on the participants consciously will be able to carry away the audience.

Your personal teaching/learning potential should be used in a strength-based way and developed according to your pedagogical environment. Tasks you want to propose should be adapted to your target group and correspond to your qualifications.

Starting from this, in this learning unit we are going to discuss the **tasks of presenters**, what know-how you already have, **what values you cultivate** and are important to you, and how you can weave these into your future work and present them successfully.

2.2 Seniors as teachers

Now let's look at your role as a teacher in the first step.

Humans are considered to be "homo discens", a learning being that is dependent on learning in order to exist at all. Constantly learning new things or relearning what we have learned is a necessity for human survival. Our ancestors already passed on vital information to others.

You, as the educator now slip into this role. But how is this role defined?

People who lecture in front of groups belong to the category **trainer /seminar leader/course leader**. They **accompany a learning group** and have the **multifaceted task** of organising the workshop/course, imparting relevant knowledge, leading the group and motivating active learning. They are employed in adult education, in-company continuing education or at private and municipal educational institutes.

Regardless of the professional skills you need to be able to shape the content of your seminar, the following character traits can help you to get off to successfully get started:

Right from start, you should **enjoy contact with other people**. Your **enthusiasm** makes it easy for you to engage your audience with your thematic content. You need a healthy dose of **assertiveness to** be able to steer the group and intervene if necessary.

Already in the first meeting with the group it is important to create **trust**, to **appear confident** and **self-assured and** to present oneself **eloquently**, passionately and sufficiently **prepared.**

As an **empathetic person,** have an **understanding for other opinions**, **patience** and a **solution-oriented approach**.

Your **ability to concentrate** guarantees that you will not lose the thread. Thanks to your **mental and physical resilience,** you manage most of the seminar programme with ease. Your distinctive **sense of humour** makes your seminar entertaining and keeps your audience happy.

> ### Definition
>
> "Trainers in adult education work with groups of individuals or with members of groups, teams, departments, organisations and companies. The trainings serve reflection, behavioural development and the acquisition of professional knowledge, social and methodological competences.
>
> In seminars lasting from several hours to several days, the trainers work on topics together with the participants. The trainers provide their expertise, give impulses and ensure a good learning atmosphere.
>
> (www.berufslexikon.at), AMS Berufslexikon, 10.09.2022, 13:01)

What are the tasks involved in designing a workshop/course?

- the efficient preparation, organisation and implementation of the workshop/course
- The goal-oriented transfer of knowledge and its organisation in the form of documents, exercises, etc.
- The independent research of the teaching content and the preparation of this content
- The motivation of the participants and their enthusiasm
- Administrative tasks such as written documentation
- Supporting the participants in the workshop/course

The following table gives you a brief overview of the most important qualifications in the training context that you need to be able to manage seminars successfully:

Skills and Competences	Requirement
Conceptual competence	The ability to create new concepts or revise existing ones and tailor them to a specific clientele.
Communicative competence	It is not only the words that need to be well thought out, but also impressive body language. This is indispensable for the credibility of a speaker.
Conflict competence	When a seminar runs out of control, disagreements, differences of opinion or friction arise. If there is conflict, it is the teacher's task to de-escalate the situation in the group or in the course of individual discussions.
Rhetorical competence	On the one hand, a target group-oriented choice of language is needed to gain acceptance; on the other hand, clever use of language can generate attention, emphasise content and influence the mood.
Presentation skills	The targeted choice of technical means, the preparation of the corresponding scripts, but also the adherence to the given presentation time are important parameters in the transfer of knowledge.
Moderative competence	With the help of the moderative technique, learning content can be conveyed in a more personal way so that the sustainability of what is learned is given. Following exercises, each individual is encouraged to reflect on the meaning of the task and ask questions.
Reflexive competence	At the end of the day or workshop/course, there is usually a feedback round in which the content, scripts, methods and role of the presenter are assessed. The self-critical reflection and the review of the seminar represent this competence.
Methodical-didactical competence	This competence determines the method to be used in the teaching-learning process. There is a variety of methods to choose from, such as face-to-face lecture, discussion or individual work. It is rarely the case that only one of these methods is chosen, usually it is a bundle of them.
Social competence	In order to convince a group, it is indispensable to be able to respond to each individual person and to meet them with empathy. The so-called pick-up of the participants is one of the most important steps in the training context.
Entrepreneurial competence	Anyone who wants to work in the education sector on a self-employed basis needs basic business knowledge: As a teacher you have to think of expenses and revenues. What are the costs for the course (e.g. materials, excursions, etc.)? What are the revenues? Is it profitable? Consider also any overheads (e.g. room, electricity, heating, etc.)

Which of these skills you already have and which you still need to acquire or improve in order to turn your idea into the finished seminar, is what we will deal with a little later.

Similar professional groups are clearly distinguished from the task of workshop/course management. For better understanding, we will make a small excursion to familiarise you with common terms from the education and social sector:

> ### Excursion
>
> **Speakers are** considered experts in a specialised field.
>
> **Moderators are** responsible for steering group processes such as panel discussions.
>
> Accompanying individuals or groups in the learning process, or observing and supervising problem solving, is the responsibility of the professional group of **coaches or supervisors.**
>
> Persons in **life and social counselling** can accompany psychosocial issues in a preventive or interventional way.
>
> People trained in **mediation and conflict management** ensure that disputing parties (private as well as professional) find their way back into dialogue with each other.

But let's come back to the **activity in the training** and how you can recognise your own strengths.

2.3 Discover your potential

"No one knows what he can do until he has tried it." (Pubililius Syrus, Roman author)

When we speak of potential, we mean everything that is at our disposal to perform. On the one hand, this can be genetic predispositions, but also skills acquired through learning processes in school, work or leisure.

Most of us are aware of our qualities, but there are some that are undiscovered and only come to the surface through training.

Let's take the example of a 7-year-old child who is introduced to a musical instrument for the first time at school, and within a very short time the musical talent becomes apparent. Another example is the retired accountant who suddenly discovers his appreciation for art and begins to paint.

Which potentials do we distinguish?

- Physical components: Strength, speed, endurance, fine motor skills, etc.
- Sensory components: visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, kinaesthetic and sensorimotor potentials
- Technical components: manual, artistic, athletic, musical talent
- Psychological components: motivation, diligence, frustration tolerance, ability to concentrate, etc.
- Intellectual components: Combinational skills, judgment, creativity, intuition, intelligence, abstraction, etc.
- Volitive components: willpower, capacity for suffering, determination, assertiveness, etc.
- Emotional components: sensitivity, empathy, enthusiasm, etc.
- Moral components: love of truth, sense of justice, tolerance, solidarity, sense of responsibility, etc.

In addition to the scientific definition of potential, there is also the subjective perception of one's own performance and its expression.

Speaking of **creativity, for example,** this can have many meanings. Someone who is able to prepare a delicious menu without a recipe is just as creative as someone who puts a funny caricature on paper without a pattern or knits a multi-coloured jumper without using a pattern. Creativity is also often called for when things go off schedule. For example, when the grandchildren come to visit unexpectedly, the fish ordered for the Sunday invitation was not delivered, or the sudden thunderstorm drowns your garden party.

In case **conscientiousness is one** of your strengths, you will certainly find yourself among those people who love order, act dutifully, take leadership and responsibility, and think carefully before acting. Typical hobbies for people of this type are being in charge of finances in a club, model airplane building, collecting stamps, babysitting or helping in non-profit organisations such as the fire brigade, soup kitchen, etc..

You don't mind picking up one grandchild from kindergarten, another from school an hour later, taking them both to lunch, taking your daughter's winter coat to the cleaners in the afternoon, picking up flowers on the way back and baking a cake for your neighbour's 70th birthday in the evening? Then you are one of those people who are crowned with **resilience and reliability.**

Every Thursday evening you play volleyball, Mondays are your get-together and if the whole family is gathered around you at the weekend, then you are happy? Then **teamwork** seems to be one of your strengths.

What activities have you performed professionally? What area of responsibility did you hold? In which position have you had the greatest professional success? Regardless of task, earnings, reputation - in which role were you happiest? What is important is not the hierarchical level, but your own feelings.

In the search for your hidden potential, the following guiding questions can be helpful:

- Is there a topic in which your **expertise** was and is always in demand? In which topic have you been professionally successful? When do you listen immediately? The range of your professional experience can include everything from labour law to space technology to hygiene regulations that you have been familiar with in the course of your career.

- Are there activities, **processes** or sequences that you know off the top of your head because you may have worked in the event sector or planned and organised the company Christmas party every year?

- Are there **tasks** or **activities** that you are particularly good at? The income and expenditure accounting of your small business was on the agenda? The central purchasing of consumables was assigned to you? You were responsible for the annual stocktaking?

- What **character** and **cultural experiences do** come with you? Have you spent several months abroad on business? Do you or your ancestors have a migration background? Have you worked in an international company? All your impressions and experiences in the intercultural field could influence your future activities.

Go on a treasure hunt! In order to recognise your abilities, reveal them and to be able to use them successfully, you need a so-called **potential analysis**. The easiest way to do this is to sharpen your awareness of your talents and strengths, but also of your needs and weaknesses. For this purpose, a piece of paper and a pencil will be your constant companions from now on. The project of self-discovery is sustainable, open in all directions and can be carried out at anytime, anywhere.

You are also welcome to ask family members and friends for support in this project. The self-image you know is often completely different from the image of others.

Important questions that will help you to recognise your potential:

1. What qualities do I particularly like about myself?
2. What is easier for me than for others?
3. What are my greatest talents?
4. Which compliment makes me particularly happy?
5. What do I not like at all when dealings with others?
6. What do I need to be happy?
7. What is my working style?
8. Do I like to be the center of attention, or do I prefer to be in the 2nd row?
9. Can I deal with unpredictable situations, or do they throw me off track?
10. What is my attitude towards people from other generations around?
11. Do I know failure and how do I deal with it?

Let's now look at your expertise, which you may bring with you from your professional activities.

**Discover your strengths!**

Co-funded by
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- What expertise do you have?
- Which system and process flows that belong to your product/your service do you know?
- What tools do you need for this?
- Which standards do you know?
- What methods do you know?
- What role have I played in team situations?
- What have you particularly been valued for by your colleagues?
- How would you evaluate your creativity at work?
- How would you evaluate your communication at work?
- What were your strengths and weaknesses in the professional context?
- How did you cope with stress at work?

Let's look at this in more detail with the two examples below:

	Cook	Accountant
Expertise	Knowledge of meat, fish and vegetable preparation, spice and herb knowledge, creating recipes, menu creation,	Recording of business transactions, checking of receipts, preparation of balance sheets, financial statements and inventories, payroll accounting, if applicable.
Process flow	Delivery - storage - preparation - serving - return - cleaning - disposal	Auditing, account assignment and posting of business transactions, processing of transactions, drafting of tax returns and payrolls, etc.
Tools	Knives, pots, pans, peelers, shovels, flippers, tongs, ricers, cutlery, etc.	PC and software
Standards	Workplace area, floor condition, room climate, fire protection, storage, etc.	Various laws and standards such as Legislation, data protection, etc.
Methods	cookshop, sideboard kitchen, serving kitchen, teaching kitchen, canteen kitchen, etc.	Income-expenditure accounting or double-entry accounting

Such a grid can be created for almost every occupation listed in the training regulations or in the catalogue of the Chamber of Commerce. This helps you to categorise your knowledge, recall forgotten things or explore new ones.

Use the information available on the internet from specialised schools, the national employment office, the business community or consult specialised literature. Create a network of professionals who you can ask for advice at any time or with whom you can exchange information regularly.
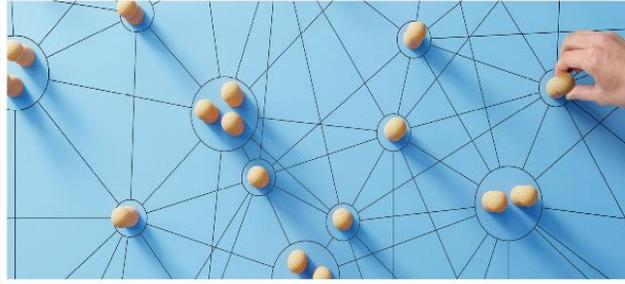
This knowledge will help you to prepare your training material in a chronologically correct, exciting and comprehensive way. In order to plan the content structure, please put yourself in the position of a **non-professional, without prior knowledge**.

What is a must criterion to understand the topic, what is a can criterion and what thematic or time buffers can be included? Work out your topic point by point on the basis of a pre-prepared table of contents, which you can add to or shorten at any time.

You can find out more about creating training materials in Learning Unit 3 .

One point that **should** not be neglected are your **values.** In harmony with others, you will feel good. On the other hand, you will feel that something is wrong if things take a different course than you would like. Therefore, it is important to define your own values and align your plan accordingly.

We would like to give you a small excerpt of the comprehensive set of values and help you to recognise them for yourself and to integrate them into your work process.

> **Definition**
>
> Values are characteristics or qualities that are considered morally good and are important to you. They provide meaning and are the basis of your beliefs. They exist in society, in diverse social groups and for individuals. The culture of the parental home is formative for the development of personal values.

Here are some examples of how values can influence your work:

- **Trust:** If this value is important for you, you will deal with your tasks and the many people around you with confidence and you will be trusted.
- **Accuracy:** If you embrace this value, but are put under pressure on a project, you will probably feel very uncomfortable and even more inclined to make mistakes.
- **Creativity**: If you are given little room to do your job, but as a creative person you have to limit yourself, then you are probably in the wrong role or working for the wrong company.
- **Privacy**: If it is customary to talk about all the experiences of the weekend on Monday morning, but you value your privacy, then you will find questions from others disturbing.
- **Success and health:** If, on the one hand, you want to put in long hours in order to be successful, but on the other hand you cannot find time for balance in the sense of exercise, then you will experience a conflict of values.

- **Authenticity:** The culture of a company (e.g. you are on first-name terms with each other at all levels) must be supported by everyone. If this value does not correspond to yours, then sooner or later you will be frustrated and will seek the distance.

Back to you as a trainer.

You are good! And in order to fulfil your vocation to lecture, it is necessary to take the path in the right direction.

Find out what you are passionate about, what you are really energetic about and what you do with all your heart. Together we will create the brand "I", your product or your service, and you will go public with it!

How do you now successfully implement your skills?

Pay attention to the competition! Surely there is already an offer somewhere that is similar to yours or possibly even the same. If we now convert this insight into positive thinking, this will spur us on to work out an important differentiating criterion.
Use your network to update your knowledge and publicise your product/service. Attend events where your topic is on the agenda. Keep in touch with people you meet or get to know there, either in person or via social media.

Learn to be attentive to your audience and perceive moods. Prepare for your big performance. Every athlete warms up before the big competition. You should also train your voice, control your breathing and practise your presentation at home - even with a family audience.

It is then only a small step from theory to practice!

The more precisely you know your **professional competences and values**, the easier it is for you to prepare your activity as a trainer.

Your professional know-how forms the basis of your script, which you can supplement/improve with current findings, the latest figures, current laws or new design if necessary. Your intellectual potential is given to you.

However, only those who share your values can cooperate with you profitably. This includes, on the one hand, the educational institutions to which you can present your offer and, on the other hand, the target audience to whom you want to pass on your knowledge.

Finally, we would like to introduce you to two options for self-evaluation that support you on your treasure hunt to discover you potentials.

- In course of the Erasmus+ project AGE:WISE, an online self-reflection tool was established that helps you to discover your available competences and find out what you in your new role as a teacher still need: https://www.agewise.eu/competences/&lang=en
- Another popular self-evaluation tool is the SWOT analysis. SWOT is made up of the first letters of the words Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

SWOT		INTERNAL ANALYSIS	
		Strengths (Strengths)	Weaknesses (Weakness)
EXTERNAL ANALYSIS	Opportunities (Opportunities)	From which strengths do new opportunities arise?	Which weaknesses to work on in order to take advantage of opportunities?
	Risks (Threats)	What strengths minimise potential threats?	Further development - so that weaknesses no longer become risks

This 4-part matrix is designed to help you increase your chances of getting a position as a trainer, because if you can assess yourself very well, you can "sell" yourself better.

2.4 Create your learning path

The existing potential is already given to you, your values are known to you, and you are aware of them. Now it is time to find out **what you still need in order to successfully start your activity in continuing education**.

The following 8-point programme is intended to help you structure the complexity of seminar design and recognise where you still need support. Because only those who know what tasks await them can determine where there is still a need for action.

1. Contract discussion with the educational institute
2. Collection of ideas on the topic
3. Concept of seminar design
4. Methods in training/workshop
5. Contents and layout of documents
6. Organisation of the training/workshop
7. Implementation of the training/workshop
8. Follow-up

The initial briefing with the educational institute (regional adult education provider, online course providers, sports clubs, libraries, municipalities,….) is at the beginning of your plans and requires mainly **rhetorical skills**, because after all it is about offering and selling your project to your future cooperation company.

What does rhetoric mean in concrete terms? This is the practical communication behaviour of people that is geared towards success, effectiveness and persuasion.

Do you recognise yourself here?

- You can maintain your confidence in a wide variety of situations because you are able to respond skillfully and intelligently to questions, statements or perhaps even verbal attacks?
- You can argue convincingly because you find and use appropriate expressions spontaneously?
- Your rich vocabulary makes you seem intelligent and educated?
- Quick-wittedness, presentation skills and persuasiveness earn you sympathy and respect?

Do you agree with all these points? Then congratulations, because rhetorically you are well equipped to enter adult education and everyday training.

Point 2 deals with **the collection of ideas on the topic**. This requires your basic professional knowledge, which can be brought up to date by means of specialist literature, videos or social media channels. To support this, public libraries or university libraries are available where you can buy an annual card for a small fee and thus gain access to a wide range of media. The necessary competence for this is to be able to set priorities and separate the important from the unimportant.

After preparing the topic, the next step is to work out a **concept for the seminar design**. A seminar outline is the written plan for one or more teaching units. It is important that the theory is easy to convey and that a common thread is recognisable.

In addition to your script, point 4 provides the seminar with the necessary **"technique"**. The methodological-didactic competence enables you to incorporate the different methods of teaching design into your concept. Do you want to work exclusively in face-to-face teaching, or may there also be group work or discussion rounds? Will the lessons be theoretical or theoretical and practical? Which settings are required, which working materials and/or machines do you or your audience need in order to be able to participate - all these questions need to be considered in the point **Methods in training.**

Outstanding seminar and training materials fulfil several functions at once, because as **well-structured working materials** they support the success of your training measure and they serve as your business card. It is therefore even more important that your seminar and training materials make a good impression, are of high quality and convince with their functionality.

Designing the **content and layout of documents** is a very creative activity that requires a lot of time. The experienced handling of the PC and current computerized software help you to design a script that is appropriate for your audience in terms of colour and graphics.

A final point of the preparatory activities is the **seminar organisation**. This means the exact planning of seminars in detail. This includes the clear differentiation of the areas of responsibility between you and the organising training company, the number of participants, the organisation of the room, the description of the seminar, etc.

This requires both **organisational talent** and **negotiating skills.** After all, you are preparing your seminar in all necessary aspects.

Once all these organisational points have been clarified, the seminar can finally start.

Now it is important to **engage the group right from the start**. Through different phases in the seminar design, attention is kept high and breaks ensure the necessary relaxation. Both your **social competence** and your **rhetorical skills** are in demand.

At the end of the day, the seminar needs to be **followed up**. Here, the focus is reflexively placed on the entire training. What went well, what could be improved, how satisfied were you with yourself and your performance, how did your audience react, and what was the assessment by the participants? In order to understand - often unspoken - feedback, you need your **reflexive skills**. Empathy, appreciation, but also dealing with (self-)criticism support you in this.

So far, so good.

If we now compare your existing skills with the required skills again, there will certainly be potential for improvement here and there, or there will be a need for training in the first place.

In the following units, you will learn how to best integrate these competences into your training, how to design teaching materials, what technical requirements are needed nowadays and what you should consider with regard to your audience.

Now, to be able to take this preparatory step, we will show you how to create a **learning path that will** help you gain the competences you need for your training activity.

What is a learning path? Learning paths show a structured path through coordinated tasks/exercises that enable you to **independently** repeat existing familiar things and acquire new ones.

The overriding principle is "**the path is the goal**", because whether you stringently work on point A before point B and before point C, or take a look at some further literature after point A before tackling point B, or even start with point C because you like it best, that is entirely up to you. The important point is to be able to orientate yourself on the basis of the path, what has already been worked on and what still needs to be done for your intellectual summit victory.
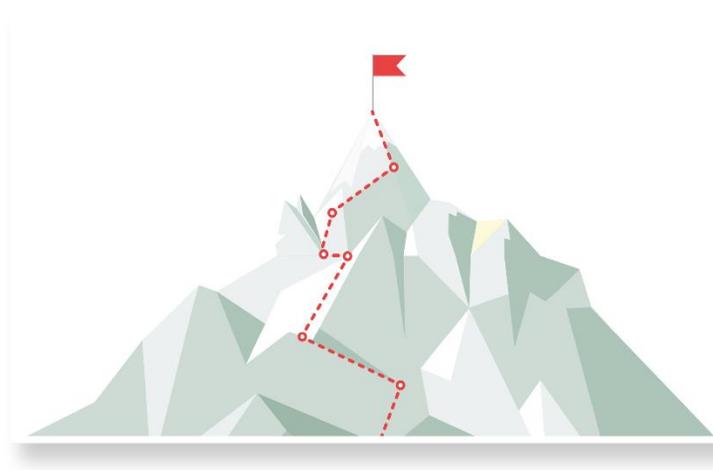
1. First of all, you have to set your personal learning goal(s) to gain the competences that you need for your activity as an educator. Make sure that you are setting SMART learning goals for yourself as well (more information can be found in Learning Unit 5.
2. Be aware to choose credible learning resources: have a look at literature or online resources from experts, search in academic online databases, check other online resources for credibility by comparing available information and checking the authors of the resources
3. Stick to a pre-defined **schedule along your learning path**.

As an example, we will now create a learning path using the subject area of communication.

In order to structure the **learning plan**, we need information about **details**. The main component is our voice and our body. We distinguish between

- verbal communication
- nonverbal communication
- visual communication and
- tactile communication

Thus, these 4 types of communication form our **headings**. The learning objectives are the chapters that make up the headings - the **sub-headings of** a topic. The learning content represents the sub-headings in detail.

Competence	Learning Goal & Learning Outcomes	Learning content
Verbal communication	**Education lessons, individual speech training**: ● Breathing correctly when speaking ● The targeted use of your voice ● The melodic voice sound ● Promoting faster thinking-speaking ● Vocal variation as a means of shaping the presentatinon	The actual state of your breathing. What is deep breathing? What breathing techniques are there and how do you use them. How do vowel massages work and how can toning - the free expression of voice and movement help. The conscious formation of consonants and vowels. Relaxation, voice and speech exercises. Shaping expression through rhythm, melody, pauses, dealing with stage fright, vocal hygiene.
Nonverbal communication	**Basics of body language and its use** ● Basics of body language ● Elements of body language ● The personal repertoire of expression ● Body language in everyday life	How does body language work and what does it mean? What unconscious elements of expression and behaviour patterns are there? Eye contact, facial expressions and gestures. How do I make an impression on others? Using signals consciously, winning sympathy through body language, the 4 distance zones, territorial behaviour, recognising and resolving conflicts on a non-verbal level, getting to know and recognising cultural differences in non-verbal communication.

Competence	Learning Goal & Learning Outcomes	Learning content
Visual communication	**Selecting the right elements for visualisation** ● Composing a message ● Information, motivation ● Use of design principles	Sign language and signs, what is the significance of visual information and communication technologies? Forms of easily understandable content, infographics, tables, diagrams. A picture is worth a thousand words - information processing in visual form

Tactile communication	The haptic perception ● Skin contact ● Haptics ● Odours ● Proximity-distance ratio ● Social roles	Tactile communication vs. verbal communication, function and protective reaction of the body, chemical communication via smells, greeting ceremonies

Another variant of a learning path is a **weekly template**.

This is structured similarly to a school timetable and offers you an even more detailed overview of your training progress. The indication of concrete learning times, supports you in planning your day and observing necessary breaks. Something that you absolutely have to take into account in seminar planning and should therefore already consider in your own learning plan.

Day	Date	Topic	Time	Subitems	What	Questions	Done
1	xx.xx.xxxx	Verbal communication	08:00 - 09:30	Breathing correctly when speaking	The actual state of breathing; What is deep breathing, etc.?	How do I develop the right breathing technique for stress-free speaking?	
			09:30 - 10:00	Break			
			10:00 - 11:30	The targeted use of your voice	Vocal massages and how toning - the free expression of voice and movement can help. Forming consonants and vowels.	How can sound, vibrations and tone production be influenced in one's own body?	
2							
3							
4							
5							

You can see from the two examples that it depends on your individual preferences which variant you choose. Whether you create your personal learning path **analogue**, for example in the form of a weekly plan or a table, or whether you use one of the many **digital online tools** - both lead to the **goal**.

Your previous knowledge will determine which subsections your learning path should contain. If you are working on a topic that is completely unknown to you, or if you want to delve deeper into a chapter

that you already know, it is helpful to organise subject-related literature on the Internet or in the municipal libraries.

To follow your learning path, you can choose among various learning techniques available and proven for self-learning among which you are able to choose: reading, online courses, educational videos, available learning apps, visual note-taking (e.g. creating mindmaps), podcasts etc. Additionally, there are some important tips to consider for your self-learning experience:

- Create a calm study space for yourself that you feel comfortable at
- Set yourself realistic goals
- Have more frequent, but short study sessions
- Take notes in a way that you feel most comfortable with (e.g. handwritten, typed,...)
- Review your notes on the same day

2.5 The summary

In your role as a teacher, you **accompany learning groups and have multifaceted tasks** like the organisation of a workshop/course, imparting relevant knowledge, leading a group and motivating active learning. To be able to successfully manage courses/workshops, following competences are important: **conceptual competence, communication competence, conflict competence, rhetorical competence, presentation skills, moderative competence, reflexive competence, methodical-didactical competence, social competence, entrepreneurial competence.**

In order to **successfully organise the workshop/course**, following **tasks have to be fulfilled**: preparation, organisation and implementation, independent research of the teaching content, goal-oriented transfer of knowledge, involved administrative tasks, support of the participants.

To **discover your personal and professional potential**, guiding questions as well as family and friends can help to discover your strengths and weaknesses. This will help you to become aware of the effect you have on others and the image you have of yourself and others.

To **uncover your need for additional training, different tools** like the online self-reflection tool, developed in course of the Erasmus+ project AGE:WISE https://www.agewise.eu/competences/&lang=en or the SWOT analysis might help you. After that you know which know-how is available to you, where you still see a need for training and how you can incorporate your personal characteristics and experience into the seminar planning in a targeted manner.

If you still have some catching up to do in terms of individual competences, you know how to **prepare your personal learning path** in analogue or digital form and how to use it effectively:

1. Set your realistic personal learning goal
2. Choose credible resources
3. Create the schedule for your individual learning path

To achieve your learning path, various techniques are available that you can apply.

In order to successfully link the tasks identified in the learning path with existing knowledge, we deal with the topic of learning theory in the following learning unit.

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LEARNING THEORY

Learning Unit
3

3 Learning theory

3.1 The introduction

All of us are given to begin learning from the first day of our lives. Daily progress expands our skills. But how do we actually learn?

In this learning unit, we will look at the **best-known learning theories** and the question of what process lies behind the **process of acquiring knowledge and skills**. Learning theories try to organise and summarise existing knowledge about the learning process. These topics explored in psychology and pedagogy, how a person can learn and how the learning process takes place, lead, through the acquisition of new knowledge, to a relatively constant change in behaviour. It is relative because existing knowledge can be lost again if it is not remembered.

An example of this is vocabulary in a foreign language which, if not used, will fall out of memory again.

The step-by-step approach you take to building your materials and course/workshop will create a sense of achievement for the learner, which will encourage them to move on to the next stage of learning. You will learn **which models are most appropriate for which group of learners** and how to prepare them in an appropriate way.

Further on you will get to know **different learning styles** and their advantages and disadvantages. You will gain knowledge about Kolb's learning cycle and Honey & Mumford's learning styles - these will support you in developing intergenerational learning materials.

3.2 Learning to learn

The term learning has Indo-European roots and means something like "trace", which indicates that we leave a trace when we learn.

Learning works like a strategy game, you define your framework conditions at the beginning as well. You decide whether you want to learn with a book or prefer to learn on a PC, you define your learning environment, whether at home or in a public area, and you define your learning time. We will talk about how to create the best strategy for your learning success a bit later.

What does "Learning" mean?

Many learning theories try to explain this process, so in the following we will give you an overview of the two main arms - the **behaviourist** and the **cognitivist learning theories**.

Behaviourist learning focuses on the individual and observes how the stimulus received by the learner is reflected in his or her behaviour. Positive and negative events play a major role in the learning process.

Let us first look at classical conditioning, known from dog training. This was founded by the Russian physiologist Ivan Pavlov and means that two stimuli are coupled together.

Experiment by Pavlov:

Food was brought to the dogs, which produced saliva by the view and smell of the food. The **unconditioned stimulus (US)**, automatically led to the **unconditioned response (UR)**.

Further on, the sounding of a bell was added to the food delivery. This **neutral stimulus (NS)** did not produce any response.

Only through the combination of the bell, coupled with the distribution of food, the dogs began after a few times to produce saliva as soon as the bell sounded, no matter whether they were given food or not.

The neutral stimulus (the bell) therefore became a conditioned stimulus (CS), to which a conditioned response (CR) followed.

Following on the experiment of Ivan Pavlov, a similar experiment was carried out with a 9-month-old child. This study by J. B. Watson is called "Little Albert".

> **Hint**
>
> The look at a lemon causes our mouth to tighten. Although you only see or think of something sour, it makes you feel like you have one in your mouth.

However, classical conditioning cannot explain how new behaviours are created.

Another type of conditioning is operant, or "learning by reward/punishment".

Frederik Skinner, American psychologist and behavioural scientist, locked two rats in a cage, the so-called Skinner box.

In this box there was a handle and a food bowl, but the handle had a different function for each rat. While for one animal the handle meant food supply, the same handle gave electric shocks to the other rat.

Skinner noticed that the positive reaction (food supply) of one rat strengthened the spontaneous behaviour of pressing the handle. On the other hand, the negative experience (electric shock) caused the other animal to reduce the behaviour. The scientist called this effect **"learning from success"**.
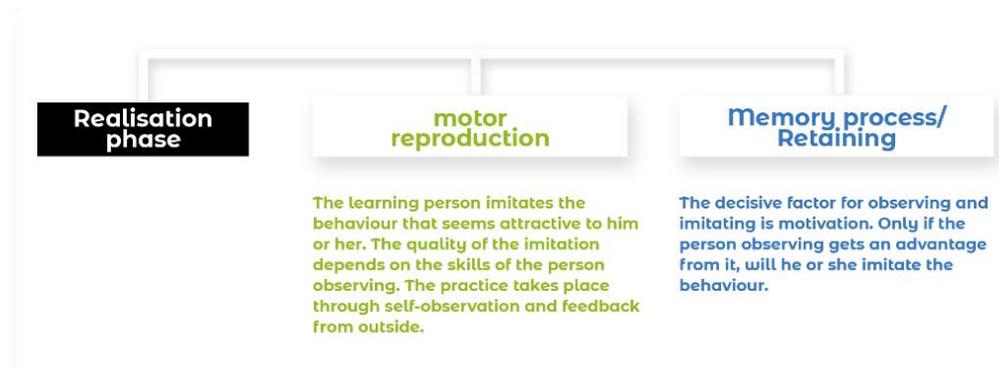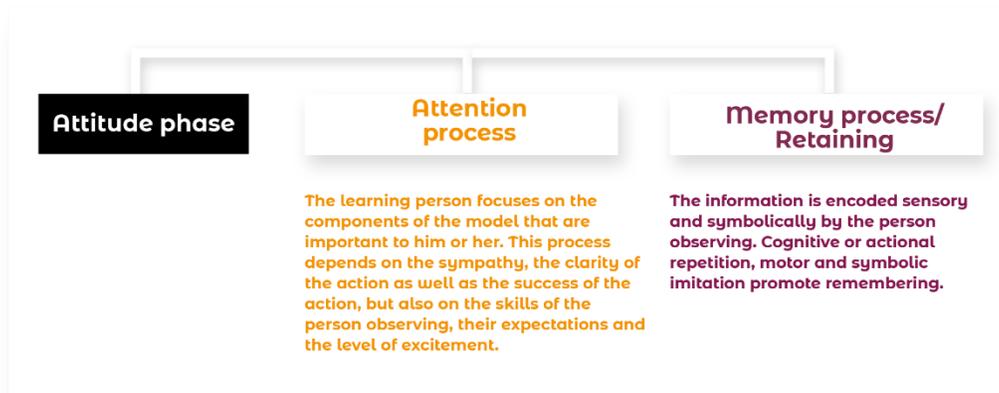
In school education, this is understood as the classic practice of studying until success is achieved. **Tasks are repeated until they "fit"**. To achieve this, the learning goal must be clearly defined, the learning steps must lead to the goal in a logical sequence and learning success should be possible in approx. 95% of all learning units.

Individual information processing is the central point in **cognitivist learning theories**. These theories assume that the learning person has an **active role**. In cognitivism, learning is seen as a process that

involves not only information processing, but also the interpretation, discussion and solution of problems related to the learning content.

"Learning from the model" theory according to Albert Bandura (Canadian psychologist)

The assumption of this model is that learning is based on observing models. This theory of thought is divided into two phases and four stages:

Attitude phase

Attention process

The learning person focuses on the components of the model that are important to him or her. This process depends on the sympathy, the clarity of the action as well as the success of the action, but also on the skills of the person observing, their expectations and the level of excitement.

Memory process/ Retaining

The information is encoded sensory and symbolically by the person observing. Cognitive or actional repetition, motor and symbolic imitation promote remembering.

Realisation phase

motor reproduction

The learning person imitates the behaviour that seems attractive to him or her. The quality of the imitation depends on the skills of the person observing. The practice takes place through self-observation and feedback from outside.

Memory process/ Retaining

The decisive factor for observing and imitating is motivation. Only if the person observing gets an advantage from it, will he or she imitate the behaviour.

Another model is the **learning theory according to Jean Piaget**, Swiss educationalist, known for his work on child development.

Piaget assumed two innate tendencies in cognitive development. On the one hand, the adaptation of humans to their environment **(adaptation),** which takes place through the adjustment of the environment to the needs of the individual **(assimilation)** or the individual's own behaviour to the environment **(accommodation).**

The second tendency is the organisation, i.e. the classification of one's own behaviour into coherent systems. According to Piaget, child development progresses in stages based on these tendencies.

You can find more information on this at https://www.educationcorner.com/learning-theories-in-education/

Another learning theory in education is **constructivist learning theory**.

For this theory, the prior knowledge of the learner plays an important role. **Learning content** is not only stored, but **linked to prior knowledge, personal attitude** and the current learning **situation**. This creates an individual image of reality in the brain - an active construct of knowledge.

This theory is based on the fact that the brain is a closed system that receives external stimuli through the sensory organs, interprets them and consequently processes them into an individual sensory impression. Therefore, what a person sees, hears, tastes or smells is completely subjective.

During the learning process, this subjective perception can be linked to the fact that learners are supported in their individual perception, work out the learning content partly on their own and recognise connections or solve problems. The **personal exploration** of the learning content is therefore in the foreground.

The picture below is an example of this. Some see two faces looking at each other. Others see a grey cup.
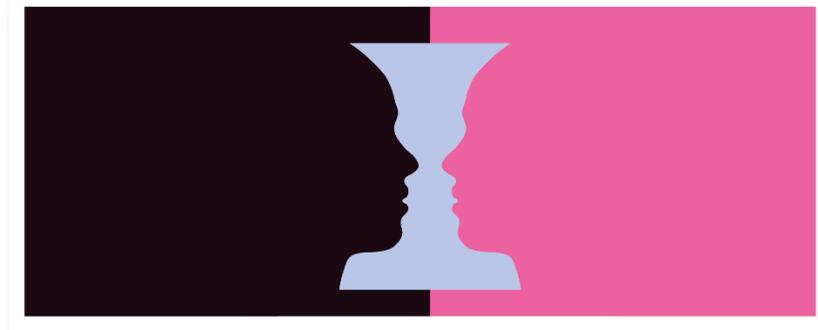
Connectivism is the most recent learning theory. It refers to **learning in the digital age**, where humans, as networked individuals, are connected to other people as well as to non-human sources (internet, books, etc.). Knowing where to find knowledge when you need it is at the centre of attention. Knowledge is created in the network, which is especially practised by highly technologised people - above all the younger generation. Personal experience moves into the background. Decision-making in a fast-changing world, connections in different fields of knowledge and participation in networks represent the new way of learning. An example is IT-supported teaching in German, where learners complete their tasks on a laptop (and no longer handwritten in a notebook).

You now know which different learning theories exist to gain knowledge. You have been able to expand your pedagogical knowledge with psychological knowledge in order to generate didactic action from learning theory. The measures you have to take as a speaker in order to successfully **use the right learning theory therefore strongly depend on your audience.**

The following table summarises the **4 learning theories** again and gives an overview of your role as a teacher.
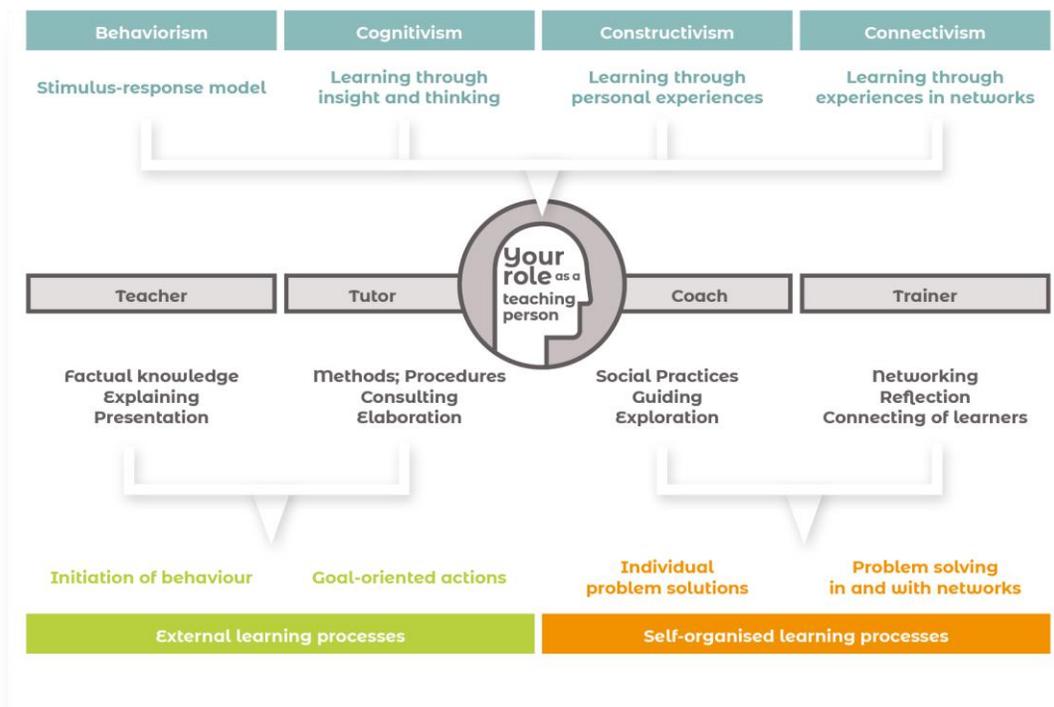
The next section deals with **learning strategies**. Effective learning means learning mindfully and using the available resources in a goal-oriented way.

> **Hint**
>
> A learning strategy is one's individual way of learning or accomplishing tasks in the most effective way.

Which aspects should you pay attention to in order to make learning effective, especially for the younger generation?

Learning styles and thus the preferred way of learning differs according to the generations the learner belongs to. The background and preferences of the generations have to be considered. When considering the **younger generation** (Generation Z) following learning strategies should be considered:

Experiential learning – learning by doing

Interactive learning strategies involving all their senses and letting them experience on their own is very effective.

Learning with technology

Generation Z are digital natives, the internet is used on a regular basis as it provides on-demand information. Including some kind of technology in your course/workshop satisfies their needs. Get them involved with their suggestions as well, maybe they know about a great educational video in

regard to the course/workshop topic on Youtube that is highly suggested in order to get into the topic.

Personalised learning

The learners of generation Z want to have a voice in what and how to study. Involve them in their learning decisions and directions to personalise their learning experience.

Social learning

Although generation Z prefers learning independently, they also like to exchange, share knowledge and co-create with other students.

Hybrid learning

Hybrid learning offers students to be more independent in their learning while also being guided.

3.3 Visual, auditory and kinaesthetic Learning Styles

The following section gives you an overview of how you can retain what you have learned.

You probably remember your most beautiful holiday, your 50th birthday or your first kiss very clearly. Our brain stores events that we associate with great feelings particularly well. Unfortunately, also the negative ones. You probably know exactly where you were on 11 September 2001 when the twin towers of the World Trade Center crashed in on themselves. **Feelings and sensory impressions** are the most effective sources for storing experiences, stories or smells.

To effectively apply these resources in your teaching-learning process, we will show you how to activate your senses and emotions in learning and remembering. Science currently considers ten senses when it comes to human perception. These include the **five senses already known by Aristotle** (Greek polymath):

In modern science, these five are complemented by the following:

Balance sense, Pain sense, Temperature sense, Movement sense (the body's knowledge of what position it is in) and the **Visceral sense** (the ability to perceive internal signals from the body - e.g. stress).

In terms of learning success, these first five senses in particular support us.

In our brain, all the senses are located close together in the **cerebral cortex**, which is about 3 mm thick. The brain separates important from unimportant information, memories are stored in coded form and pass through several stages.

Knowledge that needs to be recalled quickly is stored in the **ultra-short-term memory**, but its capacity is limited. If a new piece of information seems more important than a previous one, this knowledge is lost.

However, if the **input is given a lot of attention and even emotion**, the process of permanent storage in **long-term memory** starts. Everything between these two storage locations reaches the short-term memory, where it can be retrieved between 30 minutes and a few hours.

In order to be able to transport knowledge into this area, there are different ways, which we will now address.

The first step is to find the best way for the learner. We make a difference between three different learning types, the so-called **VAK learning styles**.

Visual type
looking & watching

Auditory type
hearing & speaking

kinaestethic type
touching & doing

Based on the individual focus in each case, the learning material can be better prepared and therefore stored more sustainably in the brain.

The **visual type** watches and observes by **reading, creating graphics, drawing pictures, creating mind maps or using videos and films** to fix knowledge. People of this type of learning are seen as imaginative and creative; they immediately have pictures and thoughts of everything in their heads.

The danger of visual perception lies in inaccuracy. You often hear from these types of learners that they have already seen everything. That may be, but only in big pictures, because details are often overlooked and what is lost from view is quickly forgotten.

Chaos in the learning area is disturbing and working through similar tasks quickly leads to boredom, which is why it is helpful to create your own pictures and present the knowledge graphically.

The **auditory type** supports the learning success by **listening and speaking**; lectures, podcasts, audio books serve the learning process as well as dictating and listening or conversations.

Learners prefer pre-defined structures to great flexibility; their learning environment requires quiet but not silence. The writing style is short and realistic, there is little imagination.

Good listening is the key for the auditory type, the learner likes to listen to others, when learning he or she reads to him- or herself and repeats it verbally, often also in the form of a poem or by singing.

The auditory type is also known to put problems to music by talking to themselves, because what they hear is easier to process.

The **kinaesthetic type** is the one who wants to "grab" the learning material in the sense of practical work, experiments, role plays or group activities - **moving, acting or feeling** are in the focus.

People of this type find it difficult to sit still, they always want to be in motion and work things out practically. Moods are noticed very quickly, harmony is the primary goal. Kinaesthetic learners like to learn in groups.

When working on a topic, they get straight to it without thinking about it for a long time in advance. "Learning by doing" is the motto of this learning person.

The more senses are addressed at the same time, the greater the learning success!

90% **seeing, hearing, doing, discussing, explaining**
70% **saying, seeing & hearing for yourself**
50% **seeing & hearing**
30% **only seeing**
20% **only hearing**
10% **only reading**

To find out which type of learning gives you the most pleasure or success, you can take numerous **learning type tests online**. There is no clear classification for any one person into the three different typologies, but each learning object tends towards one method. In order to get variety into your daily learning routine, it is helpful to **switch between the different options**, because nothing is more annoying than monotony.

In the following, we offer you an overview of the most common methods of preparing or processing information, regardless of the personal learning type.

Our brain works like a searching machine on the internet. The better a piece of information is linked to others, the easier it is to remember. Therefore, it is important to learn in a network and to establish similarities with other topics. A **mind map** is suitable for visualising the networks.

The structure is like a map showing a public transport network. Starting from the centre of the sheet of paper where you write your topic, everything you can think of is added around it and then things or terms that belong together are connected. Work with colours to create thematic circles, vary the line thickness to separate headings from content. This created network is **saved by your brain as an image and will be reproduced when needed**.

Mnemonic bridges are a useful aid when the brain is unable to store information. This means constructing a suitable story, rhyme or other context for a certain thing. Be creative, the important thing is that you use this method to remember something that does not want to be remembered in the usual way.

EXAMPLES

SVOMPT: The letter order stands for Subject, Verb, Object, Manner, Place, Time and describes the exact sentence order in English.

Spelling rhythm: Rhythm Helps You Two Hips Move.

„My Very Educated Mother Just Served Us Noodles.": Note on the order of the planets, sorted by proximity to the Sun (from far away to close): Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune.

Learning with a **flashcard** is one of the classic methods used especially in the field of language learning or for formulas in mathematics or chemistry.

The term to be learned is written on the front of the flashcard, and either the translation or the explanation of the term is written on the back.

This is the so-called 3-slot system, a card index box with 3 slots.

At the beginning, all cards are in box 1. When starting to learn, a card is taken out of the box, the term is read and "translated". If the answer is correct, the card is moved into box 2. If the answer is wrong, the card remains in box 1.

The next day, terms from box 2 are repeated. If the answer is correct, this card goes to tray 3. If the answer is wrong, the card goes back to tray 1.

In this way, it is possible to repeat the learning material until all cards are in box 3.

Learning while walking is helpful for long passages of text, such as in films and television, or for juristic formulations.

Write down the text, speak it several times in connection with movement. The brain stores the movement sequences together with the text and is better supplied with oxygen by the movement.

In order to prepare difficult learning material, a **written summary** is suitable, where the specialised vocabulary and its connections are written down in texts. With this method, the information is once again stored in the memory and can be recalled in the long term.

Are you familiar with the **dictation machine** built into your smartphone? You can use it to read texts to yourself or to save important memories with your voice. You can listen to, add to or delete these recordings at any time.

And last but not least, there are numerous **videos, films and clips** to be found on the internet that can help you to record and process your subject visually.

In order to work through learning from the teacher's point of view, it is important to have some background knowledge about the psychology of learning and its influencing factors. For this purpose, we will now look at the two learning theories according to Kolb and Honey-Mumford.

3.4 Kolb's learning cycle and Honey Mumford learning styles

Learning styles were developed in the 1970s through the psychology of learning. They distinguish between different ways of gaining knowledge, skills and abilities. Of the more than 80 known learning style models, we would like to introduce Kolb's model first.

According to the theory of **David. A. Kolb**, an American educational theorist, the **learning cycle consists of existing experiences, reflection, theory building and trial and error.**

Let's first take a look at the graphic below.

Image source: Lernstile nach Kolb – Das Lernen lernen – Elternrat Thun (jimdofree.com)
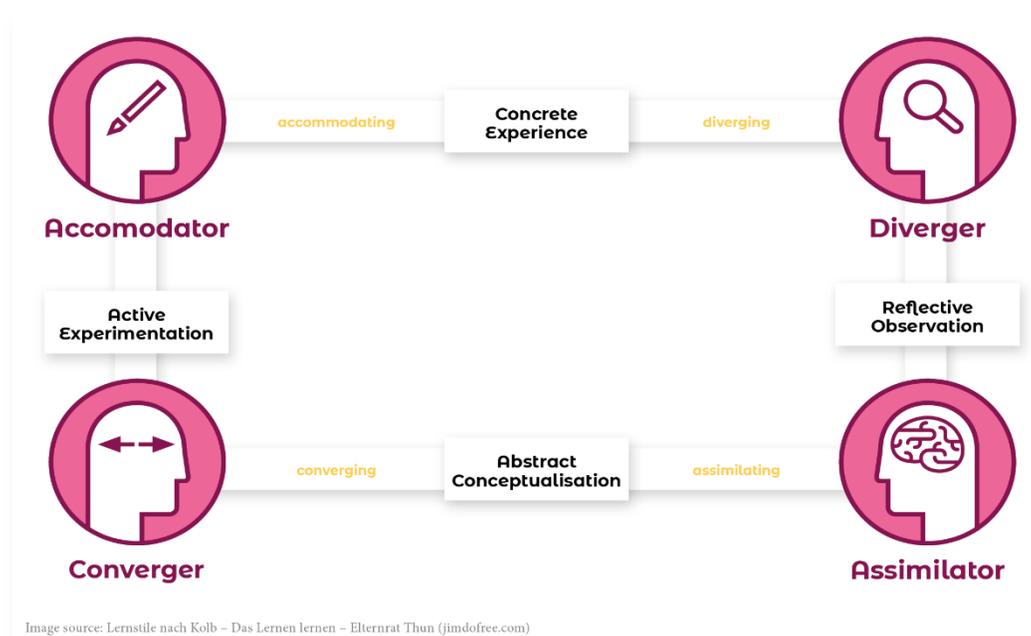
According to this learning cycle, Kolb expects people to learn in four phases:

1. concrete experience
2. reflective observation
3. abstract conceptualisation
4. active experimentation

The concrete learning process passes through these phases as follows: first, new, concrete experiences are made, which are then evaluated more in detail through reflective observation. The next step is abstract concept formation, possibly with a theory.

The new term (or theory) is tested and applied through active experimentation. New experiences can therefore develop, which closes the learning cycle.

Only a few learning processes go through all four phases - most of the time only some parts of the learning cycle are passed through, whereby the learning styles can change at any time.

Kolb identifies **four types of learning styles** from this learning cycle, where each type is characterised by two learning phases.

- **The thinker (assimilator):** reflective observation and abstract concept formation. People of this type are particularly good at putting broad knowledge into logical contexts. They prefer to focus on ideas and concepts rather than people, so lectures and fundamental theories are their preferred form of learning. **Short profile: reasonable, unemotional, logical, structured, independent**

- **The decision-maker (converger):** abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation. The decision-maker likes to apply theories in practice and use them to solve problems. Social tasks and contact with others are not his strengths. **Short profile: objective, result-oriented, competitive, spontaneous, efficient**

- **The explorer (divergent):** concrete experience and reflective observation. This learner likes to observe situations from different perspectives. The advantage is that he or she likes to develop new ideas and work in a team. Personal feedback is appreciated, active exchange in forums and explanations based on examples are useful for this type. Usually, this type is culturally very broadly positioned and artistically active. **Short profile: imaginative, questioning, deliberative, open for discussion.**

- **The maker (accommodator):** active experimentation and concrete experience stand for this type of learner, who learns more through his or her own experience than through theoretical knowledge. This learner enjoys working with others and likes to acquire knowledge in a practical way. **Short profile: practical, genuine, risk-taking, active, humorous**

By practising a learning phase with awareness, the ability to learn through this learning phase is improved. Going through different learning phases increases the quality of the learning process.

What is the relevance of Kolb's model for teachers and learners?

	Explorer	Thinker	Decision-Maker	Maker
Form of presentation for learners	Likes to present orally (presentation, lecture, discussion), visually and graphically supported; likes to go off topic; picks up on current topics	Likes to give a lecture and to pick up on what is already known; does not like experiments; visualises what is relevant to the content by means of diagrams, graphics, etc.	Likes to present case studies; likes to bring own examples and pick up from practice; questions, what can I use it for? Moderates his/her presentation	Prefers PowerPoint presentation or to show on the blackboard; offers an entertaining show with illustrative material
Form of learning	Lets others show something and observes; wants to gain experience, discuss problems, deepen his/her own	Needs to be given a clear goal, wants to proceed logically; works on texts theory by him-/herself; delivers well-structured presentations	Wants to be involved; likes practical work, learns from checklists	Feels comfortable in a group with humour; wants to present results him-/herself; with variety and excitement

	understanding of the topic, draw conclusions			
Exercises	Does not want to have detailed descriptions, only advice; loves to have experiences and report on them; prefers to observe and describe; feels comfortable in heterogeneous groups	Likes challenging (thinking) tasks, elaborating theory; likes to make an analysis of interrelationships; likes individual work	Wants recipes, i.e. explanation down to the smallest detail; does not like surprises or anything new; learns with mnemonics; needs a homogeneous group	Likes exercises to be able to follow practically; likes to make something with attractive material; loves the challenge and partner work

	Explorer	Thinker	Decision-Maker	Maker
Course material	Likes summaries and case studies; enjoys reading reports of experiences	Loves books and needs documents with a clear structure with source references; scripts must be complete	Likes practical scripts with examples and checklists	Prefers self-completion material that is designed to be entertaining
Teacher	Should guide, act cooperatively and still be challenging	Must be professionally excellent and able to score points for expertise	Clear leadership, clear tasks and practical examples	Needs charisma, competence and a solid presence

Knowledge about learning styles and the four problem-solving steps in teaching and learning help to **increase the effectiveness of learning processes**. Try to adapt your scripts and lesson design to this, but avoid the collaboration of the maker and thinker type, as well as of the explorer and decision maker type as much as possible.

The **Honey & Mumford model** is very similar to Kolb's model. This model is based on the idea that people learn in four phases:

These four phases lead to new insights, therefore this **cycle will continue without end**. Each end of the cycle is also a new beginning.

Honey and Mumford assume that one's own **experience plays a major role in learning**. This influences the different stages of the learning cycle, whereby the learning person does not think carefully about the type of learning, because **learning happens everywhere and at all times**.

The model includes four learning style types:

- **The activist**, his/her learning style is:
  People of this type learn by doing, they are not afraid to get their hands dirty, they are open to new things. Their motto is "I'll give it a try", which means they jump straight into the unknown and worry about the consequences later. Projects can be started through brainstorming, role-playing or active problem-solving approaches.
- **The thoughtful person**, for him/her applies:
  Thoughtful people do not like to be in the spotlight, but to observe from a shorter distance. They like to collect data, compare and analyse them. Often, they are considered problematic because they express justified doubts. But by providing them with facts and figures, you can quickly get them on board.
- **The theorist** is:
  "Does it make sense?" is probably the most common question of this learning style type, because only logical theories and rational systems can convince them. Tending towards perfectionism, these individuals reject subjectivism, they only trust in data and facts.
- **The pragmatist** learns:
  This learning style type wants to unite theory and practice, to put abstract concepts into practice. These learners see new things as opportunities and challenges. This type of person is characterised by impatience to try out something new immediately.

Knowing one's own **learning style**, or the learning style of the people participating, is very helpful, because it allows knowledge to be shared more efficiently and success to be achieved more quickly.

If you want to start a project, it is helpful to unite the pragmatist with the activist, to provide the theorist with numbers and therefore convince the theorist. If you **unite all four learning style types at one table**, it will have a successful end.

3.5 Summary

This learning unit gives you a broad overview of the theory of learning. What is learning, how does it work and how does our brain work when we learn something new? The **learning theories** that were described are categorised as follows: **behaviourist learning**, the one in which the person observes and is reflected in the behaviour. You have learned about Pavlov's model in this context. Another method of conditioning is the theory according to Fredrik Skinner, who researched learning by success with two rats.

The **cognitivist learning theory** according to Bandura and Piaget is based on observing role models and imitating them.

Subjective perception of situations and a reflection of one's own reality is decisive for the **constructivist learning theory**, while the networking of social individuals with inhuman sources such as the Internet belong to the technical term of **connectivism**.

The chapter VAK learning styles gives you an overview of **different modes of perception in the learning process**, of the **senses** that are addressed and of the **tools** that different learning types can use to be able to understand what they have learned more successfully. A short excursion into the design of **visual, auditory and kinaesthetic aids** completes this topic.

Finally, you learned about the **two learning styles according to Kolb and Honey-Mumford**. The different forms of learning, presenting, the design of learning materials and your role as a teacher were elaborated in detail in this part.

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FUNDAMENTALS
OF METHODOLOGY & DIDACTICS

Learning Unit
4

4 Fundamentals of Methodology and Didactics

4.1 The Introduction

Are you familiar with the words methodology and didactics?

The words methodology and didactics originate from the Greek. **Methodology** is considered **"the art of a planned approach"** It deals with HOW a course content can and should be presented in order to achieve a learning goal. **Didactics** describes the **"art of teaching and learning".** It deals with **WHAT** and **WHAT FOR**, i.e. which learning goal is pursued and what content is needed for it.

In pedagogical practice, methodology and didactics are interwoven. For you, this essentially means answering these questions:

- Why do your students come to your class and what do they want to learn?
- What content will you use to support the participants in achieving their learning goal?
- How, i.e. with which methods, will you convey your knowledge and skills to your students?

In this learning unit you will learn which **didactic methods** have already been **tested in practice** and can therefore be used well in your teaching activities in **an intergenerational setting**. In addition, you will get an overview of the **different teaching styles** and approaches to knowledge transfer in order to be able to choose the ones that are most suitable **for you and your target group**.

4.2 The Art of Teaching and its Methods

In order to make your **teaching-learning process** effective, consider at the beginning **how** you can pass on your knowledge in such a way that the information can be **absorbed, processed and reused by the course participants in the best possible way**.

In **the preparation** of your lesson, you should deal with the following questions:
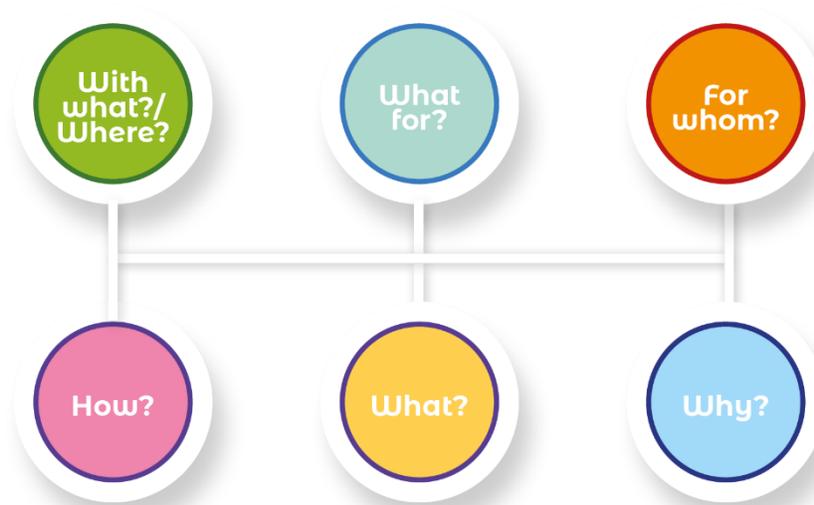
For what?
What sense do you see in passing on your knowledge and skills?

For whom?
Who are the participants in your lessons? In which circumstances do they resemble each other (e.g. age, place of residence, previous knowledge) and how can you address them in such a way that they are interested in your teaching topic as well as in you as a teacher?

Why?
What teaching goals do you pursue? What should the participants know and be able to do after your lessons?

What?
What content do you convey?

How?
How do you convey this content (e.g. storytelling and practical joint action)? How can you increase the enthusiasm of the participants for the topic?

With what? Where?
What tools do you use in class (e.g. screen presentation or exploring together in nature)? Which place of learning do you choose (e.g. a seminar room or the forest)?

Example

Imagine you are preparing a traditional cooking course, what could be the questions for the preparation of the lessons?

For what? Because there are people who are interested in traditional food and want to receive existing knowledge in this regard.

For whom? For people interested in the topic of cooking and traditional recipes.

Why? So that those people are able to cook traditional recipes and use traditional ways of preparation. And that this old knowledge is maintained.

What? Traditional recipes and traditional ways of food preparation
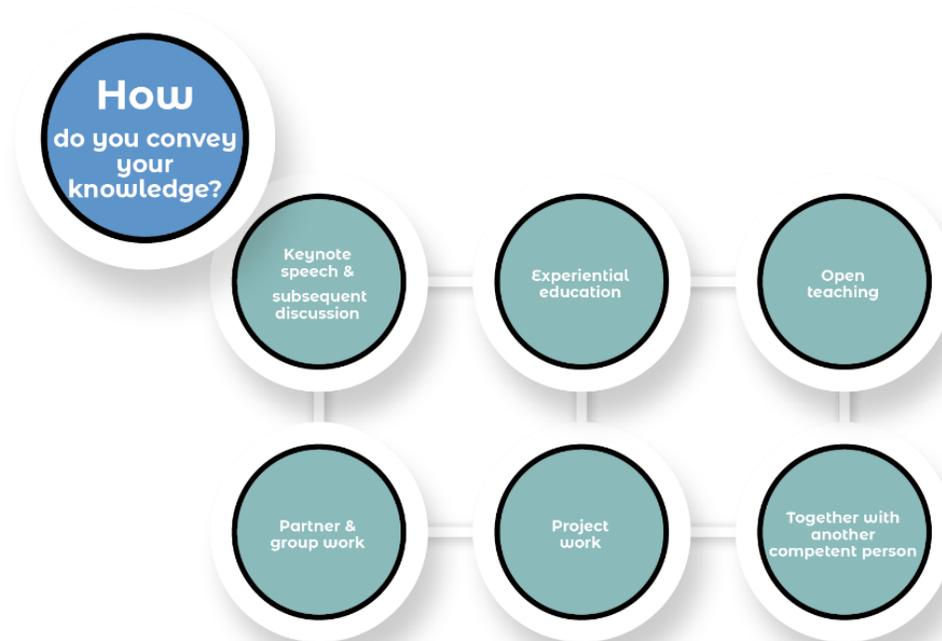
How? Preparing traditional dishes together.

Important

Consciously design your lessons in such a way that - in addition to passing on specialist knowledge and information - you **actively involve the participants** (e.g. make a guessing game or knowledge quiz, let them explore the content to be learned on their own as part of a joint excursion or let them reflect on the topics discussed in individual groups and then present them). More information can be found in Learning Unit 6.

For the **how?** There are numerous possibilities for your knowledge transfer. The following methods are very well suitable for the intergenerational learning setting.

The most popular methods

How do you convey your knowledge?

- Keynote speech & subsequent discussion
- Experiential education
- Open teaching
- Partner & group work
- Project work
- Together with another competent person

- **Keynote speech and subsequent discussion:**
  You give a brief and concise insight into the topic in about 30 minutes. Afterwards, you will lead to a joint discussion with particularly exciting questions.
- **Experiential education**
  A precise definition is just as difficult here as the experiences can be diverse. What is certain is that you actively involve course participants in the topic, so that they work through challenges well by their own actions.
- **Open teaching:**
- In this form of teaching, you pay particular attention to the fact that the learning environment meets the needs of the participants, which can change repeatedly. While you design the lessons, you provide the learners with instructional periods that they are allowed to design themselves.
- **Partner and group work:**
  You prepare work assignments on your topic, which are carried out in pairs or groups (= 3 or more people). In this form of teaching, you observe the partners/groups, listen to them carefully and advise them. Afterwards, it is your task to either present the respective results yourself in a way that is conducive to learning for all, or to guide each group in doing so in front of and for all participants.
- **Project work:**
  The focus here is on both teaching and learning for you and the participants. In this case, your knowledge alone will not lead to a satisfactory solution. This requires the cooperation of all participants. If you are the project leader, however, define the specific goal, the timeframe, and the available resources.
- **Team teaching:**
  Together with at least one other person who also contributes their skills on the topic, you will prepare, conduct and evaluate the lessons.

Practical relevance

Whenever possible, **mix the different methods** in your lessons! By alternating entertaining AND activating elements, you increase the learning success.

Forms of learning

People learn throughout their lives, and not only in educational institutions. As you learned in Learning Unit 1, learning in general, as well as intergenerational learning, can take place in three main contexts. In the following, the characteristics of the different forms of learning, defined by the EU, are explained in more detail:

Note

Formal learning

Formal learning is provided in approved educational institutions (vocational training, studies, continuing vocational training) on the basis of a predetermined curriculum and is aimed at an official degree. The focus is on the acquisition of knowledge, skills and competences. Tests and other similar forms of assessment are used to measure learning outcomes.

Practical relevance

You may have experienced formal learning at school or at the university: in the institution where you've got your official diploma, recognized on the national level.

Note

Non-formal learning

Although non-formal learning also takes place under didactic aspects, within an organisational framework, it does not aim at an officially recognised certificate (e.g. a retired sports teacher teaches his/her favorite sport). The focus is on a conscious decision of the learners to learn/master a certain activity/skill. However, non-formal learning continues to develop towards formal learning as learners become more competent.

Practical relevance

This will be the most common way of learning for planned intergenerational activities. You are experiencing non-formal learning just now, reading this material. This course is not obligatory for your diploma at school, but it gives you new skills. You will transfer your knowledge to other generations during your workshop, using non-formal learning methods as well.

Note

Informal learning

Informal learning can also be targeted, but usually happens incidentally in everyday life (work, leisure, family). In this case, a didactic structuring of the lessons as well as certificates are rather neglected. However, informal learning is essential for our knowledge acquisition and should therefore not be underestimated. Informal learning is often referred to as experiential learning.

You may have experienced informal learning in your family - everyday, in any moment: cooking together, reading a book with your parents or nephews.

In the next chapter, you will find out what makes teaching and learning in an intergenerational environment so special.

4.3 How to design your lessons in an intergenerational way

Social values and approaches to educational topics have changed considerably. Young people in particular are less interested in acquiring knowledge (the Internet is used for this), but rather in the acquisition of practical (problem solving) skills. "Repair cafés" and "upcycling workshops", for example, are becoming increasingly popular: A repair café, also known as a repair meeting, is a kind of learning workshop for helping people to repair objects themselves. Participants can for example repair their defective bicycles together with experts in this field. In an upcycling workshop things are not repaired, but transformed into something new through creative experimentation (e.g. a bag made out of a T-shirt). In both cases, a lot of initiative is used to prolong the reuse of the object or materials, thus avoiding waste.

Basically, learning across different age groups takes place in three forms:

Learning FROM each other
One generation learns from the other, e.g. reading mentorship.

Learning ABOUT each other
The respective generation shares its view on a topic with the other generation. In this context, the history of the past and the present are also addressed consciously, e.g. in a "storytelling café", people reflect together on a topic, e.g. history.

Learning WITH each other
In this case, no generation has expert status. In a project or on a topic, new knowledge is jointly generated and possibly also implemented, e.g. how people in financial need can be helped in the long term.

All these three forms of learning may occur in your course. If we learn partly from, about and with each other, the learning success is of particularly high quality. Experience has shown that intergenerational teaching is effective when it encourages to:

- **exchange experiences** with each other,
- gain a **better understanding of the other generation** and
- **improve their own communication skills.**

As numerous practical examples show, learning takes place automatically when the focus is on the joint activities of the teacher and the workshop participants. It is particularly promising when each person - regardless of generation - feels invited to contribute his or her own experiences and perspectives. This presupposes respectful interaction with each other and appreciation of the uniqueness of each person. In this way, on the one hand, the participants are able to look at a topic from the perspective of the other generation and, on the other hand, they are able to find creative solutions to intergenerational problems.

Parishes and communities in particular often provide convenient locations or space for a teaching project and arrange helpful contacts. You will find further tips on where to find support for your teaching project in Learning Unit 1.
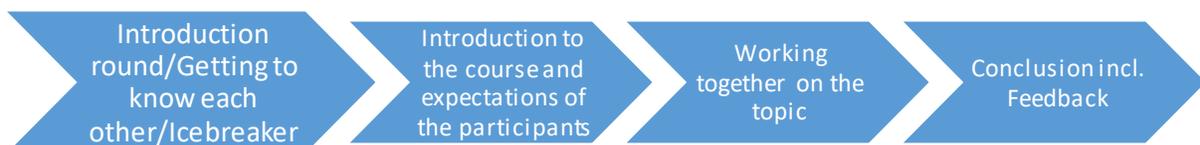
Some practical examples:

- **Learning assistance** for young people in order to improve their German language skills at school; this increases their chances of obtaining a school-leaving certificate and thus an apprenticeship.
- **Contemporary witness** for history lessons at schools
- **Various workshops:** "Customs and traditions throughout the centuries" (eg Christmas once and now), "ancient home remedies for the family pharmacy", "Herb walks, cooking and enjoyment", " grandma cooks regional homemade food", "Baking cookies according to old recipes", "discovering the forest with a hunter"...

Once you have decided on the content of your course and arranged the appropriate learning environment, you now decide how to pass on your expertise to your students.

The most important teaching-learning methods

In order to pass on your knowledge and skills to the participants, various so-called teaching-learning methods can be chosen. These help you to offer learners an interesting variety and at the same time increase their learning success. This means you plan the "HOW?" for each phase of your course.

| Introduction round/Getting to know each other/Icebreaker | Introduction to the course and expectations of the participants | Working together on the topic | Conclusion incl. Feedback |

To get started with the course:
At the beginning, an introduction round is a good way to get to know each other and to be able to cooperate well in the future. Your creativity and humour as a teacher will help to make this informal.
- One way to do this is to have each person introduce themselves by their first name and a more detailed description of who they are, such as "I'm Maria, a flower lover."

In addition, ask participants about their knowledge and experience on the topic of the course. Make connections between their prior knowledge and the upcoming course. Identify the expectations of the participants for the course and identify what would make their attendance worth it. Previous knowledge and experience as well as the expectation can be evaluated in the course of written individual work or orally in front of the assembled participants.
- Use this information to start the session by briefly going over all the comments and possibly writing down the most important ones in a way that everyone can read: In what way is each person's prior knowledge particularly helpful in the course? What are the expectations of the participants, which are likely to be met or not met in this course?

Give an overview of what activities your students can expect and write down the common schedule, including break arrangements, e.g. on a flipchart so that everyone is prepared and can adjust to it.

During **joint development** of the topic:

Get the learners excited about the content and the topic. This will create a motivating atmosphere.

- Encourage the participants to deal with the subject themselves - if possible, in a practical way (e.g. during a joint experience of a herb walk). Enable group and partner work on the one hand and discussion with all participants and you as the teacher on the other hand.

This is a good way to get different (generational) perspectives. Give the learners precise work assignments to stimulate and train their understanding and implementation in practice.

To conclude the course:

Visualise the results of the collaborative learning. Compare the starting point of the knowledge and skill level as well as the expectations of the participants from the beginning of the course with the achieved learning level and collectively celebrate the goals that you have achieved today.

- Ask individual participants for feedback (written or oral): What did they particularly enjoy? What would they do differently if they were the workshop leader? What key insight do they take home for themselves personally? Offer a preview of further courses in which content can be caught up on or repeated.

4.4 Your personal teaching style

By knowing and understanding **your preferred teaching style** and the studying **needs of your target group** in advance, you can prepare yourself more specifically for your upcoming teaching activities. This allows you to work **more confidently** with the participants and significantly **benefits their learning success**.

So that you can choose your personal teaching style, it is worth taking a closer look at **the different teaching methods**:

Teacher-centered teaching:

You lead all learners within a period in the same way with the same content to the same learning goal. In **modern teacher-centered teaching**, you supplement the classic lecture with reading out loud, experience reports, and exemplary demonstrations and the corresponding explanations. You also integrate media: overhead projectors, slides, audio, films, explanatory graphics on picture boards, etc.. This also allows short presentations by participants as well as small partner and group work sessions to lighten up the lessons.
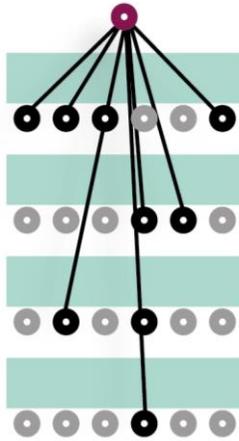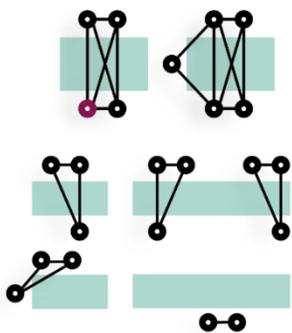
ADVANTAGES:

- Little time is spent on conveying information.
- Relatively few preparatory measures have to be taken.
- Hardly any aids are necessary.
- The achievement of learning objectives can be easily monitored.
- The behaviour of the students can easily be controlled

DISADVANTAGES:

- The students are less receptive and motivated with monotonous lessons and too much information.
- It is not important that the trainees form their own opinion.
- The knowledge is not applied practically.
- Hardly any emphasis is placed on cooperation.

Group work / Partner work

You divide your students **into groups of two or more** and give **each team a work assignment**. The learning objective can only be achieved if everyone in the group actively participates. While this sets a so-called "group process" in motion, you **observe well, listen consciously, and advise the teams**. You ensure that the respective group has a meaningful work plan. After completion of the work assignment, you **review** together with all participants and present clearly (in writing, visually, or orally) what has been **learned together**. As the teacher, make sure that all participants - including outsiders - are actively involved in the group learning process. To share the group results with those present, you can offer a variety of ways, such as poster design and subsequent presentation to all groups, mixing of groups to share ideas and experiences, or "booths" where respective group members share their results with those   interested.

ADVANTAGES:

- Learning in a team is more motivating.
- The content is taught in a diversified way.
- Organisational skills are trained.
- Participants get to know other people's perspectives and points of view.
- Mutual exchange of knowledge takes place.
- Awareness arises that the interaction of different personalities makes it possible to achieve an overriding goal even better.
- Communication skills (arguing, discussing, clarifying misunderstandings) are promoted.
- Each individual opens up to increasingly different approaches than he/she would have chosen on   his/her   own.

DISADVANTAGES:

- One must be able to rely on each other.
- Conflicts and friction occur.
- One's patience is tested.

- A conversation in a group can quickly drift away from the actual topic.
- Opinions can be taken over too quickly by the dominant members.
- Independent subgroups can form within a group.

Excursion

It can be very challenging for you as a teacher to assemble a group in such a way that the desired learning success is achieved in the end.

The British psychology professor **Raymond Meredith Belbin** already recognised in the 1970s that it makes sense to have different personal traits in a team. Ideally, these **9 team roles** should be represented in a group. It can be very challenging for you as a teacher to put together a group in such a way that the desired learning success is achieved in the end.
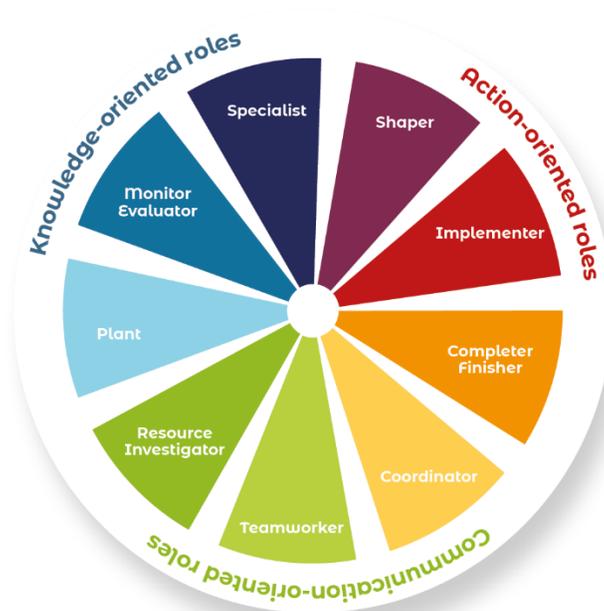
You can ask your students to self-assess which roles they think they most closely match and then form the respective groups:

Action-oriented roles
Shaper: courageously overcomes obstacles, likes challenges.
Implementer: successfully implements plans, is disciplined and reliable in doing so.
Completer/Finisher: ensures excellent results, works conscientiously and avoids mistakes.

Communication-oriented roles
Coordinator: motivates decisions, remains calm and self-confident, leads well
Teamworker: ensures successful communication, mitigates conflicts and disturbances
**Resource Investigator:** establishes contacts, is talkative and likes to present (himself/herself)

Knowledge-oriented roles:
Plant: provides fresh ideas and novelties, thinks outside the box
Monitor-Evaluator: sceptical of new proposals, checks the actual feasibility
Specialist: is committed to refining details, has useful expertise and up-to-date information

Project work:
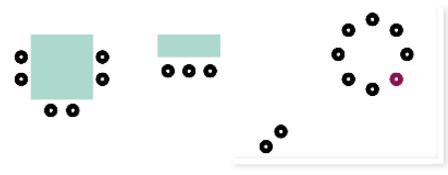
At the beginning, there is your **project idea** and how it can probably be implemented according to the framework conditions. **You plan the fundamentals of the project**: What do you want to achieve together with the learners (project goal)? How much time do you have available for this? What skills do you want the participants to cover? However, you remain flexible in your planning and prepare less than with other teaching methods.

Your students have a part in deciding how problems are solved and what is organised and done in which way. All participants work with their heads as well as with their hands in order to achieve the common goal, e.g. to make a piece of forest wildlife-friendly. You as a teacher have a special influence on the success of the project by advising, accompanying and considering yourself as the **person in charge**. Your **professional competence and support in joint planning and decision-making are essential**. On the way to the project goal, participants acquire knowledge, skills and the ability to pursue a result with different people.

ADVANTAGES:

- It promotes creativity, initiative and independence in problem solving.
- It increases communication, decision-making and conflict skills as well as the ability to act
- It practices planning and organisational skills.
- An awareness arises that the interaction of different personalities allows an overarching goal to be achieved even better.
- It strengthens social interaction.

DISADVANTAGES:

- If the majority of team members is not motivated enough, blockages occur.
- Lack of experience can make work more difficult and lead to excessive demands and reluctance.
- The process takes on a dynamic that can result in chaos.

Workshop:
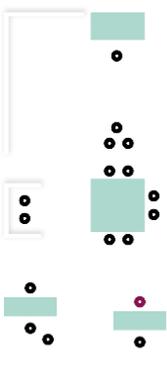
Although you **specify a spatial and temporal framework and a learning objective**, you allow the learners to **choose their own tasks and how they complete it**.

To document the **individual learning path**, you can prepare a learning pass for the participants, for example. This can include different areas that your students should work through, e.g., tasks that must be completed in any case, tasks that can be chosen from, practice opportunities that can be used and practice opportunities that deepen the acquired knowledge/skills. As a teacher, you **organise tasks and experiential opportunities for the participants, use your knowledge and skills to encourage them to independently engage with the course content, and advise** your students on how to complete their task. The workshop uses minds, hands, and hearts all together.

ADVANTAGES:

- In addition to their knowledge and skills, the participants also deepen their independence.
- The free design of the learning path increases the willingness of the pupils to perform.

DISADVANTAGES:

- The preparation and set-up of a workshop requires a lot of work from you as a teacher.
- The range of tasks and experience can overwhelm the participants.

Learning Stations:

Teach your chosen **learning topic at several stations so that the learning objective can be achieved by the last station**. You design each of these locations (they can also be very close to each other) according to a **learning section** on the overall topic. In this way, all participants work towards a common learning goal, even if they are not necessarily all at the same place at the same time and are therefore possibly occupied with different detailed content. You prepare the topic for your students at the respective station in such a way that **all senses are involved** as much as possible and motivate them to **take active action**. For each learning station, you prepare **different working materials and tasks**. As the teacher, you decide whether the tasks can be implemented **individually or as a group**. You also specify whether all stations must be completed and whether they must be completed in a certain order. The latter makes sense if you have chosen the content of the stations to build up learning. Furthermore, you make sure that there are no "traffic jams" at the stations and no "idle time" in between. In order to distribute the participants as evenly as possible among the stations, it can be helpful to offer short and longer tasks to choose from in each station or to offer more stations as groups. It is ideal if the participants can check the correctness of the tasks themselves. With this teaching method, you promote not only the transfer of knowledge and skills, but also self-

determination,   independent   activity   and   cooperation   in   the   group.

ADVANTAGES:

- It promotes individual learning for each student, as they can choose the work materials and pace of learning to a certain extent
- You, as the teacher, are able to observe and encourage individual students without all the other participants having an "idle time" during this period.
- In designing the different stations, you can appeal to every type of learner (listening and speaking, seeing or observing, touching and feeling, reading and thinking).

DISADVANTAGES:

- Learners tend to need a lot of time.
- As a teacher, you have to plan precisely in advance (content, locations, preparations, etc.).
- Appropriate materials are required for each station.
- It can also be overwhelming for some participants, as there is little guidance from you as a teacher.

Hint

Of course, your personal teaching style may be a mix of different teaching methods. This is especially useful if the course content is to be taught over a longer period of time. In addition, you are guided by the needs of your target group when selecting the teaching method(s): Young people need more predetermined structure, while still wanting to be actively involved. A mix of teacher-centered teaching and teamwork, which you discuss in as much detail as possible with the young people in advance, can be well suited here. For adults, it is generally easier to take responsibility for themselves and their own learning progress. In addition, it is usually fun for them to contribute their personal experiences and insights appropriate to the topic to the lessons and to actively participate. For this reason, it can be useful to keep teacher-centered teaching to a minimum and to concentrate on a joint project.

Practical relevance

Now about you personally, do you have a clearer picture in mind by now?

- **What knowledge and skills** would you like to pass on to the younger generations?
- Who are the people, the so-called **target group**, that you want to teach?
- Which of the previously mentioned teaching methods correspond most to your **personal teaching style**?
- Which **teaching process** do you think is best suited for your target group?

4.5 Summary

In order for you to succeed in teaching, keep in mind to prepare according to the following questions: What?, For whom?, Why?, What?, How?, With what?/Where?. You first decide on a **topic** that you would like to pass on to the younger generation **with your enthusiasm and experience**. On the one hand, you deal more closely with your motivation - **why you want to pass on your knowledge** - and on the other hand with the learning motivation of those people you want to teach - in other words, **why the younger generation wants to learn from you in particular**. Next, **plan the individual learning objectives** of your students and the **methods** for imparting knowledge and experiences that best suit you as a teacher AND the participants. Basically, you can implement your educational mission within the framework of an **educational institution**, in the form **of self-organised courses** or as **everyday support**.

Within the framework of a course, you can **mix different teaching methods**. This proves to be especially useful for courses that last over a longer period of time. Frequently used teaching methods are classical **teacher-centered teaching, discussion, experience, changing learning environment, partner or group work as well as project work** - and this **alone or together** with other teachers.

For the exclusive transfer of **knowledge**, the Internet has become established. Your knowledge as a teacher, in **connection with your experience and talent**, **is especially valued by younger generations**, as you contribute to **solutions of current problems (e.g. environmental protection, health, nutrition, sustainability)**.

Effective intergenerational teaching is characterised by an **attitude of learning FROM each other, WITH each other and ABOUT each other**. Doing things together makes learning happen by itself. Your task as a teacher is to think about a suitable **collective introduction** at the beginning of the lesson, the **learning phases** and the **conclusion of the lesson**.

To do this, it helps to be clearer about **your personal teaching style**:

- Do you enjoy lecturing and incorporating individual groups and discussion elements?
- Do you see yourself more as a facilitator for teams who develop their knowledge and skills themselves with your support(!)?
- Would you like to work together with the participants on the implementation of a completely new idea?
- Is it important to you to accompany your students on their individual learning path?
- Are you interested in addressing the respective learning types through different experiences on the topic?

By choosing the **methods that are suitable for you AND the participants**, you can design each phase of the lesson in such a way that the **learning objectives you have previously chosen** (What do you want the participants to take with them from the course into their everyday lives?) are also **achieved in the best possible way**.

4.6 Sources

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WORKSHOP PREPARATION

Learning Unit
5

5 Workshop Preparation

5.1 Introduction

By holding your course as a workshop (similar terms are course or seminar), you enable your students to achieve their learning objectives in a mainly hands-on way. The smaller number of participants allows for a framework that actively and independently involves the learners, as well as let them experience their own progress in a relatively short time.

Before you start with the detailed planning of your workshop, you as a teacher need to think about a few essential aspects: How do you convey your knowledge and skills so that participants benefit from the attendance in the long term? And how can you make sure that you yourself, in your role as a facilitator, also enjoy communicating the content and use your own learning experiences to enhance your future workshops?

In this learning module, you will learn how to create a **good learning environment**, how to reconcile your teaching concept with the **expectations of the participants**, and how to implement certain **formal cornerstones** for your teaching in order to ensure quality throughout your course.

5.2 The learning environment

Similar to the choice of topic and teaching style, the optimal learning environment is also **based on your preferences as a teacher AND those of the participants**. In this way, you contribute to a pleasant working atmosphere, which in turn has a positive effect on the achievement of learning objectives.

A need-based learning environment **can be, among other things, a place in nature, a classroom, a village square, a parish hall or the Internet**. The **goal** is to choose or design the learning environment in such a way **that the participants** - in addition to the knowledge transfer by you as the teacher - **can actively shape their learning path**. To make this possible, you provide the participants with **suitable materials, work resources and media on site**. This can be time-consuming and costly, but it greatly increases the motivation to learn.

You can also choose a **virtual space on the Internet**, e.g. a multimedia platform, as a suitable learning environment. This allows both you as an educator and your students to share (self) written and spoken content, images, graphics, videos and further internet resources online. What is particularly **advantageous** about this is that you as a teacher can **stay in contact with your students over a longer period of time and can easily and quickly share and comment on each other's work**. This gives all participants a particularly high degree of flexibility in terms of time, space and content. Even if you as a teacher have no previous experience with multimedia platforms, it may be worthwhile to discuss this with your students who are already familiar with it. Teenagers and young adults in particular usually already have some experience with these platforms.

But whether you as a teacher want to impart your knowledge in real or virtual space (or in a combination of both), you have to decide in advance about important elements of the learning environment.

Elements of a suitable learning environment

The following questions will help you create a suitable learning environment:

- Who are the **actors**, i.e. all people involved in the learning environment?
  You as a teacher, all learners, all co-creators of the learning environment, administrators when using digital platforms, the staff of the (educational) institution, etc.
- Where or how is **knowledge** stored?
  In media and in people, as content, methods, experiences, skills and abilities, etc.
- What **tools** can be used?
  Machines, devices, thoughts, words, voice tones, graphics, lighting conditions, colours, etc.
- Is it helpful to use **models and simulations**?
  e.g. recreated from wood or constructed from building blocks
- **How** do people **communicate** and work with each other?
  physically, e.g. with speech on site or via the Internet; organisationally, e.g. with a schedule

- How can the participants **check their learning progress**?
  by themselves or together with you as the teacher(s)
- What **guidance** for knowledge and skill acquisition do you install?
  a graphic that gives an overview of the contents and possible approaches to learning and/or you as the teacher with your concrete instructions/instructions
- Is there enough **space** for the participants?
  Individual learning paths through choices in knowledge acquisition, enough spatial space for each person, openness to new ways of thinking and acting.
- What general **atmosphere and attitude** is helpful?
  It starts with the organisational preparation of the course, continues through the course itself and can extend far beyond any later communication. Is the workshop characterised by your support as a teacher, pleasant learning WITH each other, FROM each other and ABOUT each other, as well as by other elements of the atmosphere that are conducive to well-being, e.g. flowers, bright rooms, suitable seating? What contributes to the well-being of all participants, e.g. additional space for group work, food options nearby? This motivates and activates the participants.
- What **elements** are needed in the learning environment in a **more specific sense**?
  Documents (books, notes, articles...), objects, materials, work suggestions, examples, method selection options, instruments, media, internet, learning stations, etc.

Enabling learning for all ages

From infancy to old age - we all learn and develop our brains throughout life. However, at different ages, different environmental conditions support us more or less.

Since mainly adolescents and (young) adults participate in your workshops/courses (you can find a clear description of the generations in Learning Module 1), we will take a closer look at these two groups:

Adolescents up to about 16 years of age learn best in project weeks, during joint experiences and through their participation in the adult world. With this they find it increasingly easy to take on responsibility and organise their own learning progress. However, young people have already grown up with the Internet. As a result, they approach digital media with a familiarity, having had ample opportunity to approach new information and communication technologies in a playful way and with a spirit of discovery. For them, it is natural to be able to consume knowledge digitally anywhere and at any time and to process it for their own purposes.

Young adults up to around 27 years of age are particularly inclined to opt for a course if they can identify an immediate personal benefit. For example, they want to learn a skill to make themselves feel more competent and effective. They particularly value gaining many different experiences on a topic within a short period of time. They would rather be active than sitting still for long periods of time.

Adults generally select the learning content that makes sense to them based on their previous experience. To get them excited about completely new learning topics, it can help to invite them to experiment without obligation.

Adult learning is more promising when learning takes place together and, in the exchange, or sharing of experiences and insights. The more active participants are involved in the learning process, the longer the learnings will be retained in their memory and can be applied in concrete situations. Few people can apply what they have exclusively heard to their own experience and take appropriate notes for practical application. Thus, as a teacher, give preference to teaching methods that enable a dialogue at eye level with your students as well as the joint active elaboration of concrete tasks.

However, at any age, some environmental conditions have a positive stimulating effect on continued engagement with a learning topic.

As a teacher, you facilitate **a good learning environment for all age groups** by providing a basis conducive to learning, which is characterised by:

● experiencing the learning content by doing it yourself,
● having their own **experiences of success** and being able to share them,
● receiving and giving **praise and recognition**
● having bright, **life-friendly rooms/spaces** at their disposal,
● finding a **sympathetic, supportive working environment**,
● **a teacher** that is **enthusiastic about the subject**,
● learning that takes place **from, with and about each other**,
● each participant **being valued in his or her own uniqueness**,
● having **sufficient time** to achieve the learning objectives, and
● having **choices** for one's own learning path.

Providing a safe (digital) learning environment

Although a real meeting on-site with the learners is fundamentally more advantageous for workshops/courses, **virtual learning environments**, so-called learning platforms and meeting tools, have now also become established for this purpose. They often supplement on-site instruction in order to stay in contact over the long term. Teenagers and young adults in particular have already gained experience with them and therefore particularly appreciate the advantage:

• Participants can use their **own computers to take part** in the course **from any location with Internet access**. This eliminates the need for travel and possible room rentals.
• A learning platform does **not have to be used** by the students **at the same time**. This is possible by participating in recorded courses.
• **Tasks can be completed flexibly** by posting them in a time-delayed manner (in writing, as a picture or video).

As a teacher, you must ensure that the **personal data of your students - and in the case of young people, also their guardians** - is kept confidential and secure. This applies just as much to a workshop held online as to a course with participants present on site. According to the **European General Data Protection Regulation**, it is the educator's responsibility to ensure data protection and data security of so-called personal data in a legally secure and responsible manner. Personal data is all data relating to a person, e.g. name, address, e-mail address, date of birth, or IP address (the address of the personal digital device), etc.. If in doubt, consult a specialist! The most essential information for your practical handling when holding a workshop, whether online or on site, can be found in the following:

What is data protection and how can you ensure it?

Data protection is about ensuring that **everyone involved in the workshop is protected from the disclosure of their personal data**. Especially if you use your private devices (smartphone, laptop, etc.) to organise and conduct your classes, please consider the following points:

- Only collect **the data that you need** to conduct the workshop
- Only publish photos with workshop participants visible whom you have explicitly asked for their consent (preferably in written form). You can find templates for this on the Internet.
- Store the data of your workshop participants **pseudonymously**. This means, for example, that you only use the first letter of the first and last name when saving the data.
- Saving your participants' data **on your smartphone** is **tricky** because **some apps**, such as Facebook or WhatsApp, can **automatically access** the data stored in your contact list. The European data protection law prohibits this because the aforementioned apps can unnoticeably upload the data from your address book to a foreign server. To prevent this, you must not allow apps to access your address book.
- **Online services for composing, saving and sharing documents**, such as Dropbox or Google Drive, must also **not be used**. This is because it can be assumed that the data is saved on foreign servers.
- Ask the operator of a **virtual learning platform** you have chosen **whether** the personal **data is stored on a server within the EU** and **which data** is **processed or passed on automatically** and how.

What is data security and how can you ensure it?

The **data itself and the devices on which it is stored** are at stake here. As a workshop leader, please make sure that your end devices are **protected against theft, loss or unauthorised access**. In this context it is recommended to:

- activate so-called "**automatic updates**" for the operating system, the Internet browser and mail client (this closes new security gaps),
- install and continuously update **firewalls** and **virus scanners**, and
- encrypt **access to stored data with a password or PIN**.

Have you gained more clarity on which learning environment is best for you and your students? If so, it makes sense for you to take a closer look at the content of your workshop.

5.3 Teaching goals

To approach the detailed content planning of your workshop, first define **WHAT goals** you want to achieve with your teaching **and HOW**. This is where you need to **align your personal teaching goals and methods with the learning goals and preferred methods of your students**. After all, the detailed information and skills that you as a teacher would like to convey to the participants are not necessarily the same ones that they would like to learn from you in your course. Similar considerations apply to your choice of teaching methods: As far as organisationally possible, it makes sense to be able to offer participants different teaching methods for the same content. For example, you can create a learning pass for young people in which they can record their own learning progress. If you teach adults, you as a teacher provide less structure, which is why a joint project on the same topic might be more suitable.

Identifying the participant's expectations

It is likely that your future students will register for your workshop with different expectations and requirements.

You can contact those who have registered **in advance** of the course and simply ask them **what they specifically expect from your course** and **what prior knowledge they already have** on the topic. It is helpful if these questions are already answered by the participants **in course of the workshop registration**. In this way, you can incorporate the participants' statements into your lesson planning in advance.

Of course, you can also ask the participants verbally or through a written questionnaire **at the beginning of the workshop**. As the workshop leader, you can then visualise what has been said or written in keywords on a **presentation medium** (e.g. a pinboard with notes) so that you can clearly **address** the expectations mentioned **with the participants**.

The following questions, for example, **are suitable** for finding out the expectations of your students:

- What would you like to **take away or learn in terms of content** in the workshop?
- What expectations do you have regarding working together in the workshop/course? How should the participants **behave**?
- What do you expect from the workshop leader (e.g. his/her behaviour, **the way the course is conducted**)?
- What are your expectations as a participant? How do you want to behave in the workshop? What would you like to **try out**?

Before you start with the content of the workshop, it is important to define the common **learning goals**. These can basically be identified through the answers of the course participants to the first question above about the content. However, it can be very challenging to formulate learning objectives and to stick to them. The SMART method supports you in this.

Pursuing SMART learning goals

SMART stands for five requirements that a goal has to fulfil. A **learning objective** should be

- **s**pecific
  Use questions to make the learning objective, the purpose of the objective and how to get there as clear as possible: What are we aiming to achieve? Why do we want to achieve this goal? What steps will we take to achieve it? At which point are which steps meaningful?

- **m**easureable
  Use facts that make it possible to determine whether the learning objective has been achieved. For example, you can show a comparison between the participants' starting situation at the beginning and the skills acquired by the end of the workshop.

- **ac**hievable
  Is the learning objective important for you and the participants? Does it add personal value?

- **r**ealistic
  A learning objective is realistic if you can agree with these questions: Are the individual steps feasible so that the final goal can be achieved? Do you have sufficient expertise and resources (e.g. time, space, money, machinery, etc.) to achieve this goal?

- **t**imebound.
  Define the timeframe, i.e. when you will start working towards a learning goal and when you will have achieved it. It can be more motivating for the students if you formulate sub-goals that can be achieved in a shorter period of time.

Example

EXAMPLE 1

The main **learning objective** for a workshop on mushroom picking with children

PROBLEM OUTLINE:

Many families would like to spend some time together in nature and to pick mushrooms in the forests, however, they are not sure which ones are fine for eating.

LEARNING   GOAL

After the one week workshop, each learner will be able to identify at least 3 edible mushroom species growing in the ABC forest in September.

EXAMPLE 2

The main **learning objective** for an EXCEL course for beginners

PROBLEM OUTLINE:

Learners want to determine individual potentials for saving money, so they have to get an overview on their expenses.

LEARNING GOAL

After a short theoretical instruction on basic calculation formulas, the learners will have the rest of the learning unit to set up individual column headlines for their monthly expenses in an Excel spreadsheet and test the functionality of the tool with inserting their expenses of the day..

specific
measurable
achievable
relevant
timebound

It makes sense to define **a main objective and several associated sub-objectives** in written form for your workshop. Of course, these sub-goals are not to be considered "set in stone" and can be adapted during the teaching-learning process - depending on the needs of your students.

5.4 Training documentation

In order to achieve the chosen (main) learning objective step by step during the workshop, it is **worthwhile to write down the individual activities of the lesson already before and during the implementation**. This will give you more confidence in your role as a teacher. It will also give your students more clarity about what learning goals they can achieve and what they themselves can contribute. After the workshop, all participants can access a collection of visual and written learning

progressions and review them at any time. As the workshop leader, you have the simple option of improving each activity at a certain point during the next run-through.

Before class

> **Important**
>
> In order to get a good overview as a teacher and to be able to communicate clearly to the prospective participants, plan your workshop in advance in written form.

Record the key points of the workshop in keywords on **one to two A4 pages**:

- **The date, the time and a concrete schedule** that takes into account times of activity as well as breaks;
  After about 45 minutes, our attention drops. In addition, it makes sense to schedule a bit more time for each activity to be able to answer unplanned questions and achieve the learning objective at a quiet pace if needed. Several short activities usually lead to a more instructive outcome than a few lengthy ones. Make sure you have time toward the end of the workshop to answer any final questions your students may have. And conclude by giving them a preview of further opportunities to refine their knowledge and skills (e.g., the date of the next workshop or summarised tips on materials, literature, or Internet resources for their own implementation).
- **Each activity has three phases as you have already learned in Learning Unit 4: the introduction** (How do you prepare your students for the activity?), **the implementation** (How do the participants work? How do you support them as a teacher?) and
  the summary of results (What did your students learn?).
- **The maximum number of course participants should be kept low,** as it can then be assumed that the time will be sufficient and the learning objective more achievable. If many people have registered, consider whether dividing them into teams for group work would be helpful. Keep in mind that a certain number of participants may be required for economical/financial reasons
- **Perhaps one or two people can assist you.** This collaboration can start with the registration process, extend to helping participants complete the activities, and possibly follow up with questions after the workshop.
- **The appropriate location for the workshop** is where you can find or create a suitable learning environment. Where will participants sit or stay during the activities? How accessible is the workshop location? How can the (lunch) break be arranged?
- **What you charge your students for participating in the workshop** depends on your fixed costs (space, materials, advertising) and your personal "earning philosophy".
- **How do you draw attention to your workshop offer so that your target group feels addressed?** You have various possibilities for this, which you can also combine, e.g. via the local community or parish, in cooperation with a professional education provider or in your personal environment or via social media, such as Facebook.
- **What data and documents do you need from the people who register for your workshop?** As a matter of principle, consider asking for "as little data as possible, but as much as necessary" already during registration. Be careful with the data you are given - in the sense of the data protection described in this learning unit. Depending on the content of the workshop, it may also be useful to know in advance what knowledge the future participants already have.
- **Possibilities to display what has been jointly developed and to summarise it** for all participants include whiteboards, large paper pads (flipcharts), sticky notes, notepads and suitable pens and jamboards etc.

- **Technical possibilities can convey the workshop contents even more comprehensibly.** Consider whether it makes sense, for example, to create a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation and then display it on a white wall using a projector. In addition to written elements, you can provide participants with graphics, pictures and films for a deeper insight into the content.
- **What should the participants themselves bring to the workshop?**
- **How and through what do you communicate with your students before (and possibly after) the workshop**? It has proven effective to send information to the registered persons via e-mail.

During class

Right at the beginning, use an **attendance list prepared by you** to document which registered persons are actually on site.

> **Remember**
>
> For the documentation during class, it is also important to note which of the registered persons are actually present on site. Prepare a **name list** with the registered persons on which you or the participants themselves can **note who is present at the beginning of the workshop**. You as the instructor can tick off the name of the person present at the time. Another possibility is to hand out the attendance list and ask the participants to sign with their names on the list.

As a teacher, document the teaching process of the workshop by taking photos of what you have worked on at the end of an individual activity phase so that you can retrieve it in the future. For example, take photos of the flipcharts created in group work or of the workpieces produced. Be careful not to take pictures of people during class unless you have received written permission from the people concerned to take pictures during the workshop. During or after the class, make a note of what or what activity may remain or change at the next workshop.

Invite participants to share photos, use the photo documentation for promoting the running course on the internet or in social media. Motivate future courses with these attractive resources. In this way, you are empowering participants to decide themselves which contents are important for them personally, so that they can take responsibility for their own learning path. This motivates and significantly increases long-term learning success.

After class

The written documentation will be very useful for you in the follow-up of the last workshop or in the preparation of the next one. You will be able to reflect particularly well,

- to what extent the desired main learning objective and the associated specific learning objectives were achieved,
- whether the workshop participants were able to follow the content you conveyed well,
- whether the teaching methods were appropriate for your students and the content to be taught, and
- Whether more or less time was needed at some points.

Practical relevance

Think about the workshop you will offer in the future and answer the following questions in written form:

- What is the most appropriate **learning environment** for your students in which you will best communicate your expertise and skills to them?
- What **opportunities** do you have to **find out what future participants want from the workshop?**
- What are the **key points for planning** your workshop?

5.5 Summary

The aim is to select and design the **learning environment** in such a way that the participants - in addition to the knowledge transfer by you as the teacher - can actively shape their learning path. To this end, you provide the participants with suitable materials, work aids and media on site. You ensure a pleasant and appreciative interaction with each other and make the place of learning a pleasant place to be.

The aim is to select and design the learning environment in such a way that the participants - in addition to the knowledge transfer by you as the teacher - can actively shape their learning path. To this end, you provide the participants with suitable materials, work aids and media on site. You ensure a pleasant and appreciative interaction with each other and make the place of learning a pleasant place to be.

The more actively participants of all ages are involved in the learning process, the longer the learned information will be retained and can be applied in concrete situations. As a teacher, you should prefer teaching methods that allow you to engage in a dialogue with your students at eye level and to actively work together on concrete tasks. As a teacher, you must ensure that the **personal data of your students** - and in the case of young people, also that of their legal guardians - is kept confidential and secure. This applies just as much to a workshop held online as it does to a course with participants present on site. It is your task to ensure data protection and data security of the so-called personal data - according to the European Data Protection Regulation - in a legally secure and responsible manner.

You can **contact the registered participants in advance of the course and simply ask them about their expectations and what prior knowledge they already have on the topic**. In this way, you can incorporate the participants' statements into your lesson planning in advance. The **SMART method** helps you to define a learning objective in a specific, measurable, acceptable, realistic, and time-bound way, making it easier to plan and implement. In advance, **record the key points of the workshop in keywords on one to two A4 pages**, e.g. which activities are planned in which time, which location is suitable , how much are the participation fees for your students, etc.? Right at the beginning of the class, you document with an **attendance list** prepared by you which registered persons are actually on site.

In order to document the class, it is worthwhile to summarise the individual program points of the class in written form before and during the implementation. This gives you more confidence in your role as a teacher. It will also give your students more clarity about what they are learning and what they can do to achieve it.

In any case, **take pictures of what you have achieved** at the end of an individual activity phase. In this way, you make a result retrievable in the future. You can ensure this, for example, by taking photos of the flipcharts designed or workpieces produced in a group activity. Make sure to get participants written permission if you also want to photograph workshop participants. During or after the teaching session, note what or which activity may remain as it is or you want to change at the next workshop. **Also invite your students to document their learning process independently in written form and with photos.** In this way, you empower the participants to decide for themselves which content is important for them personally in order to take responsibility for their own learning path.

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TRAINER'S TOOLBOX

Learning Unit
6

6 Trainer's toolbox

6.1 Introduction

Once the key points for your workshop or course have been determined, it is a matter of how to make the individual lessons of the teaching and learning activities engaging and interactive for the learners.

In this learning unit you will get a practical overview of the tools you can include in your personal toolbox to make the workshop or course engaging and well-structured for younger people.

In intergenerational teaching, different perspectives of the different age groups are predetermined, and this can lead to disagreements. Therefore, "interpersonal tools" are also needed. As a teacher, it is important to be prepared to avoid or resolve possible conflicts in order to ensure teaching and learning success in the quality you are aiming for.

In this learning unit, you will also learn how you and the learners benefit from experiential learning, which digital tools complement and enrich the teaching in a meaningful way, and how you can continuously check and improve the teaching and learning success of the course or workshop.

6.2 Conflict prevention and transformation

Different views and needs can lead to conflicts among people. It is not the question of guilt that is decisive for the learning process, but the question of meaning. What can conflict be useful for? Conflict makes differences clear, strengthens group cohesion, shows the complexity of an issue, reveals commonalities, brings about change or preserves what already exists.

What conflicts might occur in your workshop?

- **Factual conflicts**

  If learners lack a clear overview of the purpose for which certain content is being taught, this can lead to the trainer's teaching competence being questioned by the learners.

- **Relationship conflicts**

  In a group, not all learners will get on equally well with each other.

- **Perception-oriented conflicts**

  Learners differ in their background, their level of knowledge, and their experience in a particular topic. This can reinforce different ideas, perceptions and views. There are few people who remain calm despite rising emotions. Depending on the situation and the characters involved, it requires special tact on the part of the teacher to counteract an emerging conflict.

> **Hint**
>
> Only about 15% of people manage to remain calm and objective in the heat of the moment.

- **Conflicts of objectives**
  When a group works together on a piece of work, with the successive work steps being completed by different people, dissatisfaction with the "preliminary work" done can arise. This often occurs when the quality of the intermediate goals required to jointly achieve the desired goal has not been sufficiently discussed.
- **Distribution conflicts**
  If certain people, e.g. those with the most limited life experience, are given less attention (hearing, opportunity to participate), this is an essential starting point for a conflictual atmosphere.
- **Conflicts of values**
  Values are qualities, behaviours and thought patterns that are considered desirable. In general, proximity to people with whom one shares common values is preferred. Similar value attitudes are often found in the same generation. Nevertheless, each person has developed

uniquely and individually. Therefore, so-called conflicts of values are not solely possible between the individual generations.

Important

Values are not negotiable. We are usually not aware of them and therefore cannot easily recognise and name them. Yet they are often the basis for why conflicts arise. This can give the impression of "worlds" colliding.

- Role conflicts

    If it is not clear what the learners' personal contribution is to the success of the workshop, this can lead to confusion and disagreement.

    Teachers can also feel "left out" when learners question the approach to a topic and/or demand more of their own freedom of action.

Remember

It is often not easy for teachers to recognise **(emerging) conflicts**. The earlier you notice them, the better you can manage them. In practice, certain **signals** can help you to become aware of them:

Ironic and sarcastic remarks increase.

Learners become grumpy.

Information is not passed on.

Learners start to avoid each other.

Learners react increasingly aggressive.

Learners react stubbornly and without understanding.

Learners avoid confrontation and thus postpone the conflict.

Learners deliberately make mistakes to undermine the (group) work.

Learners show increasing disinterest.

How do you best deal with conflicts as a teacher?

- First of all, you can benefit from your life experience, which gives you the necessary composure. Conflicts can basically be solved in the same way they arose - namely through communication.

Important

Conflicts serve the further development of personal issues and topics that need to be worked on together. As a teacher, **your basic inner attitude towards conflicts contributes significantly** to whether they lead to a tense teaching situation or become a driving force for learning progress. If you can recognise the **positive aspects of conflict situations and even name them in class**, it is easier for the persons involved in the conflict to calm down again and align themselves with the common learning

goal. For example, an emerging conflict can make it clear what you as a teacher need to look at more closely together with the learners in order to work on a topic together. Nevertheless, it is important to accept that **sometimes there are conflicts that are neither useful nor productive**.

- As you have already experienced in your own life: **A satisfactory conflict resolution for all parties involved is not always possible.** Accepting this fact is often the first step in avoiding further escalation.
- **Ask learners what is important to them in relation to the subject of the conflict**. Appreciate the needs of all parties. This creates mutual understanding, which makes it possible to distance oneself from one's own emotions and turn back to the issue at stake for all parties. The persons involved in the conflict take away another crucial experience: They thus train their empathy for opposing characters or age groups and subsequently approach them more favourably.
- **If you experience a negative reaction, talk to the person concerned** and ask him or her why - in a simple and friendly way. Talk about this briefly and involve this person in a meaningful conflict resolution to continue the lesson.
- **It is often helpful to take three deep breaths and ask yourself: Why is this actually upsetting me so much?** Which of my needs is being offended here? How can I explain my point of view in a few objective words?

- **Accept the opinion of the opposing party**, even if it is diametrically opposite to yours. As a teacher, you have the right to be wrong. There might always be more than one point of view on a topic. However, also accept that your learners could be right.
- **Ultimately, let the power of a self-fulfilling prophecy work**: imagine that the conflict has already been resolved. This releases hope and energies for the corresponding implementation.
- **Perceive your inner conflicts as helpful**: You certainly know your own inner conflict when you alternate between different points of view or feelings, especially when it comes to decisions. An example from the classroom: "Should the learners solve the next step of the work completely independently or is it more useful for the learning success if I, as the teacher, accompany them in a structured way?" They themselves feel different values, needs and views. All these "inner voices" have positive motives. "Listen to their answers to the question and

decide as a "leader of your inner voices". Which suggestions make sense to you as a teacher and to the learners to achieve the common learning goal? In our case, your answer could be: "As the learners enrolled have little previous experience, I will guide them step by step through the production process".

Remember

The supreme discipline for conflict resolution is that all parties involved look for an agreement in order to continue to work productively with each other. Mutual appreciation is the essential component here.

In intergenerational teaching, the focus is not only on imparting knowledge, but also on a dialogue at eye level between the age groups.

For productive collaboration, as a teacher, be sure to,

- clearly address differences between generations, as this will help learners to overcome any prejudices and build mutual understanding,
- communicate what all learners have in common (across all age groups involved),
- enter class with the attitude that you as a teacher also want to learn from the younger generation,
- involve learners from the middle generation adequately (people being between the ages of 40 and 60)

Avoiding conflicts from the beginning is not always possible. The better you as a teacher understand the possible points of conflict, the more appropriate measures you can take. Unproductive conflicts need to be controlled in advance, find some suggestions for this:

- Take the opportunity to introduce the course AND yourself as a teacher already at the time of the advertisement. Answer questions such as "What is the content?", "What specifically makes

me a teacher in this field?", "Why is this course close to my heart?", "Why is this particular course interesting for the learners? In this way, interested parties receive helpful clues as to whether the course is suitable for them. Doing so will reduce disappointed expectations from the very beginning.

- **Start the course by reviewing the essential preliminary information** to ensure that all learners start with the same level of information.
- **In your behaviour during the class, be a role model** and ensure that all learners are accepted as they are. Be as respectful of your own wishes, needs and fears in the workshop as you are of those of the learners. Appreciate everyone for their individuality and uniqueness, with which they engage in the topic and implement the learning content in the course. Be cautious with your judgments. Always emphasise the common goal for which the learners are coming together for the learning activities.
- **Ask learners to communicate "I" messages and their own needs. Set an example with your behaviour.** Better say: "I have the impression that I did not communicate the work assignment clearly" instead of: "You did not understand me!"

- **Define the learning objectives together with the learners at the beginning of the course** (see Learning Unit 5, Workshop preparation).
- Give a **good overview of what content is being taught with which methods with regard to a specific learning objective on a regular basis**. This will help you avoid learners questioning your teaching competence. In addition, you will **help learners understand which common learning objective they are working towards and increase their motivation** to actively participate.
- In your teaching, make sure that successful cooperation does not require a common majority opinion. **Controversial points of view are allowed and can be discussed**. In this way, guide the learners to adopt a perspective that is new to them. By doing so, you create the basic prerequisite for mutual understanding and tolerance.
- **The sooner you address emerging misunderstandings, the sooner they can be dealt with constructively.** Certain formulations are helpful here: "Did I understand you correctly that ...?", "Am I correct in assuming that it is important for you to ...?".

- Ensure that you have **sufficient materials** (pens, posters, materials, tools, etc.) **available** for all learners.
- Ensure that learners have **enough time for the planned activities**. Time pressure encourages conflicts.
- **Clarify before each activity how learners will be involved**: Who is given which role in the group work (time management, group leadership, presentation) and what expectations and tasks are associated with each role.

> **Remember**
>
> Being afraid of conflicts or a complete denial of conflicts is unproductive. At the same time, not every disagreement should be considered a conflict. **Trust your life experience and intuition as to which reaction from you as a teacher is appropriate and sensible in the respective conflict situation**.

6.3 Experiential and participatory learning

It is known from neurobiology that one can remember up to 90% of a learned content if one actively participates in the acquisition of knowledge - in other words, much more than if only theory is taught. **From one's own day-to-day experience, one naturally derives knowledge that one later automatically incorporates into one's way of life. It is a basic human need to have experiences because they support our personal developmen**t. This is exactly why experiential learning is particularly effective to us. Experiential Learning is the process of learning by doing. By engaging participants in hands-on experiences and reflection, they are better able to connect theories and knowledge learned.

As already discussed in Unit 5, **all age groups of learners (adolescents, young adults and adults) share the desire to actively work on tasks together**. Young people are particularly interested in adventure. In experiential learning, you as a teacher design **the learning environment and the teaching methods** for the learners **in such a way that they can experience the topic - as an adventure - in the best possible way through active participation**. A woodworking course can start with an excursion to the forest where suitable materials for sculptures can be collected. The learners learn on the spot what is important when looking for components of a personal work of art. Already during the deliberate selection of

materials, the experience of one's own creative process is initiated. They experience the learning environment, the people around them AND also themselves. They get to know and appreciate themselves as proactive and spontaneous. If selected materials had been provided in the creative workshop - without the shared experience in the forest - the learners would not have been able to establish a relationship with the individual elements of their artwork or to refine their own sense for the appropriate material.

Remember

Experiential learning and active participation have **significant advantages** over other teaching styles:

Learning happens on three levels, with mind, heart and hand.

Activity and movement support our brain in the learning.

The joy of doing, fun and good humour increase learning success.

If a task is experienced through active participation instead of being provided with predefined solutions and methods, the learning goal is achieved more fundamentally.

Experiences leave a deep learning track in our brain. If the experience is reflected upon, the insights derived from it remain effective in the long term.

Having mastered situations that are not commonplace increases creativity in everyday life. One becomes aware of one's own new resources and competences.

Appreciative and helpful communication between learners promotes one's own communication skills.

The general way of dealing with challenges and stress is strengthened.

How can you best encourage learners to actively participate?

- By **limiting the number of participants** and considering **activities** that are carried out in an **appropriate group size**, you ensure that everyone present can be well involved.
- As far as possible, **match the content of the course to the needs of the learners**. By doing this, you will help learners to become actively involved.
- Encourage learners to **ask questions at any time**.
- **Use your own enthusiasm to inspire learners' curiosity** to engage with the task at hand.
- Be sure to choose **activities that engage learners at all three levels of learning (mind, heart and hand)**. In this way, learners will not only learn new content about a topic, but also experience themselves emotionally through their active engagement with it.
- Choose tasks and a learning environment with a **strong connection to everyday reality**. In this way, learners will better recognise the benefits of the activity and be more motivated to get involved themselves.
- Choose **tasks that learners perceive as challenging yet manageable**. This enables a highly productive state called flow, which is beneficial to learning.
- **Encourage learners to define their own learning goals**. In this way, you support self-responsible learning, which goes hand in hand with higher motivation.

- As a teacher, **divide each activity into three parts: Pre-discussion** (What will the learners have to do?), **implementation** (actively working on the task) and **reflection** (What worked well? What can help next time? What insights can be gained?).
- **Enable learners to solve the task** - preferably in teams - **with the greatest possible use of their own strategy, decision-making competence and ability to deal with conflict**.
- **Offer the learners different possibilities of activity** to achieve the learning goal.
- After the (group) activity, give the learners time for themselves to process the new experiences mentally, and thus trigger their own reflection process.

Learning in a group, i.e. resulting from collective action, is in the nature of human beings. As each member of a community works on an issue that concerns all of them through his or her personal action, social togetherness is promoted, with each individual perceiving himself or herself as a functioning part of a group. Each person, with what they contribute in their unique way, is essential to common success. **Young people, as well as adults of a more mature age, take their share of responsibility in the success of the common project.** Participants learn to trust each other and to communicate clearly, while a person alone cannot solve the task. Certain rules have to be followed and conflicts have to be managed. Strengths and weaknesses of the individual group members have to be accepted and contributed to the common success of the task in the best possible way (see Learning Unit 4, team roles according to Belbin). Helpfulness, responsible action and respect are trained. Group processes therefore mean - in addition to the acquisition of content-related knowledge - **both a self-experience and a group experience** for all learners.

6.4 Useful tools in the teaching process

Once you know what you want to teach your learners, you have another decision to take:

What resources/tools are worth being embedded in the lesson to help learners learn well, enjoy learning and actively engage their learning initiative?

In this chapter you will learn how to keep learners interested throughout the lesson, which tools will help you prepare, modify and deliver the course, and which tools and methods you can use to effectively support team building and group work.

The first few minutes in particular are crucial in determining whether learners feel comfortable in the course. Give yourself and those present the opportunity to orientate themselves well right from the start.
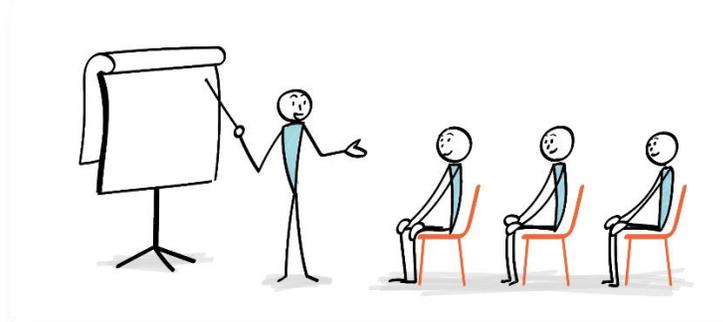
Basically, **each teaching unit consists of three phases**. In this way, you as a teacher can gain and maintain the learners' attention for the content all the time:

- **The introduction, which arouses curiosity:**

  In this phase you explore the **prior knowledge** as well as the **expectations** of the learners, offer guidance (How does the course proceed? What learning objectives are to be achieved? What are the time frame and break arrangements?) and **generate the curiosity** to learn more about the topic. You should also **make sure that the learners get to know each other**. So-called "getting-to-know-you games" or "icebreakers" are suitable for this (you will find many suggestions on the internet using the search terms "getting-to-know-you games" and "icebreakers"). A popular example is throwing a ball in a round of seats. Whoever has caught the ball says his/her own name, why he/she is here and what previous knowledge he/she brings with him/her. In order to remember each other's names more quickly, it can be agreed in the next round to call out the name of a participant beforehand and then throw the ball to him/her. The person who catches the ball is the first to say which person gave him/her the ball.

- **Working together:**

  As a teacher, you stimulate the learners about the topic, stimulate and maintain their attention (orally, visually, with practical examples and through active participation), **facilitate experiential learning and support the learners in doing so. You determine the direction of the collective learning experience** (by paying attention to the achievement of the previously defined learning goals). Your task as a teacher is also **to adapt the lesson - despite the planning - to the actual situation** (e.g. if a group work takes longer than expected or some learners are overwhelmed). Help the weaker learners and be sensitive to the participants who are slower. By letting learners choose which method they want to use for continuing the lesson, you increase their motivation and thus their learning success. This will also motivate the more advanced learners if they are allowed to choose their own approach to the topic. Avoid exclusive frontal teaching whenever possible. **Encourage social learning**, e.g. in the form of group work or with activating questions that can be discussed together with all learners. **Include refreshing group activities, so-called "energisers",** in between (you can find many variations on the internet by searching for "energiser games"). In order to motivate learners to participate in the games, explain

beforehand that this will stimulate the mind and body and bring a creative drive into the workshop/course. In addition, it strengthens the team spirit, which contributes significantly to the success of working and learning together. An example of this is the clap and duck game. All persons stand in a circle. One learner claps his hands once. The person to the right can now decide whether to clap or duck. If they duck, the next person has to clap their hands once. If he/she fails to clap, he/she is out of the game. In addition, it can be agreed that you can also clap your hands twice, which means a change of direction. The game is played until everyone is laughing and can no longer concentrate on the game.

- **The conclusion, summarising for the learners' own gain of knowledge;**

    You summarise the acquired knowledge and skills together with the learners, **ask them for their feedback** on the contents as well as on the way the lesson was conducted (see Learning Unit 5). There are also interactive options for this, such as www.padlet.com, which allows you and the learners to visualise work results in writing with each other using any internet-connected computer, smartphone or tablet, and to evaluate the course online using anonymous feedback.

Prepare appropriate teaching materials for the learners to support them and give them further ideas for the time after the course. This can be concrete assignments or work instructions, **teaching materials** you have summarised (possibly as a useful handbook for them to read at home) and/or a bibliography or a list of further information and contacts. Design these materials in a target group-oriented and appealing way so that learners will want to read them (colourful, easy to read, also with humorous pictures, etc.). Since young people and young adults are used to and appreciate digital teaching material, consider putting online documents/internet links/pictures/videos related to your course. Digital pinboards are a good way to do this (see Learning Unit 6, Technologies).

The learning environment and the room have a significant influence on whether it is easy to participate or not. For example, if the chairs are placed in a row and one behind the other, this reduces the field of vision and thus successful communication between the learners. Collaborative activity is then more difficult. **Therefore, plan enough space for the activity so that learners can work well together. Consider the appropriate seating for this**. Here are some examples:

Possible seatings
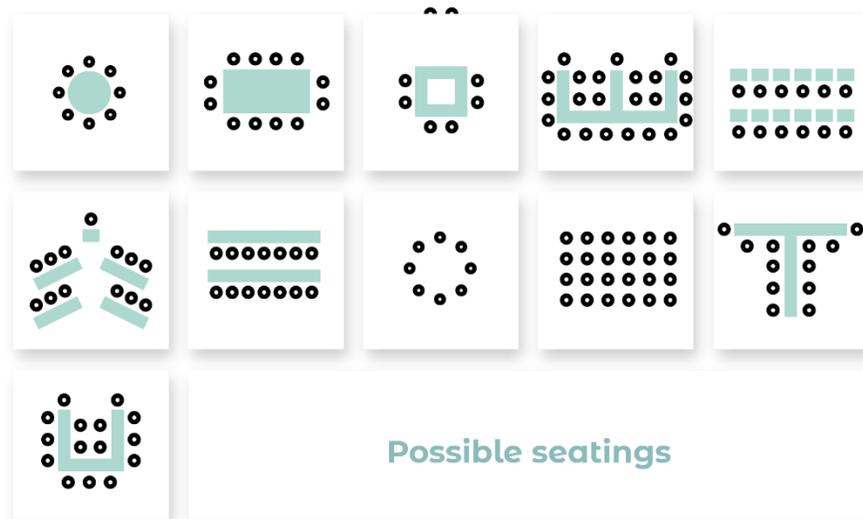
- **Choose to include visual (seeing), auditory (hearing) AND kinaesthetic (doing) elements** in the learning activities. If the topic is appropriate, also allow learners to smell and taste. The more senses are addressed in the lesson, the more is remembered (see Learning Unit 3).
- **Visualise the essential information** of your learning activity. This will help learners to understand and remember the content:
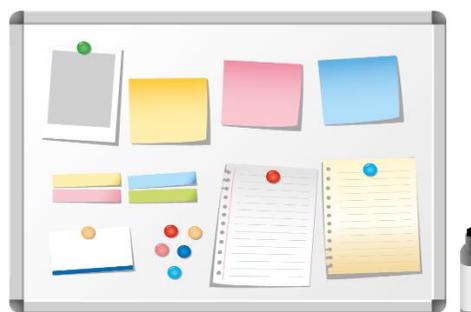
- **Work with specially cut coloured thick paper** (moderation cards) and use the different shapes and colours to structure: e.g. small rectangles for ideas, oval cards for headings, large rectangles for questions, etc. In addition, provide pens (markers), poster paper, tape, glue, a pin board with pins or a large wall to attach the cards.

- If you **use a flipchart** (a writing pad for turning pages as large as a blackboard with a writing surface of approx. 90 x 70 cm), you can already write on some sheets in advance and add to them in class or note down the essential key terms during the workshop. Prepare the flipchart pad and the necessary pens (markers) for this purpose. A flipchart is more suitable for small groups of up to about 15 people and for teachers with legible handwriting.

- Nowadays, the function of the overhead projector is taken over by a **multimedia projector (beamer)** as a digital advancement. For this purpose, you can connect a computer or laptop directly to the device in order to project information onto a larger surface (white wall, blackboard or screen). This makes it possible to show moving images or films.
- **Posters, whiteboards, slides, photos, films, videos and other materials** (e.g. work pieces, cut-outs from print media, etc.) are other visual aids you can use to make lessons more interesting.
- Encourage learners to visually record their work steps and results themselves with the smartphone. **You can also offer to send the learners documentation photos of the learning processes and learning outcomes as well as further information on the topic by e-mail or as a download link.**

Especially in the context of **group work**, the experiential learning of skills and abilities is trained through the active participation of the individual learners. They learn to work together towards a goal, to communicate clearly with each other and to present their joint findings.

> ### Hint
>
> It is usually more effective to work in small groups (up to 5 people) because it is easier to communicate and cooperate. The motivation to work actively increases.

There are several ways to form learners into groups or teams. Here are some examples:

- You can ask the learners to take turns counting from 1 to 4. All the people with the number 1 form a group, all the people with the number 2 form a group and so on.
- You, as the teacher, should prepare several boxes with objects and hand them out, from which each person should take one thing, according to their own spontaneous impulse. These could be animal figures, for example. Then all those who have chosen a dog, for example, afterwards form a group.

If a certain combination of team members seems to make sense for a joint activity - e.g. according to their previous experience, interests, expectations of the course - you can also bring your learners together into a group accordingly. It is also possible for learners to choose which other people they would like to form a group with.

- **Consider whether all groups should work on the same task or whether it makes more sense for different tasks to be solved by a different group.** For example, a three-course meal is cooked in a workshop and several small groups are formed to prepare one course each.
- **Make each group task available visually** so that learners can always refer back to the question they are working on.
- **Enable all learners to understand the tasks clearly** by using simple wording and encouraging questions, even during group work time.
- **Define the timeframe for each activity**. Decide (together) how long the teamwork will last and when the presentation of the results will take place.
- Ensure that **all groups have a well-equipped workplace** (room/location and materials) to satisfactorily complete the work assignment.
- **Suggest giving all learners a team role during the activity**. For example, one person will be responsible for keeping to the agreed time, another person will be responsible for writing down the contributions of each group member, a third person will be responsible for facilitating the group through the work process and a fourth person will present the results.
- **Support the presentation of the results with helpful materials** (e.g. materials, machines, tools, posters, pens, paper, scissors, glue, pin board with pins etc.) and give recommendations on how the presentation can be particularly helpful for all present.
- **Be supportive for the teams during the activity**. Guide the groups in terms of content and time management with an overall view as a teacher.

- **Enable constructive feedback** (also among the learners) on the way of working in the respective group as well as on the presentation of the results.

Frequently used **methods for group work** are:

- Brainstorming

  Using this method, the ideas of all group members related to the task are written down - without any rating for relevance. This encourages creativity and conversation within the group.

From the ideas gathered together, another method can then be applied in the next step:

- Mindmap

  This is used to organise the ideas developed in the group: The topic to be worked on is placed in the middle of a sheet of paper, the most important terms or the sub-areas for solving the task are arranged around it and connected to the topic in the middle with a line (main branch) in each case. Each concept assigned to the topic can contain further sub-branches with subordinate thoughts/ideas that contribute to solving the task.

- Business game

  This is a task to be worked on together, which the learners should recreate as realistically as possible in order to be able to implement the solution found in real life. On the one hand, each group member takes their own decisions and on the other hand, they recognise the effects of their own and others' possibilities of impact. Connections become clear and solutions are found.

6.5 Technology

Technologies and digital tools are already an integral part of modern teaching. Digital tools can save the teacher and the learners time and effort when implementing tasks together and documenting the learning content. Recordings, recommended internet links or videos can be easily used by learners after the course to reinforce the learning content. The use of digital tools usually requires only a short training period. You as a teacher and the learners can use such tools **with any internet-connected computer, tablet or smartphone. As a teacher, you will find a variety of online tools on the internet, some of which you can use free of charge or for a small fee for the course**. A small selection of them is presented here. In addition, **new tools are constantly being developed and made available on the internet.** If you would like more information on the tools mentioned, you can find details on the respective provider's website. Furthermore, you can search YouTube (www.youtube.com) for practical instructions on tools to get an insight into whether it is suitable, appropriate or user-friendly for you as a teacher and the learners.

When **considering** a (digital) tool, ask yourself this question: **How can it facilitate teaching for me and learning in the course for my target group?**

Digital slides:

In order to make essential information visible to all learners using a multimedia projector, you can **prepare them on your computer or laptop**. You are probably already familiar with **presentations** created with the Microsoft software PowerPoint. Make sure that the file on your storage medium (e.g. USB stick) on which you have saved your presentation is also compatible with the software of the computer in the classroom. To ensure this, simply carry out a test run on site.

If you have a stable internet connection in the classroom, you can also use online presentation tools such as GoogleSlides (www.google.com/intl/en-GB/slides/about/), Keynote (www.apple.com/keynote/), Open Office Impress (www.openoffice.org/product/impress.html) or Canva (www.canva.com). There is also an online tool for Microsoft PowerPoint (www.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-365/free-office-online-for-the-web).

Interactive whiteboard:

If you hold your course in a training centre that is equipped with the latest technology, you will probably have an interactive electronic whiteboard at your disposal. On this you can write with a special pen or your finger, present files from your computer as well as web pages, films, audio recordings etc. from the internet. Ask the relevant contact person at the training centre about the various functions of the interactive whiteboard and how you can use them, because it's worth it!

Videos:

If it is not possible to take your learners to a place that makes it easier to understand the learning content, you can **prepare videos that you have made yourself**. The easiest way to do this is with the help of your smartphone. If you have decided **to record the lesson as a video** (e.g. because you want to make this unit available to learners on a digital platform), you can use good and cheap video recording and video editing tools from the internet (e.g. Camtasia at www.camtasia.com or Screencast o matic at www.screencast-o-matic.com). If you want to **upload your video to YouTube**, note the "visibility" setting. If you do not want the video to be accessible to everyone, select the functions "unlisted" or "private".

Digital teaching materials:

- When preparing your lessons, you can create **digital pinboards**, such as Padlet (padlet.com), Pinup (www.pinup.com) or Scrumblr (scrumblr.ca), to work collaboratively with the learners. Using this online tools you can store texts, pictures, drawings, links and sometimes even videos, voice recordings as well as screen recordings. Even after the end of the workshop, these digital pinboards can still be accessed and changed by the teacher and the learners using a link.
- To edit a text document in the workshop together with up to 14 people or their end devices with an internet connection (e.g. smartphone), you can use an **online text editor** such as www.board.net. The collected text entries can then be accessed by the teacher and the

learners using a link. After the workshop, the collected text inputs can be "picked up" by the learners themselves with a link over a longer period of time and further revised if desired.

- You can share documents on clouds, e.g. Google drive, Onedrive etc. for collaborative editing.
- There are also some tools that are well suitable for collaborative mind mapping and brainstorming, such as Google Jamboard (www.edu.google.com/intl/en_ALL/jamboard/) or Miro (www.miro.com).

Playful break-up and feedback:

- **To make your lessons more fun with interactive quizzes, surveys or polls**, you can use online tools such as Kahoot (www.kahoot.com), PollEverywhere (www.polleverywhere.com) or Google Forms (www.google.com/forms/about/).
- **It is also possible to create an interactive treasure hunt or an educational trail** to communicate learning content, which the participants simply complete with their smartphones (e.g. Actionbound at www.actionbound.com).

Especially in lessons with digital tools, it is particularly easy and purposeful to include texts, pictures, videos and music from other experts in the subject area or artists from the fields of photography, film and music. **However, whenever you as a teacher or the learners present something that they have not created themselves, it is important to consider copyright regulations**: Before using content that you have not created yourself (e.g. an image), check whether you need to conclude a licensing agreement for it for a fee. If you want to use images from an online image database, for example, you will find detailed information on the respective website (e.g. www.istockphoto.com or www.shutterstock.com). However, you can also use online databases where images, music or videos are made available free of charge (e.g. www.pixabay.com). In this case, a licence agreement is concluded automatically and free of charge as soon as you use the image, for example. Nevertheless, certain conditions may be demanded, such as stating the name of the author when using the image or refraining from using the image for advertising purposes. If you have any doubts about possible copyright infringement when preparing your lessons, check with the website or simply ask the person of authorship by email and be sure to keep the written consent.

Be aware that copyright is also something that has to be considered when using texts either from the internet or books. Appropriate information about the original resource has to be provided with proper citation. More information about how to do this can be found here: https://guides.libraries.psu.edu/apaquickguide/intext.

If you would like to **conduct your lessons online**, there are various **video conferencing platforms** available, e.g. Zoom at www.zoom.com, Skype at www.skype.com or MS Teams at www.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-teams/log-in. Make sure that you make all the settings in the chosen video conferencing platform in accordance with the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). If in doubt, ask experts in the field of data protection for advice in order to protect the learners' data accordingly.

> **Definition**
>
> If a course or workshop is held with the learners in presence on the one hand, but is additionally supplemented with online teaching units, we speak of "mixed" learning, so-called **"blended learning"**.

Podcasts that you recommend or create yourself (audio files for downloading from the internet) that match the topic are also suitable for deepening learners' knowledge in and after the workshop or course. If you want to create podcasts yourself, you can present them on all kinds of podcast platforms, e.g. with Podigee (www.podigee.com). Podcasts by other professionals on a wide variety of topics can be found, for example, on Spotify (www.spotify.com), Soundcloud (www.soundcloud.com) or YouTube (www.youtube.com).

> **Practical relevance**
>
> Ask the learners which digital tools could be helpful for your workshop. Probably some learners have already had good experiences with particular digital tools and can give you some tips on how to use them in class.

6.6 Evaluating the teaching-learning process

The evaluation of the teaching-learning process supports you in checking whether the main learning objective or sub-objectives set for the course or workshop have been achieved. This reflection is done by the teacher as well as by the learners. **Not only when the course is completed, but already during the course**, it is important to find out whether the learning content has been understood by the learners. Especially if several sub-goals are needed to reach the main learning goal, it is important to ask for feedback from the learners after each step or to observe them to what extent they are ready for the next activity. For example, in a ceramics workshop, the clay piece needs to be sufficiently finished before it can be glazed.

On the one hand, give direct feedback to the learners to enrich their (group) work. On the other hand, also ask learners for ongoing feedback on how they are progressing with the current task. In this way, you will increasingly recognise which teaching methods are most helpful in passing on your knowledge and experience to your target group.

You have the choice of interviewing your learners orally or in writing (anonymously is also possible). Basically, the larger the group, the more useful standardised written feedback is, as it requires less time. In addition, feedback from young people requires a more playful approach than with adults. Also consider in advance what information would be valuable to you: What do you want to know about the strengths or weaknesses of the approach to teaching and/or your performance as a teacher? Do you want to get input from the learners?

Here is a small selection of **methods to get constructive feedback from learners**:

- Open discussion round:

Learners are given the opportunity to discuss individual activities openly and to express both praise and criticism. Your role as a teacher should also be addressed. To ensure that this exchange remains constructive, define constructive **feedback rules** together with the learners. These could be:

1. we address another person directly.

2. we express observations in concrete terms.

3. our criticism is constructive.

4. we are appreciative and polite.

5. we present a balanced number of pro and con arguments.

- **Five-finger method**

The playful five-finger method is particularly suitable for working with young people because it is fun and can be learned quickly. This method can be done orally or in writing. You ask the learners to give answers, each corresponding to a finger on their hand: The (like) thumb stands for "That was great, I especially liked it!", the index finger means "You should look here!" and/or "I would have liked that!", the middle finger shows "I didn't like that!", the ring finger means "I learned that/ I'll take that with me!" and the little finger stands for "I would have needed more time for that!" and/or "I missed that!".

You can find more creative ideas for receiving helpful feedback on the Internet by searching for "feedback methods".

- **Classical feedback sheet**

You can create a classical feedback sheet (maximum one A4 page) and hand it out to the learners in paper form. They fill it in by hand and give it back to you. Afterwards, you evaluate the answers provided. You can either use open questions (free choice) or standardised questions (with predefined answers to select from).

- **Online evaluation**

By providing an online questionnaire, your learners can fill it out and submit it immediately via smartphone (e.g. by scanning a QR code). There are corresponding tools on the internet, such as easyfeedback at www.easy-feedback.com, which provide proven templates and a helpful evaluation of the survey. A simple and free creation of an online questionnaire is also possible with Google Forms (www.google.com/forms/about/). Google Forms also offers a user-friendly evaluation.

Also test your own ideas to get constructive feedback from learners! You can ask learners to self-evaluate their own learning by contrasting what they expect from the workshop or course day with what they actually experience and report back to you.

Or create a quiz to check what knowledge learners have acquired.

Remember

Test which evaluation method suits you, your survey objective and the course or your target group. Once you have decided on a method, it makes sense to keep it for several workshop sessions in order to be able to compare the development of the survey results.

It is important to remember that all feedback is subjective. Take note of points of criticism, without immediate comment. **Ask for clarification** if feedback does not seem clear to you and **ask for concrete ideas for improvement**. Finally, thank the learners for their feedback and clarify that it is valuable for you and the course.

Also invite yourself to evaluate the course:

- Was there any recognisable learning for the learners (what they wanted from the workshop versus what they gained)?
- What did not work out as desired?
- Why were objectives not achieved? Were the learners overwhelmed (When? Why?)?
- Were the methods chosen to convey the content helpful (Why or why not?)?
- Was the use of (digital) media effective?
- Was the time schedule coherent?
- Where would more time be necessary and why?
- At which point should the learners be given more freedom?
- What alternatives are there for the next learning event? As a teacher, was I able to keep the learners' interest all the way through?
- Did I succeed in keeping the learners' attention on the central questions?

After evaluating all feedback - from learners and teachers - make a note of what you would like to improve in the future. No matter whether the evaluation shows that you need to restructure the content, change the timing, incorporate motivational elements or new methods - evaluation is useful to make your role as a teacher and your learning offer even more effective in the future.

6.7 Conclusion

Conflicts in a workshop or course can take place on the subject, relationship, perception, objective, distribution, value and role level. It is helpful if you, as a teacher, recognise conflict potential at an early stage in order to counteract its escalation appropriately. However, conflicts also serve to gain new perspectives from which solutions that have not existed before can emerge. But this can only succeed if all parties involved see and recognise the other parties as allies with a common goal right from the start.

Experiential learning and active participation enable us to learn most naturally, as it fulfils our human need for personal development. This universal desire applies to all age groups, with young people especially seeking adventure and risk. By making it a point as a teacher to involve learners in activities in the introductory, working and final phases of the course or workshop, you will greatly support their learning.

Choosing your tools for teaching, it is crucial that you ask yourself as a teacher how they support you in your role or your participants in their learning. The more senses (seeing, hearing, doing) are addressed in the learners, the more sustainable is the learning success. In addition to encouraging active participation, visualisation also plays an important role in imparting knowledge. For this purpose, digital possibilities (e.g. a PowerPoint presentation with the help of a multimedia projector) or the design of whiteboards, posters or flipcharts as well as a range of other materials (e.g. photos, films, workpieces) are available.

New technologies can facilitate knowledge transfer and learning. For your personal development in the use of digital tools as a teacher, there is a wide range of tools and information available on the Internet. Young people in particular have already had good experiences with digital tools and appreciate their use. For example, in addition to digital presentations, use self-made videos, digital noticeboards and an online text editor to collaboratively edit documents. Interactive quizzes can be easily created by a teacher and can provide important variety in the course. You can also arrange for polling or learner evaluation of the course with easy-to-use online tools.

By regularly evaluating the teaching-learning process, you can draw on a rich store of development opportunities that will allow you to make your role as a teacher and your teaching even more effective. Ask learners for specific suggestions for improvement and reflect in writing after the workshop or course on what you would like to change or maintain in terms of timing, content elements and methods in the future.

6.8 Resources

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