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Digital
TRAVELLERS 

Working with Vulnerable Groups

Self-training Module



AT THE END OF THIS MODULE...

...I will be able to...

- Identify vulnerable groups
- Get in contact with them and inform them of the services that I offer
- Understand how to get to know vulnerable groups and communicate and interact with them
- Adapt how I reach out to and interact with vulnerable groups to specific circumstances (for example, situations where I can not meet in person for whatever reason)



Defining *Vulnerable Groups*

1. Vulnerable from the standpoint of digital skills

2. Don't reinvent the wheel!

Digital skills workshops may be relevant to groups of people you are already in contact with. For example:

- Particular groups for whom you already provide services and/or targeted outreach
- Target groups of partner organisations/venues
- Individuals/groups who have requested support from you

Which 'categories'?

Groups:

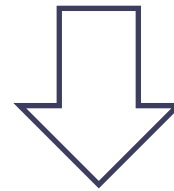
- School dropouts
- Elderly citizens
- Women...

Individuals :

- In search of employment
- Illiterate/with little or no schooling
- Living in poverty
- Migrants/refugees
- Immigrants/Non-native speakers
- Visually/hearing impaired
- With other disabilities
- Prisoners...

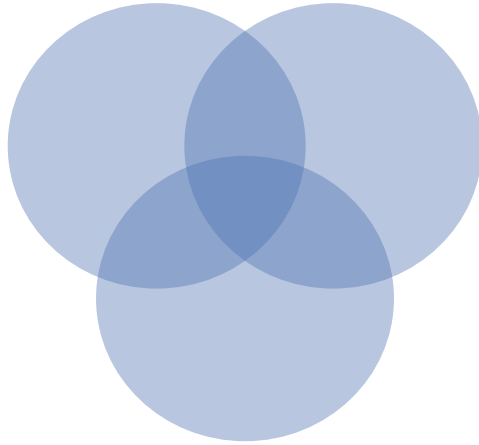
'Traditional' categories

(age, gender, socio-economic background...)

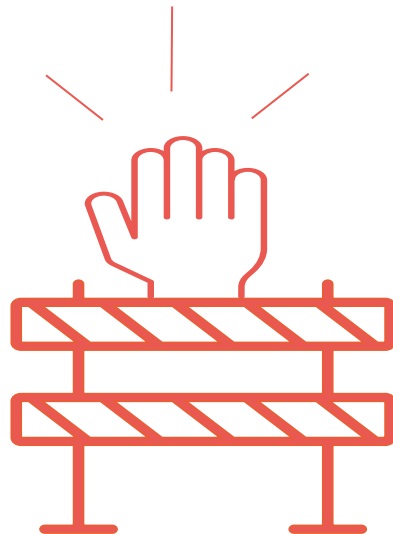


- Can be reductive
- Groups can face a combination of difficulties

Which 'categories'?



Inclusion rather than segregation



Active barriers
Concrete needs

What are the potential barriers?



ACCESS to digital

- Material
- Technology
- Connection
- Living with a disability

SKILLS

- Digital
- Language
- Other related useful skills
(often linked to level of education)



PSYCHOLOGICAL aspects

- Perception of their own skills
- Self-confidence
- Motivation...



What are the potential barriers?



Based on my knowledge and experiences:

- What other barriers may individuals or groups face?
- Which barriers particularly affect my target groups?



Adapting *Our Practise*

How to adapt your practise to your participants?

2 big questions

'WHAT do my participants need?'



- Choice of competence areas to work on
- Examples to use during your workshops
- Choice of practical exercises
- Relevance for 'real life' scenarios

'HOW can I help them break down the
barriers they face?'



Organisational and interpersonal
considerations



Why?

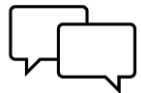
Better understand the context and requirements

Understand what can cause obstacles and how to adapt to these

Generate interest and motivation

Based on:

- The information you have gathered about the participants! **Be aware of preconceptions!**
- Information held by potential partner organisations
- A context that is as realistic and as recent as possible
- What is expressed by the participants themselves!!!



Talk directly to participants rather than using questionnaires



Classify these needs according to the **DigComp2.1**

- clear and logical common framework
- search for resources in The Digital Travellers Library of Resources



Find out more in the modules: **What is DigComp 2.1?** and **The Digital Travellers Library of Resources**

A simple, but not simplistic, approach



Functional skills

- Practical and basic skills
- Progressive and concrete activities (+ BYOD)



Critical thinking and constant evaluation

- Key skill in digital literacy

E-security

- Protection of the user



Research and selection of information

- Learning based on exploration, and trial and error (positive status)
 - Progressively develop autonomy



A simple, but not simplistic, approach



Cultural and social understanding

- Caring and a mutually enriching context
- Better communication



Creativity

- Give meaning to what we learn
- Integrate several competencies in the same task

Communication

- Opportunity to develop general communication skills

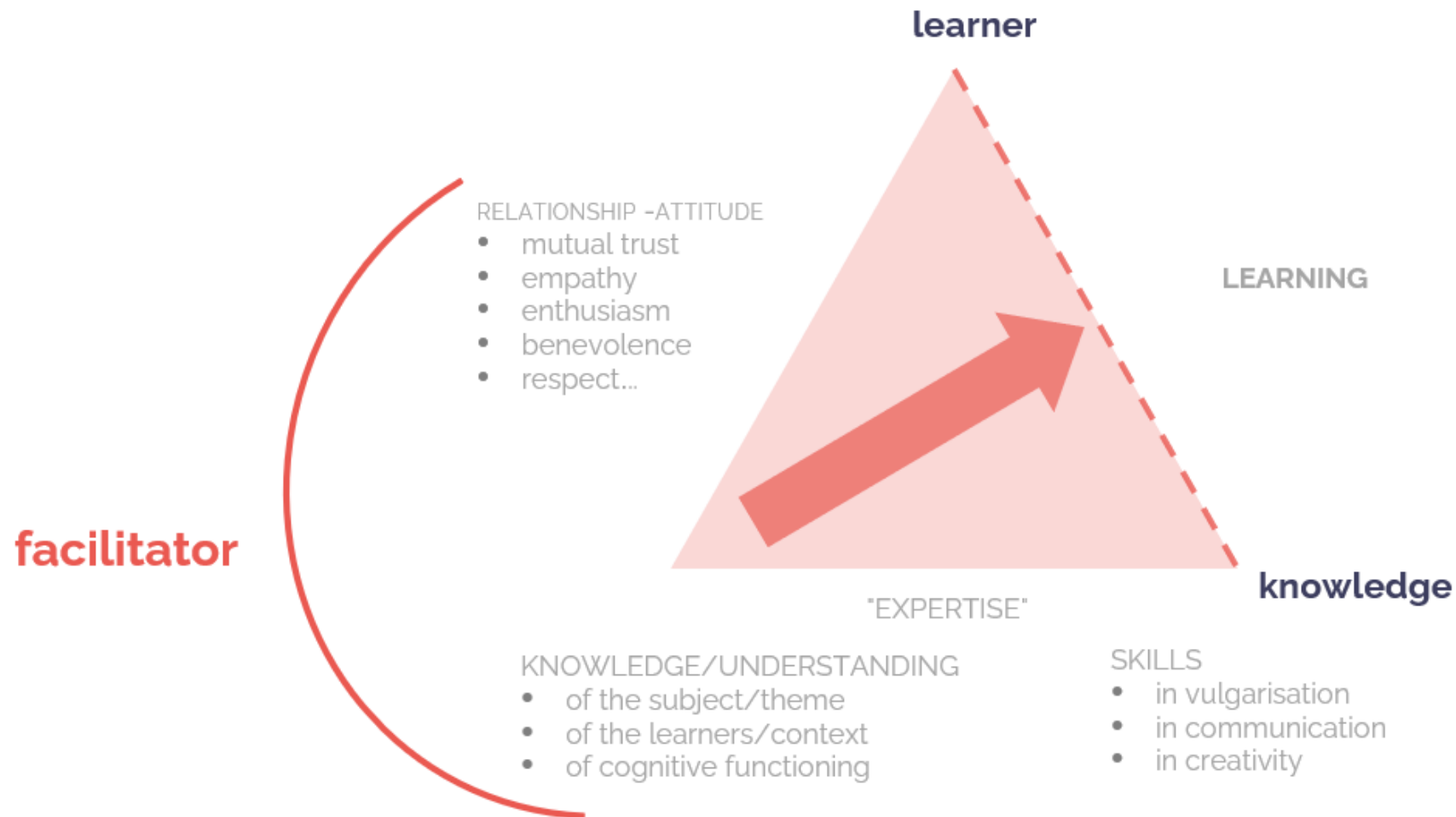


Collaboration

- Sense of belonging and self-confidence
- Deepening of learning through 'confrontation' and dialogue



Reminder: Role of the facilitator



Some facilitation points to consider

Observe without preconceptions and actively listen

- Behave in a way that shows you are interested
- Let information flow naturally
- Avoid hasty judgements/conclusions

Ensure mutual understanding

- Use a common vocabulary
- Ask open-ended questions to go further
- Reformulate and verify participants understanding

Take into account the barriers identified

Prioritize activities that are concrete/immediately useful

- Identify situations where digital skills are crucial

Promote confidence and positive self-esteem

- Point out existing skills
- Highlight progress

Create a sense of belonging

- Create a positive group dynamic
- Destigmatize

Overcoming barriers together



Based on my knowledge and experiences:

- Can I think of other facilitation techniques which are useful in overcoming barriers?
- Can I think of further things to bear in mind when facilitating workshops with vulnerable groups?



Reaching *Vulnerable Groups*

Publicize your services in advance: the means

- Communicate via various channels
- Make yourself known in areas frequented by your target groups
- Collaborate with organisations where your vulnerable audience feels at ease
- Go through people who have already participated in these types of activities themselves



Based on my context, can I think of other ways to publicize my services?

Publicize your services in advance: the manner



- Provide simple and precise information
- Highlight the potential concrete benefits of the proposed activities
- Ensure you make contact in a friendly and pleasant way
- Take into account the target groups' organisational constraints (work schedules, children or other dependants...)
- Opt for short workshops rather than long training sessions



Based on my knowledge and understanding of my target groups,
can I think of further points to highlight when advertising my workshops?

Reaching out to vulnerable people if I can not meet in person: the means

- Think about communicating with vulnerable groups via unusual places that are frequented despite the circumstances
For example, via notice boards in shops
- Find out about existing Facebook and WhatsApp groups that reach vulnerable groups
- Think about communicating using short video clips (these don't need to be polished)



Can I think of other ways to reach individuals or groups if I can not meet them in person?

Reaching out to vulnerable people if I can not meet in person the manner

- Highlight the particular importance of developing digital skills in the specific context
- Take into account the family dimension
(each family member having different/particular needs, limited number of devices...)
- Develop a mentoring system
(via telephone and/or via someone close to the participant who is more digitally skilled)
- Provide reassurance that alternative options exist
(places you can connect to the internet/access devices, mentoring, using a smartphone)

Tip: In the Practical Guidance section there are resources about organising and facilitating workshops online



IN SHORT

What practical use is this module to me when reaching out to vulnerable groups?

- It can help me to find new, innovative ways to contact vulnerable groups
It is not always necessary to meet people in person to advertise your workshops.
- It can help me to reflect on how I approach vulnerable groups
I can better interact and communicate with vulnerable groups and build positive relationships.
- It can help me to recognise the common challenges faced by multiple target groups
Different groups of people may face similar barriers such as access to technology and psychological barriers.
- It shows me how to recognise and adapt to the specific circumstances of participants
Individuals may face challenges of limited devices, family responsibilities or specific working hours.



NEXT STEPS

In your training journey...

1. Consult other modules

- The Digital Travellers Library of Resources
- My Role as a Facilitator
- The Stages in a Workshop



2. Browse practical guidance related to this module

- Guide: Reaching out to and Interacting with Specific Audiences





REFERENCES

Module and image sources:

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- Outreach and access to learning during the coronavirus pandemic, (02.04.2020): <https://eaea.org/2020/04/02/outreach-and-access-to-learning-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/>