



Develop Your
Creativity

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METHODOLOGY FOR TEACHING ADULTS AND STANDARD OF EDUCATOR'S WORK DURING THE COVID

GUIDE



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Certified Service EDU SMART Training Center
UKRPN 12066295

Table of Contents

1. Qualifications and professional competences of educators in remote work with adults	4
2. Description of educators' work in teaching processes during COVID	14
Why is it worth limiting grading?	22
How to evaluate a student during remote learning?	23
Motivating adults in activities and lifelong learning	25
3. Changing the way of working in the times of COVID for educators	27
4. Changing the style of work after the pandemic in Poland	30
New competences for educators after the pandemic - what to learn?	31
Remote work - a new style of work after the COVID-19 pandemic	32
5. Changing the style of work in Bulgaria	34
Organizational forms and organization of the learning process of adults	36
Current trends and problems in adult vocational education	40
6. Changing styles of work after the pandemic in Ireland	42
Competences to work remotely with adults	43
7. New rules of remote work	45
Statistics in the EU	45
New rules of remote work in Poland	51
The approach of the European Commission	52
Report by WHO and the International Labor Organization	53
Preparing the workplace for COVID-19 - new rules	54
8. Tools for remote work with adults	55
Tools for remote work	57
Educational platforms used	66
Effectiveness of educators in the conditions of distance learning	67
9. Focus on the participant - how to motivate and cooperate, maintain the willingness to educate?	69
Sources	73

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Introduction

COVID-19 has caused the greatest disruption in non-formal education in history. By mid-April 2020, the pandemic affected 94% of the population learners around the world. This means that adults have not only been isolated from the possibility of participating in social, civic, cultural and educational life.



Social exclusion due to COVID-19 has become part of our everyday life - non-formal education is the answer to the challenges associated with this phenomenon.

Adult education is an extremely important aspect in the current situation we find ourselves in. Educational strengthening of the society takes on a different dimension. It cares for the development of adults, but also prevents regression and exclusion, which is a real threat in the time of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The premise of the "DEVELOP YOUR CREATIVITY" project is to support educators as people who support adults in education. They have the opportunity to directly reach, talk and convince adults to enter the path of education they will follow throughout their lives. Thanks to educators who have the right competences and educational tools, it is possible to improve social inclusion in adult education.

This guide, created by partners from Bulgaria, Ireland and Poland, is an extremely important source of information for both adult educators and people involved in non-formal education.

We hope that the valuable information contained in the guide will help you improve your competences and significantly affect the quality of work with adults.

Karolina Kornecka-Kupiec
Project leader "Develop Your Creativity"

1. QUALIFICATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES OF EDUCATORS AT REMOTE WORK WITH ADULTS

As a result of the aging society, more and more people, despite their age, are still professionally active.

In addition, under the influence of dynamic changes, both socio-cultural and technological, it is necessary to improve the qualifications and professional skills of adults through vocational courses, specialist training and workshops.

Therefore, the role of the educator is becoming more and more popular and important. In the Dictionary of the Polish Language you can find a short explanation of the term "educator", according to which it is a person who professionally teaches or educates others. However, this is a very general definition.



"Educator" is a person who professionally teaches or educates others.

In addition to being a teacher, an educator is someone who:

- encourages others to analyze and self-assessment their professional development,
- motivates others to develop and supports them in doing so,
- obtains its funds for the implementation of their professional plans,
- is one of the founders and creators of the education system,
- plans his professional duties,
- evaluates its work,
- is constantly developing both personally and professionally,
- uses the knowledge, skills and experience of other people, including training participants.

The functioning of the educator and the quality of the tasks performed by him are influenced by the following factors, which belong to specific levels of social organization. These levels are as follows: **intrapersonal, interpersonal, group, institutional and social.**



The **intrapersonal level** determines the knowledge, experiences, skills, competences, beliefs and character traits of an individual.



The next level - **interpersonal** - relates to direct relationships with other people.



The **group level** is the way a given social group functions, because the work of an educator is mainly work with educational groups. The institutional level also influences the educator's work. These are all institutions related to educational activities.



The last level - **social** - are factors related to the socio-political and economic conditions that hold for locally and globally.



Literature focused on the development of adults mentions a specific set of personal characteristics and attitudes of educators, trainers and mentors.

To the above-mentioned traits and attitudes include:

- *openness*, which means the ability to self-reflect, share your experiences and related emotions with others, share your thoughts with the interlocutor and the willingness to listen to others and learn about their views, values, lifestyle, experiences;
- *tolerance*, that is, respect for different views and values among the society;
- *empathy*, the ability to understand the feelings and experiences of another person (compassion);
- *courage*, that is, admitting your mistake, showing your weaknesses when the situation requires it;
- *responsibility* for their tasks and fulfilling their role in a competent manner, conducting trainings so that the recipients are satisfied;
- *respect* for others, i.e. respect for the needs and expectations of other people;
- *assertiveness*, which means being aware of your rights and the ability to show your needs and express your own opinions;
- *creativity*, i.e. creating new, original solutions;
- *sense of humor* that allows you to distance yourself from emerging difficulties and to relieve the tense atmosphere in the training group.



In addition to the above-mentioned personal characteristics and attitudes, the educator of an adult should have a number of relevant skills. If the educator wants his classes to be effective, it should take into account the individual needs of the participants and the whole group. This ability is **diagnosing and taking into account individual and group needs**.

Another skill that is in demand is the ability to **effectively and efficiently communicate**. Conducting educational activities is mainly related to communication with others. Good communication between the educator and the training group allows, among others, the correct and effective performance of tasks by training participants and allows for the development of positive relationships in the team.

When working with other people, especially with adults, you need to be able to listen to someone and convey information in a precise and understandable way. Therefore, the person who teaches others should **be able to give and receive feedback**. Thanks to this advantage, communication during training and the process of acquiring knowledge by adults will be much better. Providing feedback correctly encourages training participants to ask questions, clarify doubts or exchange views. On the other hand, obtaining feedback from the training group allows the educator to assess the classes outcomes, and in case of any doubts, it helps to explain them.

There are times when a conflict may arise when working with a group. Therefore, it is good for a person working as an educator to **be able to diagnose and solve conflicts**. Has the function of a mediator. Thanks to this skill, the educator will prevent delays in the course of teaching.

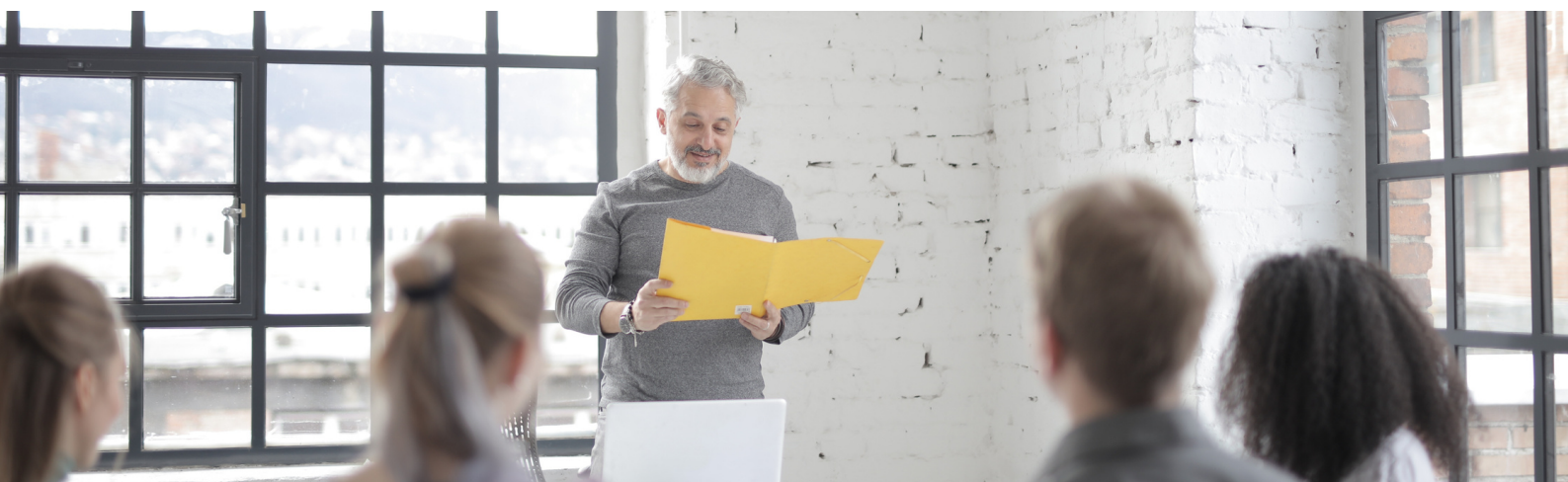
Another predisposition that is welcomed at the educator is **building an atmosphere of openness**. The atmosphere in which the classes will take place depends on him. It is important that it is based on openness, i.e. the possibility of expressing your concerns, expectations or difficulties during training with adults. This will allow for better work results.

It is also important that during classes with adults, in order that the educator takes care of **building a sense of responsibility**. Training participants should take responsibility for the tasks they perform and thus for the course of your education process.

When performing tasks during training, doubts and problems often arise. In such situations, it is necessary to exchange experiences between members of the training group and the trainer. This will solve the problems quickly. Therefore, the educator should **be able to refer to the shared experiences of group members during classes with adults**.

In addition, the adult educator must **prevent disruptive behavior during training**. He should do it decisively, but respectfully, so as not to alienate people to training, but only pay attention. Failure to react to this type of behavior may adversely affect the work of the group during the training.

The last desired skill among educators is **the evaluation of the workflow of the group**. Skillful assessment of progress during training, tasks performed by adults and relations among the group, allows for drawing appropriate conclusions and then taking appropriate actions.



Educators are a group of people diversified in terms of competences, education and work experience. This diversity depends individually on each educator, whether they have the will and willingness to constantly acquire new knowledge and qualifications.

Educators are most often **assigned pedagogical or psychological education**. This is correct. However, it should be borne in mind that graduating in pedagogy or psychology does not give formal entitlements to teaching adults. The person becomes an educator thanks to their experience and career development choices. At the moment, there are no standards or regulations that precisely define what conditions must be met in order to be an adult educator. The best way to do this job is to just start teaching adults (and not only adults).

To sum up, anyone who just wants to transfer knowledge and skills to others, on their own account or in the institution that employs him, can do it.



The best way to do this job is to just start teaching adults (and not only adults).

It is difficult to clearly define what qualifications and training an adult educator should have. The previous paragraph mentions psychological or pedagogical studies, but this is not a condition, the key to success. It really depends on the knowledge that will be passed on to others, on the subject of the workshop.

Due to the fact that access to the profession of educator is generally available, a person teaching adults can be a lawyer, economist, sociologist, as well as other specialists in many fields. It should be remembered that it is very important that adult educators have experience and skills in the field from which they will lead training. In the professional achievements of such a person, additional training is also welcome, i.e. in the field of career counseling, work with small and large groups, effective personal communication, preparation of training materials or conflict resolution. It is also worth paying attention to the educator's internship.

It is extremely valuable for such a person to have at least one several-month internship in a training company. The better the training institution, the better.

In particular, an adult educator should be able to conduct workshops and training, and to transfer knowledge to others in a skillful and understandable way. Currently, it is very important that such a person should be able to conduct classes online, which means that he should also be familiar with communicators for communication and distance learning.



It should be remembered that it is very important that adult educators have experience and skills in the field from which they will lead training.

Competences are defined as a combination of three elements: **knowledge, skills, and attitudes**. In the work of an educator, it is important that he has "soft skills". In other words, "soft skills" is the ability to cope with social situations. Such competences include: time management, self-management, coping with stress, creativity, assertiveness, emotional intelligence, the ability to work in a group / with a group, the ability to motivate others, convince others to be right, the ability to cope with problems and solving them. In addition to soft competences, also hard competences are mentioned, which are closely related to the knowledge, competences and experience acquired by the educator.

The educator should have a number of hard competences, including:

- **self-improvement** - the educator must constantly improve his qualifications and expand and update his knowledge;
- **diagnostic competences** - getting to know the participants of the training is necessary for the educator in conducting classes;
- **design competences** - developing programs, plans and projects of training activities;
- **control and evaluation competences** - educator assessment is one of the most critical moments in the adult learning process.

In addition, important competences that have gained importance during the pandemic are **technological and IT competences**, i.e. using the Internet and its resources, knowledge of educational platforms and the possibility of using them in teaching, the ability to use applications and social media in teaching, understanding media resources related to with the training, analysis and substantive evaluation of the existing media resources and the ability to use them properly in the education process, using information technology to communicate with the training group.



The way we work, learn, participate in public life and organize our daily lives is changing with the development of technology and global and demographic challenges. Appropriate skills help people adapt to these changes and maintain their well-being, while contributing to society, productivity and economic growth.

Today, people need to have a variety of skills, ranging from basic skills such as language and math literacy and digital skills to professional or technical skills, as well as entrepreneurial skills and transversal skills such as foreign languages or personal development and learning skills.



Today, Europe faces a number of challenges.

The ecological and digital transition is changing the way we live, work and interact, and a change in the skill set is needed to make the most of their potential.

Demographic change requires Europe to take advantage of all its talents and diversity. At the same time, they will create new job opportunities in the elderly and care sectors.

The COVID-19 pandemic has made work and distance learning a reality for millions of people in the EU and has shown the limitations of our digital preparedness. The pandemic also had a negative impact on the job opportunities of many people. Too many people cannot find a job because they do not have the necessary skills or work in jobs that do not match their abilities.

At the same time, 40% of employers cannot find people with the necessary skills to fill the vacancies, and too few people have the necessary skills and support to see starting their own business as a realistic opportunity.

An unacceptably high proportion of Europeans - one-fifth - have difficulty reading and writing, and the level of mathematical literacy and digital skills is even lower.

Although everyone should be able to improve their skills regularly, only 4 out of 10 adults participate in learning activities.

Education and training in Europe are a matter for the Member States. National and regional labor markets and education systems face specific challenges, but Member States have similar challenges and opportunities.

Therefore, European Skills Initiatives aim to mobilize all stakeholders in Europe in line with the following lines of action:

- Job skills
- Cooperation
- Opportunities to acquire skills throughout life

The European Skills Program of 1 July 2020 includes a 5-year action plan with 12 actions aimed at helping to improve Europeans' skills.

Each year, a large number of countries receive specific skills development recommendations to guide their national policy-making, and EU funding helps to implement the policies developed:

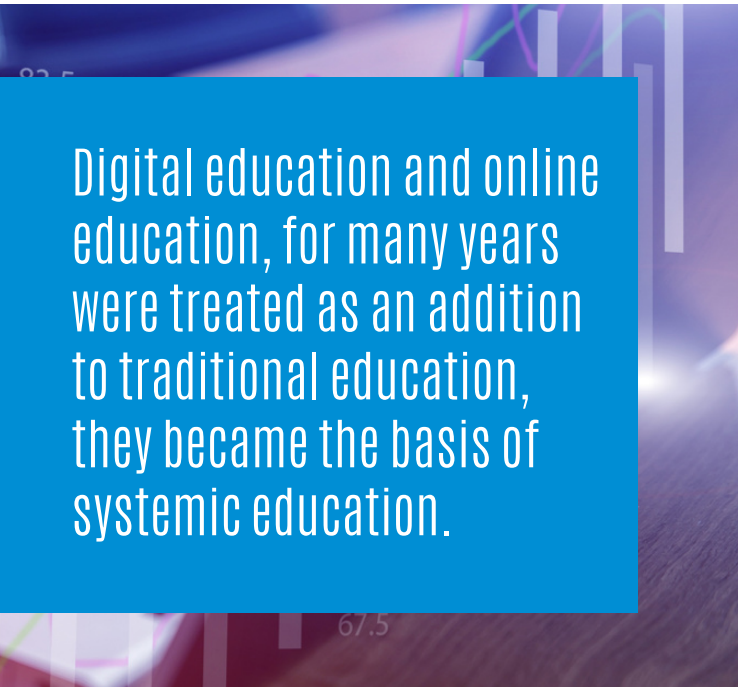
- European Social Fund
- Erasmus +
- Youth Employment Initiative
- European Globalization Adjustment Fund (EGF)
- Horizon 2020
- EU Employment and Social Innovation Program (EaSI)
- European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI)
- Competitiveness of Enterprises and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Program (COSME)



2. Description of educators' work in teaching processes in the times of COVID

Remote education in connection with the COVID-19 epidemic began unexpectedly.

Day by day for some, week by week for others. She stayed in kindergartens, schools and universities. It depended on the epidemiological situation, which is constantly changing. Regardless of the duration of the pandemic, educators have been forced to deal with it by doing the best they can.



Digital education and online education, for many years were treated as an addition to traditional education, they became the basis of systemic education.

The 21st century, characterized by ubiquitous digitalisation, defined the direction of remote education towards online education. A wide range of digital tools for conducting online classes, e-learning platforms, digital educational resources, seemed to create enormous opportunities for the course of remote education, in this difficult period for the world. However, the first days, and then weeks, showed that the situation is much more complex than everyone initially thought.

The technological equipment of institutions, the availability of equipment and the Internet at home, the level of digital competences of teachers and students, the availability of digital teaching materials, online teaching methodology, and above all a number of social issues related to distance education made remote education a very big challenge both for the institutions themselves, as well as - above all for educators and their students.

We show the lack of preparation of teachers to conduct online educational classes in three areas:

A

technological preparation, understood as the lack of computer equipment (computers, laptops, tablets), the lack of sufficiently fast and stable access to the Internet;

B

methodological preparation in the field of transferring traditional classes to the digital world, understood as the ability to select appropriate tools, methods and content available in digital form;

C

lack of sufficient digital competences among teachers.



The SAMR model developed by Dr. Ruben Puententura assumes four phases of transforming traditional learning into technology-enhanced learning.

The first phase is the substitution of traditional methods with technology without changing the type of tasks: instead of a pen the student writes in a word processor or the teacher uses an electronic blackboard instead of on a chalk board.

The second phase is augmentation: we start using the e-tool function, e.g. we provide students with e-notes from the lesson, we receive an e-document to be checked, students take an online test, which will check itself a moment after its completion, thereby involving students in the e-learning process itself (instant feedback).

The third phase, in which a significant shift in the emphasis on the student's work is already visible, is the modification: technology becomes important - the task cannot be completed without it, and the student's social and digital skills play a significant role. In this model, the teacher differentiates tasks, configuring individual areas for the student - so the motivation, commitment and interest of students in personalized learning increase.

Four phase - redefinition - requires the use of technology as a collaborative tool for students working on the task, and the role of the teacher turns into a moderator and coordinator of the teaching process.

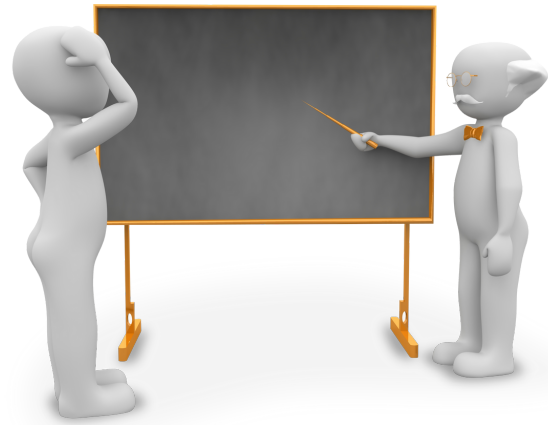
The learners are at the center and become the subject of the learning process, the tools of which are the technologies they use. The role of the student as a creator is therefore absent in the beginning. It is slightly marked in the second stage. It clearly gains importance in the next stage, in order to be in the center in the last stage.

Modification is a phase in which, by means of planned activities, we can release the layers of creativity in students - they can become the authors of their own documents - whether they will be simple texts, drawings, calculations or more difficult tests, surveys or videos that require the use of new tools from outside simple sets of educational applications.

All these works (within the meaning of copyright law) are unique, unique works of students - it is up to the educator whether they will be typically imitative (according to the method: ctrl + c / ctrl + v), or will be called a creative activity and will be endowed with individual traits of students / creators.



In distance learning, the learning process itself, properly planned, engages the recipient much more.



At the same time, it increases the intensity of learning. The student's entire attention is focused on performing tasks that - when they are interesting - engage them completely. There is no room for a one-way message here - a student in a virtual environment is surrounded by dozens of distractions, and he or she will include something more attractive than a monotonously delivered lecture in a separate window, it is only a matter of time. Therefore, we have to switch from the serving mode to the learning support mode of our subject.



This is the "content guide" mode that we propose to the student (eg by designing a lesson in one of the tools available for free for education). We should also allow students to find and propose alternative content on their own, creating a planned space for these presentations at the same time. It may be that the students' suggestions will be better than ours. They will be characterized by a new, unconventional approach and a different view of the problem. In such a situation, the student will become a co-creator of the learning process and co-author of the content and teaching that will be used by all interested parties in the class team.

The first step to this transformation is to enable joint editing of documents, which are to become teaching materials created in all possible types of processed data: films, images, sounds, animations, texts or numerical data. Collaboration on shared documents allows students to instantly compare their own ideas, modify and change entire concepts on the fly, before final online publication.

Processing them and presenting them in shared virtual spaces together with teachers (movie channels, network folders, internet boards, websites, blogs, etc.) with a clear indication of students' authorship allows them to convince them of the value of these materials and the importance of decisions regarding the choice and placement.

Such a virtual space in which the content proposed by students and educators can permeate are all kinds of open blogs, shared folders, dedicated educational platforms or network tools for jointly "collecting" information on any topic: Symbaloo (<https://www.symbaloo.com>), Pearltress (<https://www.pearltrees.com>) or Padlet (<https://padlet.com>). presented content. It is important to base e-learning on multi-communication tools (programs).



E-mail is primarily a tool for students to log into educational platforms for students - sending e-mail is time-consuming and complex compared to using real-time chat and instant messaging. E-mail is sometimes the only way to send students tasks to be performed - in the era of e-journals, this function was taken over by their communication modules, equipped with an additional and important feature from the point of view of information security - certified security of transmitted and shared data.

The situation of the pandemic, related to the necessity of long forced isolation and the lack of direct peer contacts, prompts the use of e-learning tools (programs) that perform as well on desktop computers as on mobile devices: for students it makes no difference whether they learn from a 24-inch screen. or 6 inches. What is important for teachers is the substantive message, its reception and the ability to use a given application on a student-friendly device, which ensures synergy of learning outcomes. There is no better equipment for a student than his own smartphone or tablet, which he knows from the inside out, until recently so disliked in the traditional form of education



We need direct and indirect communication as different types of communication (and also different communication tools) will be needed at different times in teaching.

There are also no better tools for e-learning than the responsive platforms available free of charge to schools offered by Microsoft and Google in Poland - mainly due to the common ability to use these tools (by students and teachers) as well as the interchangeability and universality of the formats of the created content.

The best situation for students is the coherence and homogeneity of the teaching process, ensuring the certainty of achieving the assumed goals - even if the goals seem irrelevant to the children. The key subject of e-learning is still the teacher, who actually becomes the designer of the teaching process.

Departing from the administration mode and assuming the role of a guide in the world of information that is worth building knowledge from - this is our today's challenge, forced by the situation.



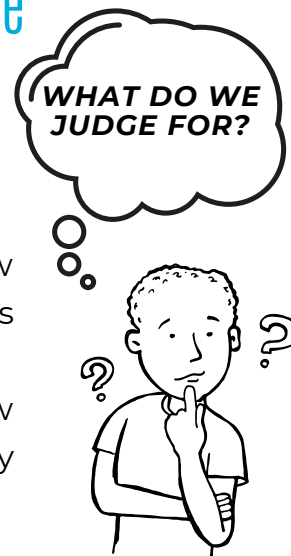
DEPARTING FROM THE ADMINISTRATION MODE AND ASSUMING THE ROLE OF A GUIDE IN THE WORLD OF INFORMATION THAT IS WORTH BUILDING KNOWLEDGE FROM - THIS IS OUR TODAY'S CHALLENGE, FORCED BY THE SITUATION.

It is the selection of content, the method of their presentation, the methodology of introduction, the pace of work, the creation of space for students' creativity and the presentation of this creativity in joint projects that determines the involvement of students, freeing their creativity and creating a positive "flow" and learning fashion.

The educator is responsible for assessing the learning outcomes of the student.

There are two main reasons for judging:

- Providing the student with information on how his / her learning is progressing, which is synonymous with helping him learn.
- Acquiring information by the teacher about how his students learn, what issues they have already mastered, and what needs to be repeated.



WE CAN HEREFOR FORMULATE A DEFINITION OF FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT:

Formative assessment is the process of obtaining information by the teacher and learner that helps them recognize what the learning is doing in order to:

- the teacher could modify and improve further teaching,
- the student receives feedback to help him learn. Issuing a grade is only some information for the student, telling about the effects of his work and the student's situation compared to the group.

Thanks to this, the student does not gain knowledge of what and how to improve, and the teacher does not find out what else to work on with the student. So it is not a formative evaluation. The general principle we use for formative assessment is that feedback should be given to the learner while they are learning (when they can improve something else) and grade is a summary of achievement. Formal assessment experts, referring to the conclusions of the research, indicate that it would be best not to assess with grades altogether.

WHY REDUCE GRADING WITH GRADES?

The recommendation to limit grading by grades is that they only give the student information about how far he or she is from being perfect, or how much he is in the ranking of group achievement. Some educators believe that grades motivate students to study, but practice shows that this is rarely the case. And even if it does, it's just an external motivation that is very fragile.

During distance learning, this motivational argument is completely omitted, because the educator has no control over the work performed by the student. Students also realize that a grade does not reflect their efforts, so it is not useful information for them either. At the present time, therefore, we recommend that you limit grading only to the final grade, if it is necessary.



The student needs an opinion on his work. Ideally, it should be formulated in the form of feedback, which consists of:

1. information about what has been done well (according to predetermined criteria),
2. information about what and how to improve,
3. tips on how the student should continue to learn and develop. Feedback can be provided to the student by:

- educator
- another student (peer assessment)
- himself (self-esteem)

In the case of feedback from the educator, its quality is most important. It does not have to cover all aspects of the work, but it should help the student learn.

The work that the student does at home without the teacher's help should be checked and provided with feedback. Therefore, the teacher should consider what tasks he is proposing to the students as homework. Therefore, it is worth asking homework that develops students, and feedback helps them learn.

Whenever possible, it is worthwhile to leave peer-reviewed or self-assessed works to be checked. In this case, students need to be provided with an example of a job well done.

In formative assessment it is very important to define the criteria for success in advance. They should be known to students before starting work. It is just as important for peer assessment as it is for self-assessment - neither one nor the other is possible without defining criteria. Peer review is the feedback given to the student by a friend or colleague.



ASSESSMENT

STUDENTS SHOULD KNOW THAT THE EDUCATOR IS JUDGING THE STUDENT'S PERFORMANCE, NOT THE STUDENT.



In order for a student to be able to make a peer assessment, he must know what a properly prepared work should look like. This means that the educator, after the students have completed the task, should provide them with a benchmark against which they can compare the assessed work. During distance learning, peer evaluation can be arranged in pairs via e-mail. This is important because, by getting to know another person's work, the students learn from each other. In order to carry out a self-assessment, the student also needs a model of properly done work. This is especially useful for test tasks. The student can take a test and then compare their answers with the answers given by the teacher. Both in peer assessment and in a situation where the student is to make a self-assessment, it is advisable to have the opportunity to consult his opinion on the assessed work with the teacher. This can be done through telephone or online consultations.

MOTIVATING ADULTS IN ACTIVITIES AND LIFELONG LEARNING

In this hectic time, educators, especially those with no previous experience of using new media in their educational work, can feel lost among so many resources available.

If teachers have the right to feel confused and insecure in a situation in which they have to switch to different paths of carrying out their tasks, it is also worth looking at students from this perspective.

This applies to four spheres, important from the point of view of the subject matter:



HARDWARE (DEVICE TYPE, CONNECTION SPEED, ETC.),



COMPETENCE (DIGITAL SKILLS, LEVEL OF EFFICIENCY IN USING TECHNOLOGIES),



MOTIVATIONAL (MOTIVATION TO LEARN AND USE TECHNOLOGY, COMMITMENT, INTEREST, ETC.),



SITUATIONAL (ORGANIZATION OF THE DAY, ACCESS TO THE DEVICE, ROOMS, PRIVACY ISSUES, HEALTH ISSUES, ETC.).

Therefore, tools are needed so that everyone can "fit" here and find space for themselves. Also those who have less competences, inferior equipment and limited access to it. Therefore, what is needed is the most capacious and flexible method, or rather the form of implementing priority tasks. Such a formula can be digital storytelling and methods based on collecting one's own works or achievements (the aforementioned portfolio), strongly emphasizing the techniques of expressing oneself with all possible means of expression, e.g. photovoice.

A digital story can take the form of a movie clip made of a combination of sound and image, text, animations, etc. It can also take the form of a multimedia presentation.

Participants of such activities improve, inter alia, the ability to find and select useful materials (created by oneself or found in the Internet resources) and to use them.

These skills make up an ability known as **digital literacy**.

Depending on the competence of the author, the story can be created independently, as part of a larger whole (for example, as a result of group work), or with the support of an educator or group.

It consists in telling stories using the tools offered by the Internet and new technologies, meeting the natural need to participate in storytelling and creating stories, stories about us, our experiences, achievements, important.

Some people find it more difficult to participate in this typically human activity (e.g. due to communication and verbal difficulties, lack of interest in the environment, lack of a feeling that you have something important and interesting to convey, but potentially a group of people with whom this method can be implemented in the current situation. , it is quite wide.

Of course, in working with some people, it may fulfill more limited goals (e.g. developing and using digital competences thanks to the technical aspect of storytelling), and in the case of others - more extensive (making decisions, empowering identity, self-presentation, supporting cognitive development, cybersecurity issues, etc.).

However, it should be emphasized that its significant advantage is its universal character and the fact that it allows to take up very diverse issues, also outside the program.



THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF SELECTED METHODS AND TECHNIQUES WHILE CONVEYING ATTRACTIVE CONTENT MAY AFFECT THE DEVELOPMENT OF MOTIVATION FOR LIFELONG LEARNING.

3. CHANGE OF WORK STYLE FOR EDUCATORS DURING COVID

The skills and competencies acquired during the pandemic while looking for tools for remote classes seem to constitute an extremely valuable basis for further work.

Through online classes, educators learned about digital education tools and digital resources, and probably never before had the time or opportunity to try out so many opportunities offered by modern technologies. Even if most of them learned to use new tools by trial and error, and their efforts did not always bring positive results, the skills and competences acquired during the pandemic while looking for tools for remote activities seem to be an extremely valuable basis for further work.





Digital e-learning is likely to return in increasingly diverse circumstances. The main trends / opportunities for using digital education after the epidemic are:

- random circumstances,
- prolonged absence of teachers and students,
- organization of online meetings of the teaching staff,
- online meetings with parents,
- online education as an alternative form of learning, etc.



How then, knowing such a great potential of the experiences and reflections so far, to prepare for it in the future?

1. There is a need to use the full potential of online education in remote education.
2. Intensification of training in the field of digital competences and the online methodological workshop of teachers.
3. Intensification of activities for the planning of the online education process.
4. Intensification of activities for the broad support of educators and students in online education.
5. Intensification of activities for the technological equipment of institutions, in particular mobile equipment laboratories, allowing students and educators to work on school equipment at home.

The attractiveness of selected methods and techniques while conveying attractive content may affect the development of motivation for lifelong learning.

4. CHANGES IN WORKING STYLE AFTER THE PANDEMIC IN POLAND

The spread of the COVID-19 virus and the pandemic associated with it have diametrically affected the functioning of the entire world.

People had to completely change their lifestyle. This change concerned, inter alia, the professional sphere. Due to the ubiquitous pandemic, restrictions appeared that forced employers to significantly modify the work model, especially the intellectual one. Remote work has gained in importance. From day to day, employers were obliged to provide their employees with the possibility of providing it, so that the effectiveness of their professional duties and the achieved results were not at a lower level than those from before the pandemic.

The provision of remote work resulted in the emergence of specific challenges for employers. The most obvious challenge was the evolution of the workplace.

From March 16, 2020, a lock down was introduced in Poland. As a result, the offices were closed completely, remote work was in force or a hybrid system was introduced. This situation continued until the second half of May 2020.



From that moment, individual sectors of the economy were defrosted in stages and some restrictions were lifted. Many companies began to reopen, but it was not possible to return to the pre-pandemic working model. On the contrary, most employers have left the option to work remotely. In some companies, where remote work has not resulted in a decrease in employee efficiency and achieved results, the hybrid work model has become a permanent feature.

Employers made it possible for employees to choose whether they want to work remotely or stationary. In addition, in order to reduce the risk of infection, only a part of the workstations were made available in the offices. There is also a rotational presence of individual employees.

While remote work in most Polish companies did not contribute to the decline in the results achieved, it had an impact on the broadly understood integration between employees. Staying at home for a long time and working individually, to a large extent, loosen contacts between team members. Consequently, it is more difficult to maintain a sense of cooperation. The above-described tendency generates another challenge faced by employers, which is the need to integrate the team. Integration trips, meetings or joint trainings and workshops have been replaced by the creation of internal media interest groups and corporate social networks, such as Emplo or Yammer.

Another challenge that employers and business owners had to face was ensuring the security of data that is made available to employees for remote work. Managers use, among others, an encrypted VPN (Virtual Private Network) for this purpose.

New competences for educators after the pandemic - what to learn?

The last few months have been extremely hard for adult educators. The epidemic taught them that the situation on the labor market is changing dynamically. It turned out that the work performed on a daily basis now requires completely different skills and competences. Most of them changed the nature of their work to remote and moved to the virtual space, **focusing on e-learning**.



Online classes require proper preparation, which means gaining skills related to the operation of electronic devices and knowledge of new media. Podcasts and video materials used in working with adults are an additional option. Being able to conduct webinars can also be especially helpful. It will therefore be necessary to acquire all useful training tools, applications, devices and computer programs. It will also be important to learn how to use them and their individual functionalities.

In the process of the changes taking place, it was possible to distinguish key competences for educators:

- Broad knowledge of technology,
- Ability to organize time while working remotely,
- Creativity and independence in solving problems,
- Communication,
- The ability to actively learn.

Apart from the features outlined above, adaptation to changes and high resistance to stress are also extremely important. A strong character and the ability to use one's competences in crisis situations will also help to stay in the labor market. We do not know what the labor market and the style of duties will look like in a few months, so it is worth noting that flexibility and good self-organization will be an important element in the educator's work.

Remote work - a new style of work after the COVID-19 pandemic

The results of the Pracuj.pl study on changes in the labor market as a result of the COVID-1 pandemic "Work in the era of coronavirus" show that in the second half of April 2020, over 60% of the survey participants worked remotely. Two-fifths of the respondents declared working entirely remotely, while one in five - in a hybrid model, partly remotely, partly in the office. The popularity of remote work in Poland is growing rapidly, of course, like every change that occurs, it has its supporters and opponents. The coronavirus popularized this form of work on a previously unique scale.

Employers, however, seeing that the effectiveness and efficiency of work had not decreased, became convinced that remote or hybrid work is not only a necessity that improves safety, but a certain beginning change in the style of work, which also defends itself in economic terms.

The research of the Polish Chamber of Commercial Real Estate shows that in the third quarter of 2020, the interest in renting and buying office space decreased significantly compared to the previous year. This is a decrease of up to 40%. Experts indicate that this situation will continue and its scale will increase even after the end of the pandemic, and thus will permanently change the employee market.

Both employees and employers are still waiting for the legal regulation of this style of work - the Ministry of Development, Labor and Technology is working on ensuring that information on remote work appears permanently in the Labor Code.

The provisions on remote work should be general enough to leave an open space for arrangements among employers and employees. Regulating remote work according to the Deputy Minister should provide opportunities to adjust the needs according to various industries and the specificity of individual workplaces, and to include them, for example, in internal agreements or regulations.



5. CHANGING THE STYLE OF WORK IN BULGARIA

Andragogy is the science of adult education. It is aimed at developing the skills, needs and attitudes of people to continue their education after compulsory education, entering working age and looking for employment.

Vocational training of persons over 16 years of age provides competencies in accordance with the state educational standard for acquiring qualification in the respective profession. Adult learning is an important component of the lifelong learning system.

Lifelong learning includes the processes of learning in formal, non-formal and informal form (independent learning), passing through the structures of the traditional educational system. Formal adult education implies learning activities leading to diplomas and certificates equivalent to those that can be obtained in the school or higher education system.

Non-formal adult learning is a form of learning outside formal education and training institutions that leads to the acquisition, expansion and improvement of personal, civic and professional knowledge, skills and competences. Informal form or self-learning involves self-learning in the process of performing various activities and through independent search and assimilation of information, which leads to the acquisition or development and improvement of already acquired knowledge, skills and competencies.



According to the Law for amendment and supplement of the Law for promotion of employment in Bulgaria (Art. 58a.), The education of adults includes: literacy training; training for acquiring professional qualification; training for acquisition and improvement of key competencies and motivational training.

Vocational guidance and training of adults is organized by the Employment Agency, in accordance with the needs of the labor market, the requirements of employers and the approved plan for the unemployed. The institutions in the system of vocational education and training that provide vocational training to persons over 16 years of age are: vocational schools, vocational high schools, art schools, sports schools, vocational colleges, vocational training centers, information and vocational guidance centers, centers for qualification of trainers. (Vocational Education and Training Act).



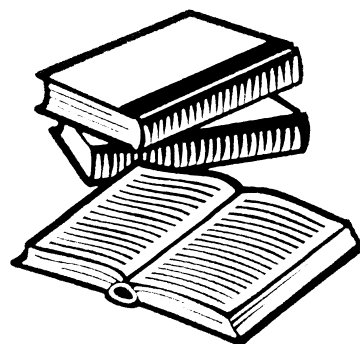
Training for acquiring professional qualification is also conducted by ministries, municipalities, employers' organizations, workers' and employees' organizations and individual employers. To train their own employees, companies provide informal continuing vocational training. Vocational schools, vocational high schools and colleges, and licensed vocational training centers certify the conducted vocational training with documents in accordance with the State educational requirement for the documents for the public education system.

Persons who have acquired professional competencies for practicing a profession or part of it through non-formal training and informal learning receive a certificate for validation of professional qualification or a certificate for validation of qualification in part of the profession, after assessing the compliance of these competencies with the requirements for acquiring professional qualification under conditions and by order, determined in an Ordinance of the Minister of Education, Youth and Science in the Republic of Bulgaria and after successful passing of examinations.

Organizational forms and organization of the learning process of adults - students

Vocational education / training for adults can be conducted in the form of:

- *basic education / training,*
- *literacy courses,*
- *compensatory education / training,*
- *continuing education / training,*
- *leisure education,*
- *education / training related to the labor market,*
- *education for specific categories of learners.*




Adult education is conducted in various forms:

- **individual form** – individual on-the-job training with a mentor or for computer-mediated training and distance learning, incl. electronic and Internet-based learning / learning (e-learning);
- **group form** (workshop, training, working group - workshop);
- **collective form** (lecture course, seminars, lectures, etc.).

Depending on the time and place, adult education is conducted in regular, evening, part-time and distance form for self-study, with the help of a trainer - instructor, mentor, tutor, course consultant, who maintains continuous feedback with each of the learners; external form of self-study, in which the student receives from the educational institution only a program and instructions, prepares completely independently and takes a document exam); Saturday-Sunday form; shift form of internal company training, organized in the free time of students; dual form of training (practical training is conducted in real jobs, and students are paid for the work they do).

Adult vocational training is based on the principles of integrated teaching of theoretical knowledge with practical skills and problem-solving learning, active and self-directed learning.

The learning process with adults in Bulgaria is strictly specific and implies clear positions and roles in its management. The adult learner is at the center of the educational process, which is oriented to its specific features. Motivation is essential for effective adult learning. Adults transfer their life experience to the learning environment through the application of strategies of joint learning and cooperation, role-playing games, case studies, simulations.



The adult teacher (trainer) is a designer and training manager

The adult teacher (trainer) is a designer and training manager - prepares, organizes, conducts, manages and controls the learning process with adults. Its functions are reduced to the formation of motives and attitudes for learning, supporting the learning environment for the implementation of the activities of teaching, consulting, informing, modeling and intervening. The adult teacher plays the role of facilitator, mentor, coach.

Facilitation is an activity that requires skills to create an atmosphere of mutual respect, cooperation, sharing responsibility and empathy. A variety of learning techniques are used, such as: community clusters (groups made up of learners of different ages who learn from each other and work together), group learning, synectics, brainstorming and more.

Leadership is an integral part of effective management of adult learning. It is the ability to influence individuals and groups to achieve the goals of the group, organization or company. The leader has a set of personal qualities, such as a high level of initiative and activity, experience and organizational activity, interest in achieving group goals, sociability, high prestige and authority.

Mentoring in adult learners is a process of interaction between two or more persons / parties, in which one person - the mentor, exercises qualified and professional influence on the behavior and work of the mentored person, as a result of which he acquires new skills.



Adult vocational training is closely linked to practical training. It requires a special organization of the learning environment and material-technical base for training - specialized classrooms, workshops, workshops and laboratories, as well as their equipment with tools, machines and equipment for practical activities.

Adult training can be in-service training - in-house training (instruction, demonstration, mentoring, mentoring, rotation) or out-service training - external training (courses, seminars, discussions, simulations, experiential training, etc.).

Courses (short-term and long-term) as a form of vocational training for adults have different durations, depending on the target group and its subject. Seminars as a form of adult education are applied when presenting and getting acquainted with a new product or new technology, imposed on the market.

Training is a practice-oriented form of learning based on learning through action and experience, personal experience and activity. The training aims to acquire knowledge, skills and habits necessary for adequate implementation of a specific activity, based on group dynamics and two-way communication. In the course of the training methods such as discussion, debate, group work, role-playing games, simulations, decision-making strategies, negotiation, presentation, case solving, practical tasks, etc. are applied. The leader of the training group (trainer) is an active participant in the group work, an expert and impartial analyst of the problem situations, a moderator who manages the discussions and mediates in the exchange of positions and points of view.

The workshop (working with a group under supervision) involves the participants in a real process of leading a group and receiving feedback to improve the acquired skills.

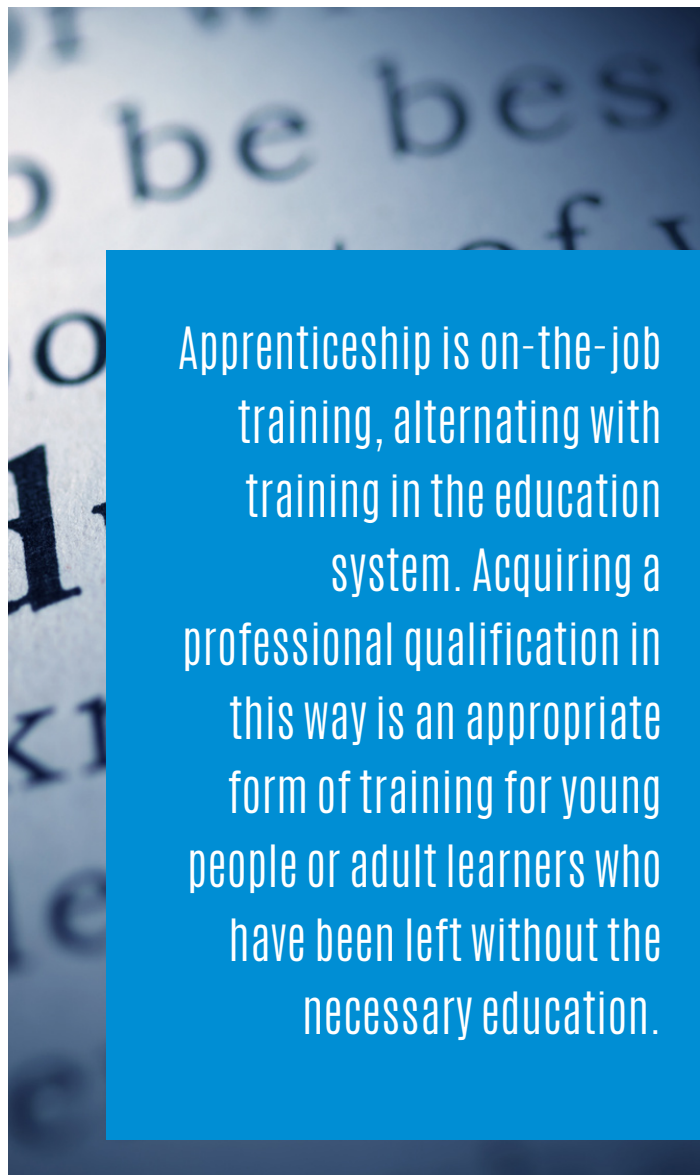


On-the-job training is carried out in a real work environment under the guidance of a qualified trainer for the application in practice of previously acquired habits and skills. It can be conducted entirely in the workplace or combined with off-the-job training.

An internship is the practice of an activity in a specific job to acquire or improve skills, by developing skills and increasing experience. Internship is a model for acquiring knowledge, skills and work habits in a real work environment. Internship under the mentorship of an employer or a person designated by him - a mentor, is realized in order to acquire practical skills in the acquired profession or specialty.

The company's training aims to increase the qualification, adaptation and motivation of employees, as well as the good microclimate in the company.

Coaching is a process through which people, teams and companies are supported to reach a higher level of their skills and abilities and to develop personally or professionally. Coaching is results-oriented and uses all effective tools for personal development and making goals a reality.



Apprenticeship is on-the-job training, alternating with training in the education system. Acquiring a professional qualification in this way is an appropriate form of training for young people or adult learners who have been left without the necessary education.

Teambuilding is a format in which fun and sports - entertainment elements increase the motivation of staff, overcome stress and conflicts in the workplace, increase trust, improve teamwork and internal communication.

Current trends and problems in adult vocational education

In order to optimize and outline the directions of development of vocational education of adults in Bulgaria, it is necessary to focus more on:

- [Identification of the needs](#) for vocational training and suitability for employment of adults, in view of future trends and changes in their qualifications. On this basis, to draw adequate conclusions about the training needs.
- [Study of training needs](#) of adults - learners in the social, political, cultural and personal spheres and coordination of the identified gaps in the competencies with the training providers.
- [Optimization of the existing competencies / skills](#) and determination of the current and future requirements for qualification in the respective profession.
- [Comparison between existing and necessary competencies / skills](#) and coordination of actions between the main stakeholders (regional partners, representatives of municipalities and labor offices of the Employment Agency, researchers and representatives of non-governmental organizations) implementing policies and actions of labor market.

The National Strategy for Lifelong Learning 2014-2020 is aimed at achieving the European framework for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. Ensuring high quality in adult education, in line with the Europe 2020 strategy, is a key factor for a successful return on investment in human resources development.



In this sense, the following problems and priorities in the development of education and vocational training for adults in Bulgaria can be identified:

- **Modernization of vocational education for adults** in Bulgaria, through the study of innovative practices and experience of the educational community. An important emphasis is also placed on the provision of funds for financing adult education under programs of European funds.
- **Continuous increase of the professional competence** of the pedagogical staff / adult educators and improvement of their skills for application of interactive methods and personality-oriented approaches in adult education.
- **Organizing in-house trainings and trainings** to increase the efficiency, motivation and competence of employees, development of individual training programs in accordance with the individual requirements and needs of the team.
- **Development of training programs** by pedagogical teams and scientists, according to the innovations and trends in the field of andragogy (adult education).
- **Providing more funds for financing adult education** under European Structural Funds programs (the main instrument of the European Union for the implementation of its Regional Policy).

IN CONCLUSION!

The participation of adults in trainings for acquiring professional qualification, key competencies and for supplementing the professional knowledge and skills is essential for increasing the adaptability and competitiveness of the workforce.

In order to increase the opportunities for realization on the labor market, it is important to provide more jobs for practical training, on-the-job training, apprenticeships and internships, constant updating and supplementing the qualification of teachers in vocational training, cooperation between VET, business and universities.

6. CHANGING THE STYLE OF WORK IN IRELAND AFTER A PANDEMIC

The last dozen or so months have confirmed that the only thing you can be sure of in life is change.

Flexibility, competences in the field of new technologies and competences in distance communication have become something that today's employers need the most.

Changes have taken place in many aspects - digitization has accelerated, many advanced technologies have been used, remote work has become an everyday reality for many adult educators. All these changes mean that modern skills are needed for effective teaching. Therefore, it is worth making sure that we not only have the competences that are currently the most desirable, but are also necessary in teaching others at a distance.



COMPETENCIES FOR REMOTE WORK WITH ADULTS

Here are the four types of skills needed to work remotely with adults:

1. DIGITAL AND PROGRAMMING COMPETENCES



During the pandemic, the services of people involved in internet marketing, web design, development and programming have become even more in demand by employers than in pre-covid times. The growing number of universities implementing a remote or hybrid work system shows how crucial it is to know digital tools and programs that enable remote work.



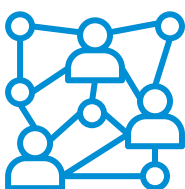
2. COMPETENCE IN USING SOCIAL MEDIA

The ability to use and manage social media is a skill that has been increasingly in demand on the labor market for some time. The pandemic reality made these skills necessary. However, many universities do not have sufficiently rich budgets, to be able to afford a full-time employment of a social media manager. As a result, skills related to using social media, which complement basic competencies, may turn out to be very attractive for the employer.

3. TECHNICAL COMPETENCES



Technical skills in areas such as robotics, augmented reality, internet of things or artificial intelligence can become invaluable for educators working with adults, especially in the context of pandemic-induced changes. Experts point to the growing interest among employers in people "who are familiar with issues related to cloud software and who have competencies in the field of technologies enabling remote work". The growing dependence on new technologies makes it worth acquiring these skills and supplementing your CV with all relevant skills in this field.



4. SOFT SKILLS

Self-discipline, communication skills and taking initiative are considered commonly desirable qualities. Their importance, however, grows when the work is performed remotely. These skills become even more important when the distance between the educator, co-workers and the student is greater than the desk.

IN THE CONTEXT OF THE SUMMARY

It is important to make clear your flexibility, advanced digital capabilities and your ability to adapt to change. The following are extremely important in the work of an adult educator:

- awareness of the level of your knowledge and skills,
- understanding the need for continuous professional training and personal development,
- self-assessment of own competences,
- perfecting the skills,
- setting the direction of one's own development and education.

7. NEW RULES OF WORKING IN REMOTE FORM

Remote work will be work consisting in performing work wholly or partially at the employee's place of residence or in another place agreed by the employee and the employer, in particular with the use of means of direct distance communication.

Statistics

The global COVID-19 epidemic has significantly increased the practical importance of remote work. A year ago, many employers were quite cautious about remote work, and now it has become a way to ensure business continuity, and even the prospect of long-term reduction of operating costs. However, working remotely is associated with many legal and organizational challenges that must be solved and implemented in your organization. But how widespread was domestic work before these measures came into force?

In 2019, 5.4% of employed persons aged 15-64 in the European Union (EU) usually worked from home. This share has remained constant at around 5% over the past decade. However, over the same period, the share of people who sometimes worked from home increased: from 6.0% in 2009 to 9.0% in 2019.





W In 2019, a slightly higher percentage of women declared that they usually work from home than men (5.7% versus 5.2%)

Over the past decade, the percentage of self-employed people who say they usually work from home has been consistently higher than the percentage of employees who usually work remotely; the percentage of self-employed who do so also shows an upward trend, from 16.2% in 2009 to 19.4% in 2019.

More women than men work at home

There are different trends that reflect the age and gender of employees when it comes to working from home. In 2019, a slightly higher percentage of women declared that they usually work from home than men (5.7% versus 5.2%). In addition, older age groups were more likely to work from home: 6.6% of those aged 50-64 tended to work from home, as did 5.2% of those aged 25-49. In contrast, only 2.1% of younger 15-24 year-olds said they usually work from home.

PEOPLE USUALLY WORKING FROM HOME, 2020



ec.europa.eu/eurostat

At the top of the list of EU Member States dealing with remote work were Finland and Luxembourg, where in 2020 25.1% and 23.1% of employees usually worked from home. They were followed by Ireland and Austria (where 21.5% and 18.1%, respectively, usually worked from home).

In turn, the lowest percentages of people working at home in 2020 were recorded in Romania (2.5%) and Bulgaria (1.2%).

SHARE OF EMPLOYED PERSONS USUALLY WORKING FROM HOME, 2019



ec.europa.eu/eurostat

The Netherlands and Finland topped the list of EU Member States involved in remote work, with 14.1% of employees working from home in 2019. They were followed by Luxembourg and Austria (where 11.6% and 9.9%, respectively, usually worked from home).

In turn, the lowest percentage of people working at home was recorded in Bulgaria (0.5%), Romania (0.8%), Hungary (1.2%), Cyprus (1.3%), Croatia and Greece (1.9%).

Telework

The pandemic-induced increase in remote working has led to a significant increase in the variety of teleworking laws around the world.

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in major changes to many companies' policies and practices for working remotely or "teleworking" - working remotely using information technology (IT) - especially in the countries most affected by the pandemic and ensuing blockages. The sudden shift to remote work was imperative and mostly worked better than expected, but setbacks were also unavoidable due to the lack of specific rules and rules for the practice.

In the European Union, according to the European Commission, more than half of the remote workers in a pandemic have never done so before. This has resulted in a marked increase in teleworking regulations worldwide, some of which are presented below.

The nature and scope of the new regulations vary considerably from country to country, from introducing the first statutory framework to regulate teleworking to allowing employers to voluntarily take certain preferential measures (such as covering employee costs).

A photograph of a woman with long dark hair and glasses, wearing a white t-shirt, sitting at a desk and working on a silver laptop. In the foreground, there are several stacked white ceramic mugs and a white coffee cup. The background is a blurred indoor setting.

According to the European Commission, more than half of the remote workers in a pandemic have never done so before.

Examples of teleworking provisions in selected countries

Poland

The proposed wording of Art. 6733 KP:

§ 1. Remote work may be performed occasionally, at the request of an employee submitted in paper or electronic form, for a period not exceeding 12 days in a calendar year. Initially, it was announced that the change of KP would take place in the third quarter of 2021. Various proposals were made during the consultations on the draft act, for example on January 1, 2022. However, the new regulations are currently planned to enter into force 3 months after the end of the epidemic.

Bulgaria

From August 20, 2021, heads of all administrations must organize the work process in the appropriate organization, setting working hours with floating limits and the start of the working day between 7.30 and 10.00. They are also required to allocate remote work to at least 50% of the staff, unless this is not possible depending on the nature of the work. This is ordered by the Minister of Health, Dr. Stoycho Katsarov, by order RD-01-712 / August 19, 2021. In this way, the flow of passengers in urban and intercity transport throughout the country will be significantly reduced, which facilitates both compliance with anti-epidemic measures and the implementation of effective health control. The Order also states that all employers and appointing authorities should, as far as possible, organize the work process remotely, allowing a maximum of 50% of employees to work in person.

Ireland

In January 2021, the government launched a National Remote Working Strategy which aims to "ensure remote working is a permanent feature of the Irish workplace" with the aim of maximizing economic, social and environmental benefits. The government still needs to draft laws regarding the right to work remotely, but issued a Code of Conduct on the Right to Disconnect in April 2021, which maintains that workers should not be required to work, be available or respond to employers' needs outside of regular working hours. Neither employers should routinely contact employees outside of working hours or penalize employees for refusing to work or reacting outside normal working hours.



New rules of remote work in Poland

When remote work became a part of our everyday life, it was regulated by law. The draft act was prepared by the Ministry of Development, Labor and Technology, and the provisions are incorporated into the Labor Code. The project introduced the most important rules for remote work.

These are:

- Possibility to order work in special cases. The draft provides that the employer in special cases (eg as shown by experience in emergencies).
- The rules of remote work will be regulated in an agreement concluded by the company collective organization with the employer or in the work regulations established by the employer.
- Possibility to perform work at the request of the employee.
- The right to withdraw remote work by the employer or employee within 3 months from the date of its commencement.
- Specification of the employer's obligations towards the employee, in particular regulating the rules of providing the employee with materials and tools necessary to perform remote work, covering the costs directly related to remote work.
- The right to conclude an agreement on the use of private tools and materials by the employee in remote work.
- The employer will have the right to inspect the employee at the place of performing remote work.
- Prohibition of discrimination against employees performing remote work.
- Occupational health and safety regulations for remote work were also regulated. The employer will be obliged, inter alia, for: organizing the workplace in accordance with the provisions and principles of occupational health and safety, ensuring the safe condition of work rooms and technical equipment.

The changes have not yet been introduced to the Labor Code, they are at the stage of legislative work. These rules may therefore be modified in the course of parliamentary work.



The approach of the European Commission

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown how important health and safety requirements are for the protection of workers' health, the functioning of our society and the continuity of key economic and social activities. The previous EU strategic framework for health and safety at work for 2014-2020 focused, inter alia, on the prevention of work-related diseases, and addressed demographic change and the implementation of legislation.

The Commission has adopted an EU strategic framework for health and safety at work for 2021-2027. They identify the key actions needed to improve the health and safety of workers in the years to come. In the period 2021-2027, the Commission will also seek to make recommendations on mental health at work by the end of 2022 in guidelines to protect almost 170 million workers in the EU.

„For many, the concept of a traditional workplace is disappearing fast. While that brings opportunities, it also brings challenges and risks -- health, psychological and social” – said Executive Vice-President of the European Commission Valdis Dombrovskis at a press conference in Belgium, 28 June 2021.



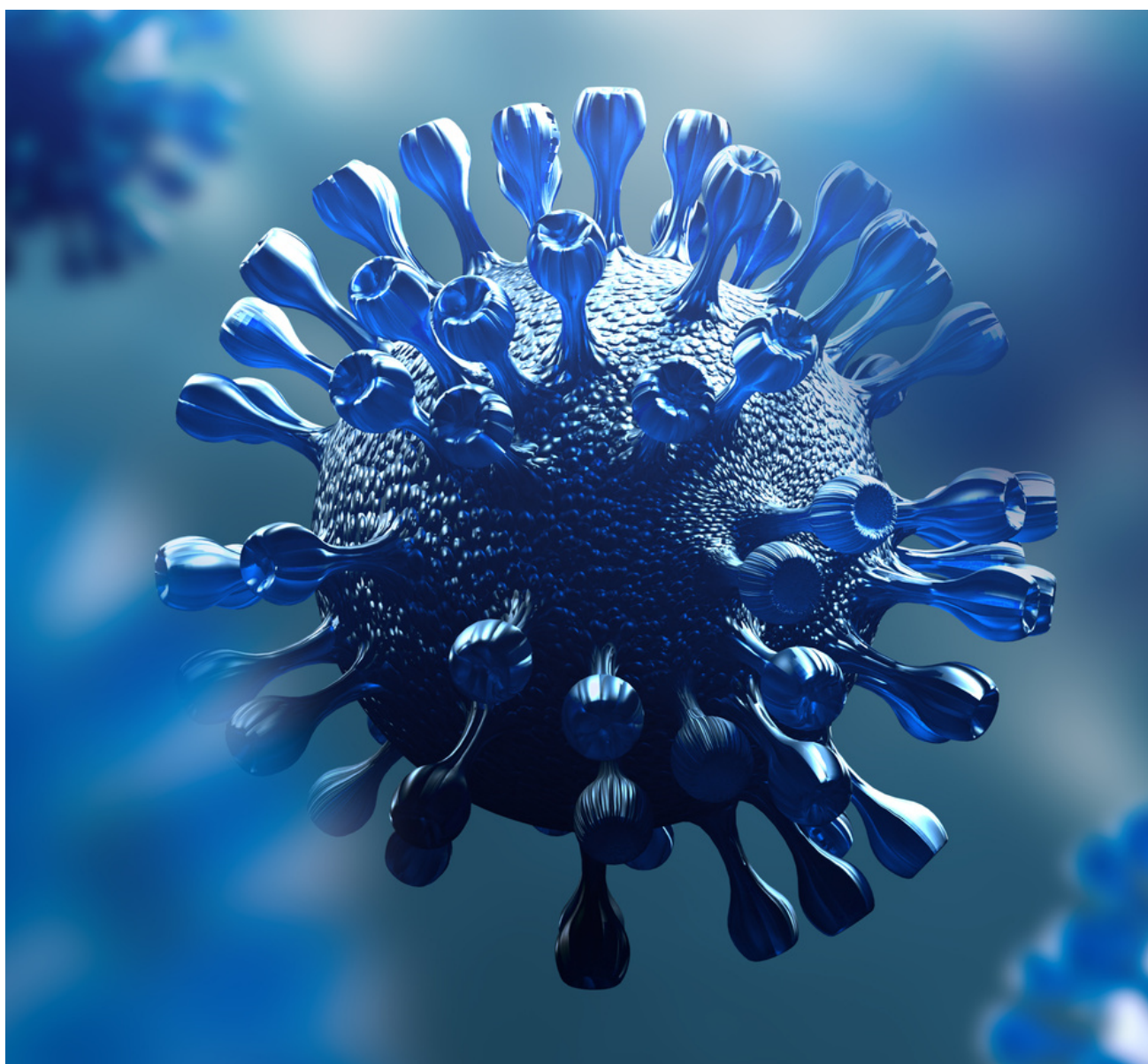
phot. <https://ec.europa.eu>

Valdis Dombrovskis added: EU health and safety legislation is essential to protect nearly 170 million workers, people's lives and the functioning of our societies. The working environment is changing as a result of ecological, digital and demographic transformations. We need more action from the EU to make our jobs fit for the future.

Report by WHO and the International Labor Organization

The joint WHO / ILO policy report summarizes the evidence of the transmission of COVID-19 in workplaces and reviews the WHO and ILO recommendations for the prevention and mitigation of COVID-19 and the protection of occupational health and safety in the context of the pandemic.

The document is intended for public health and labor authorities, enterprises, employers, workers and their representatives at national, local and workplace levels to facilitate the implementation of public health and social measures related to COVID-19 while maintaining full and productive employment and decent work during pandemic.





Preparing the workplace for COVID-19 - new rules

The following points outline new policies and actions to transfer employees to remote work in a safe, healthy and efficient manner:

- Redesigning the workflow, protocols and processes to accommodate the maximum number of employees working remotely.
- Assessment of which people in specific positions and tasks can work remotely and implement the principles of remote work.
- Providing training in safe and efficient remote work.
- Make sure the remote workspace is ergonomically equipped for the required work task.
- Encourage regular short stretching breaks every half hour for sitting work.
- Encourage constant working hours and breaks.
- Providing social contacts with employees and encouraging regular video interactions.
- Educating employees about the mental health effects of long-term remote work, including the risks of depression, isolation and anxiety. Discussing work-life balance and setting clear working hours so that employees do not feel the pressure of constant contact.
- Encourage employees to support mental health through a regular schedule, exercise and social interactions such as virtual meetings and socializing. Consider providing access to an employee support program for people experiencing mental health symptoms.
- Informing employees about a healthy lifestyle, encouraging their adoption.

For these and additional recommendations on the mental health impact of teleworking, see the International Labor Organization's guide on Working "Managing work-related psychosocial risks during the COVID-19 pandemic".

8. Tools for remote work with adults

Remote work has its own rules, especially when it comes to communication and organization.

Working in a group without daily physical contact is difficult and requires a large dose of self-discipline, regularity and knowledge of online tools, which is very rare in the case of seniors. To make it easier for them to communicate and plan tasks, you should start from there.

Currently, you can find a lot of applications, messengers and planners on the Internet that help in everyday work, both for younger and older users.



Remote work tools can be divided into many categories. Project and task management, instant messaging, interactive calendars, teamwork programs or network drives enabling control over the circulation of documents - these are undoubtedly tools that help a lot in remote work.

Below are three key areas that should be used when working remotely with adults:

1) Communicators

The most popular communication tool for many years is widely known e-mail. Virtually everyone uses it, regardless of age or type of work. It gives us many communication possibilities, thanks to which we can, among other things, provide instructions on how to perform a given task, make a price assessment of services and products or present an offer.

E-mail does not work for longer conversations that require quick exchange of data or ideas among a larger group of people. For this, applications such as Slack, Microsoft Teams or Google Hangouts are much better suited.

Thanks to these applications, you can easily conduct a meeting of a larger group of people without leaving home and, importantly, you do not need to install any software / applications on devices. Another advantage is that all participants of the conversation do not need to set up accounts, which could be an obstacle in the case of seniors. It is enough for one of the group participants to start the meeting and invite the rest of the members by sending them a link or a message to the aforementioned e-mail.

2) Planning of activities

Time management while working remotely is a big challenge, without an orderly and clearly defined action plan, working remotely may fail. The easiest way to help seniors keep deadlines and remember deadlines is to use boards and online calendars that remind you of upcoming deadlines and meetings. One of such tools that will facilitate time management and at the same time is simple and intuitive to use is Google Calendar. Older people, after quick training, should have no problem using such a calendar.



3) Work in the cloud

Creating documents, presentations, letters or lists in a group is now also possible on the web. Due to the popularity and necessity of remote work, many interesting, easy to use and, importantly, free tools have been created that make it possible.

One of the most popular tools on the web is Google Docs - it is the Internet equivalent of Microsoft Office. It gives all team members the ability to update and edit at the same time and access to the view of introduced modifications. As you know, computers, laptops and telephones often fail, so it is important to keep the peaks we create in network drives. Thanks to such tools, we have access to documents wherever we are and at any time. And here, as in the case of the previous tools, there are several options to choose from, such as OneDrive or Dropbox.

When working remotely with adults, the key will be to choose the right tools that are easily available, easy and free to use.

Tools for remote work

Examples of tools that can be used in remote work with seniors are presented and described below::

- **Skype**

Microsoft instant messaging. It is worth using it to communicate with seniors because it is easy to use and free, and very popular among seniors. Skype is available both in the browser and as a downloadable application for phones, tablets, PCs and Macs. You can also send text messages and make group calls on Skype.

Price: Free

Source: Skype.com





- **Google Hangout**

Google communication tools. It allows you to record conversations, which is useful, for example, for training courses, important conversations - you can listen to such a conversation later or send it to selected people. Google Hangout has voice, video and chat connections in its options.

Price: Free

Source: [Hangouts.google.com](https://hangouts.google.com)

- **Slack**

The popular Slack messenger is available on any device, which makes it possible to use it both in the office and on the road. On Slack it is possible to communicate with both individual team members and the entire group. The tool is free, multi-functional and easy to use.

Price: Free

Source: [Slack.com](https://slack.com)



- **CloudApp**

It allows you to record from the camera and desktop. It works in the cloud, so when you finish recording, you immediately get a link to share with others. It enables simple video editing, CTA overlay or highlighting important elements on the screen.

Price: free (up to 90 seconds of recording) / \$ 9.95 PRO pack

Source: [Getcloudapp.com](https://getcloudapp.com)

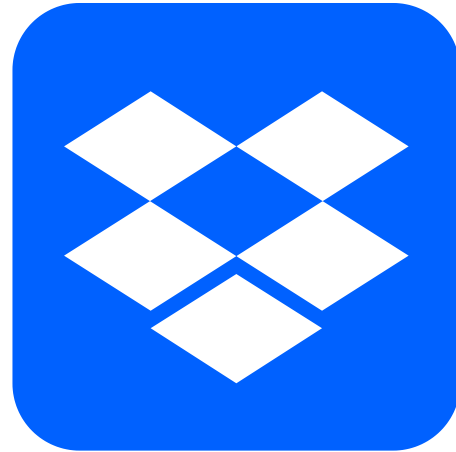


- **Dropbox**

Dropbox provides secure access to all your files. It is perfect for work, training and remote learning. With Dropbox, you can open, edit, and share files anywhere and anytime in the free space. You can use your Google or Apple account to log in.

Price: Free and from 9.99 € per user in the PRO version in the annual package

Source: Dropbox.com



- **Canva**

It is a tool for preparing graphic files - presentations, charts, posts, invitations and many other useful elements.

With Canva, you can create design teams who can work from multiple locations on a single graphic at the same time.

A tool recommended for trainers, trainers and people who use, for example, graphic presentations in their work.

Price: Free and from 449,99 PLN per user in the PRO version in the annual package

Source: Canva.com

zoom

- Zoom

A popular tool for conducting trainings and online meetings. The free Zoom application gives you the opportunity to conduct up to 40 minutes of training for a large group of recipients. You can join a meeting anywhere in the world using phone, email, or company contacts.

Price: Basic package for free

Source: Zoom.us

- Timezone.io

A tool that displays the local time in a globally dispersed team. Convenient and brilliant in its simplicity - you create your team on the platform and define which time zones are displayed. In the panel you can see photos of team members, divided into time zones.

Price: Free

Source: Timezone.io



- Jamm.app

If spontaneous calls are part of your work, you will certainly need some help. The Jamm.app is an improvement for highly organized voice or video calls in teams working remotely. Jamm also takes into account time differences between locations and allows you to record video messages in the messenger.

Price: Free

Source: Jamm.app/en

- **Live Webinar**

A Polish tool that will allow you to conduct online conferences in a multimedia and interactive way. Live Webinar offers many interesting solutions, including dividing one conference room into several smaller ones (during the conference), assigning roles to conference members, or recording the meeting in full HD.

Price: PLN 48 / month

Source: livewebinar.com



- **Webex Meeting**

Webex is a tool that allows you to organize online conferences and webinars for a wide audience. You can organize everything efficiently from the application level or in the cloud.

Price: free up to 50 minutes. with one leading person or from € 12.85 / month

Source: webex.com

- **Trello**

A simple tool that allows you to manage projects in the agile model. Similar to Asana, although a bit simpler.

Price: Free or Paid version at \$ 10 / user per month

Source: trello.com





- **ClickMeeting**

ClickMeeting is an interesting proposition for webinar organizers. This tool allows you to organize them from A to Z. Thanks to personalized invitations, free or paid webinar options, branding personalization and dedicated registration pages for individual events, you will be able to control the entire process.

Price: from PLN 40 / month in the annual plan

Source: clickmeeting.com

- **G Suite**

Of course, our list includes a solution that will provide you with (almost) all the necessary tools for remote work in one package - and more! I don't think you need to introduce G Suite to anyone, but for the sake of decency, we would like to remind you that by choosing this option, you get access to, among others: personalized e-mail addresses, easily accessible cloud storage, google docs, google slides, google sheets, hangout chat, google keep ... and a whole lot of other features!



Price: 4.68EUR / user

Source: workspace.google.com

- **GoToMeeting**

GoToMeeting connects you with your team with one click, regardless of the device you use. You can quickly create a conference room or join an existing one. No unnecessary procedures. This tool also allows you to organize webinars.



Price: \$ 24 per month

Source: goto.com/meeting



- **WebinarJam**

If your online reach is a bit larger and you need to host an online event of up to 5,000 people led by more people, WebinarJam is an option worth checking out. The platform may also be useful for corporate clients with a large number of employees.

Price: \$ 499 /year

Source: webinarjam.com

- **Doodle**

Planning meetings, telephone conferences or a "ringtone" can take many hours, which could be spent on much more creative activities. Doodle will help you stay in control of your calendar thanks to, among other things, notifications and integration with your email inbox.



Price: from 6.95 EUR / month

Source: doodle.com

Kahoot!

- **KAHOOT**

Kahoot is a way of interactive online learning. The tool allows you to conduct live tests and quizzes, introducing an element of competition between participants. Kahoots have a positive impact on the memorization of the acquired information and the integration of remote teams. The undisputed advantage of the tool is also the speed of preparing the quiz!

Price: from \$ 10 / month per lecturer

Source: kahoot.it

- **Microsoft OneNote**

Electronic notebook that you can keep on all your devices. You can edit notes and share them with the users you choose. You can also capture your ideas in handwriting, which makes it easier if you really need to draw something.

Price: Included in Office 365

Source: microsoft.com/pl-pl/microsoft-365/onenote/digital-note-taking-app



- **SimpleNote**

The simplicity of the tool that follows the name makes taking notes very easy.

Price: Free

Source: simplenote.com

- **MIRO**

Miro is a whiteboard for a distributed team. A tool that will allow you to creative design work, planning, brainstorming, building decision trees, constructing complex processes. The possibilities with this tool are really endless.

Price: Free or Full Version from \$ 8 / user on an annual plan

Source: miro.com



- **Language Tool**

An effective tool that helps you check text for spelling, style and grammar. Available in many languages, including Polish!

Price: Free

Source: languagetool.org/pl

- **Headspace**

Probably the most popular meditation app. If you haven't tried to meditate yet, this app is the perfect start. If you are already meditating, this is where you will find a sea of inspiration regarding the methods and techniques of meditation. Good meditation really does improve self-awareness, focus, inner peace, and sleep. If you are in the middle of a storm of life or business, this is a good remedy to calm your head.

Price: Free or from \$ 12.99 / month for full version

Source: headspace.com



Recordings and screenshots - ShareX

We live in a pictorial era where a screenshot posted online or a short video recording works better than 1000 words.

In particular, remote communication requires depicting changes (e.g. changes in the project), or what we see and what the customer sees (as you know, it often differs).

ShareX allows you to make quick screenshots (recordings) of the screen and send them as, for example, a link in the description in an e-mail. In addition, you can easily put the content on the screenshot, mark the place in question or hide something through the so-called blurring.

Online graphic creation - Photopea

Photopea is a website that will allow you to prepare graphics because it has a huge number of functions similar or exactly the same as Photoshop. You enter a website and it feels as if you have just started Photoshop..

Educational platforms used

The Microsoft Teams platform, recommended by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Bulgaria, has a number of additional features that facilitate the learning process and should be carefully considered and studied.

Given the urgent need for distance learning, many of these functions and possibilities are not known to teachers and have not been used. Regardless of personal evaluation and the sense of success in the use of online learning platforms by educators, it is necessary to plan and implement training on their use. Training for platform learners is essential. Among the most used are Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Google Classroom, Viber, Messenger and the possibilities offered by online diaries.

Provision of distance learning resources

The basic condition for the implementation of distance learning in the electronic environment is the availability of appropriate electronic devices and electronic educational resources. Equipping the educational process with electronic devices, Internet connection, access to electronic platforms, etc. is an important condition for the integration of technology in the learning process. This is essential for the effectiveness of distance learning as it allows for active interaction between adult educators and adult learners, and between adult learners themselves.

Data on the availability of electronic learning devices in rural and urban households differ significantly.

The socio-economic status of the family also has a strong influence on access to electronic devices and thus on the possibility of effective participation in distance learning in the electronic environment.



Effectiveness of educators in the conditions of distance learning

Most educators (87%) believe that there are significant differences between the way teaching and distance learning in the electronic environment compared to the current learning process.

About 77% of them used more educational resources in working with students, and 72% had more opportunities to experiment with different teaching methods.

The data show that most adult educators were able to prepare for and transition to distance learning in a very short time. 42% of them took this process 1-2 days, another 36% - 3-5 days, and only 4% - more than 2 weeks.

Most adult educators use traditional classroom approaches and teaching methods, transferred to an electronic environment - presentation and explanation of the curriculum in a synchronized lesson; setting tasks for independent work and checking the results; additional work with students as needed; conducting discussions; tests etc.

A relatively smaller percentage of educators organized the work of learners on projects or created conditions for group work of learners.

Most often, synchronous learning was accompanied by independent work on various electronic platforms.

Adult educators set tasks and exercises for independent work of students (for 52% of students in all classes and for another 32% - in most classes), most often sending scanned / photographed copies of teaching materials for independent work, and then the students, one by one, sent the scanned / photographed copies of their work (70% of students).

The e-learning distance learning assessment was mainly done using online testing. Approximately 37% of educators claim that their students did not have difficulties with mastering the didactic material.



9. Participant focus - how to motivate and cooperate, maintain the willingness to educate?

Bellow you can find a list of practical tips and some suggested tools (incl. exercises, techniques and methods) that motivate adults to learn in group context.

Building relationships with participants

Address the participants with their names from the beginning. You can remember the names of your students even before the start of the course, you can also hand out nameplates. But most importantly - address people by their first names - this helps a lot to shorten the distance between teacher and learners.

You can start learning with the game "Who's who". This will allow you to determine the motivation of the participants. This game will show the motivation (or lack thereof) to participate in the training. The game helps to reduce the tension in the group, as well as to build the initial relationship between the participants.



Share your personal story related to the topic of the training. It may be a story of failure, which later became a success. It may be a story of a crisis moment that led to the search for a way out of the difficult situation. Storytelling has two very important functions - it builds trust between the trainer and the group and brings them together - and this is very necessary for the learning process. The risk of using this method is that some people may withdraw and refuse to show such openness.

Pay attention to the participants who do not want to be involved in the learning process - those who do not participate in the conversations, who do not participate in the discussions. Do not force them, but rather give them the opportunity to share their thoughts in conversations in pairs or in small groups.

It is good to gather information about what the participants' expectations are for the training. You can then put a summary of these expectations in a prominent place. This is important, but far more important is to try to meet these expectations during the training - to include in the training the content that is interesting and important for the learners. In this way you will show respect to them and their needs will be taken into account.

Security

Ask the question "What are you here for?" Instead of "Why are you here?" Although it is possible to get the answer "I don't know", this is still one of the best questions to start learning.

Ask the question "What do you expect after the training?", Which draws the participant's attention to the results he/she wants to achieve in his professional or personal life.

You can also ask, "Which goals do you define as closest to you?" Such a question has a double meaning - on the one hand it acquaints the participants with the learning objectives (in order to choose which goal is closest to you, you have to read all the objectives), and on the other hand - it unites the participants with similar priorities.

Telling funny stories related to learning. You can tell something that happened to other groups you have trained. You can also share jokes related to the training.

Remember the learning objectives by playing a game. The purpose of the exercise is to name one or more of the learning objectives (without reading them, of course). The game can be played at the end of the first school day or it can start the second. The exercise makes the participants remember the goals of the training, and at the same time reminds of the atmosphere from the first minutes of the training - it additionally motivates the participants.

A method of numerous questions that further motivates the participants. The exercise is done in pairs and begins with the question "What will you get after completing this training?". The next question depends on the first answer. If the answer is, for example, "Completing this training will allow me to change jobs," then the next question would be, "What will you get if you change my job?" "If I change my job, I will get a higher salary." "What happens if you get a higher salary?" etc. The exercise ends when the interviewee feels that this is the end of the search, i.e. the deepest hidden motivation has been reached. Which is often the feeling of satisfaction, happiness or the opportunity to live in harmony with other people.

Encouragement

The trainer encourages participants to speak straight. This encourages them to overcome their fears and be more involved in learning. In small groups (6-12 people) the method may not be very effective, but in large groups it works great because the trainer can activate the more passive participants. The person who decides to take the floor gets a chance to feel the feeling of sharing your thoughts and giving feedback.

You can repeat what the participants have said. You need to keep in mind - do not exaggerate and do not rely only on active participants. This can cause the shy to withdraw and not want to speak in front of the group. It is always a good idea to repeat a funny gesture or word that has already been said and has somehow activated the group.

Encourage the participants during the training - for the opinion expressed, for the exercise, for the activity. Rewards can be applause, words of gratitude, encouraging the group to encourage the participant through shouts or pre-selected gestures.



Build a connection in the group

Games in pairs or in small groups, which give participants the opportunity to get to know each other and build trust with each other.

Rituals created by the group. It can be a kind of greeting, a way to end the school day, welcoming the trainer, a sign of consent and approval of the content that a participant is currently presenting. Everything can vary from a gesture to the utterance of a certain word. This method is taken from NLP and creates a sense of belonging to the group, which is an invaluable way to increase motivation to learn.

Pay attention to the participants who follow the rules of the group - such as accuracy or wearing a badge with the name. The advantage of this method is building a sense of community in the group through passive behavior - such as not being late and not forgetting to carry the name tag. The secondary effect of using this method is the increased sense of security in the group, which strengthens the positive attitude and the desire to spend more time in the classroom, where there is no risk of punishment.



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All photos and graphics used to create the tutorial are sourced from the Canva website, from the extended PRO version, to which the Association "Creative for Business" has purchased access.