

DIGIT-GERA: 2021-1-PL01-KA220-ADU-000026148
BUILDING A DIGITAL AGE-FRIENDLY LEARNING COMMUNITY

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Tips for Training: Methodology for senior learners

Usually, older adults have lower rates of internet usage than younger people. Therefore, considering the increasing digitalization of our societies, it's essential to have a good approach and relevant methods with senior citizens on:

- how they can acquire digital skills;
- how they can learn to use the digital tools



Skills of the trainers

Given the vulnerability of the group, it is important that the trainers show some particular skills: being able to tackle specific issues like the lack of motivation. Trainer must be empathic and patient for multiple reasons: Some participants may have a lower educational background, some others have a greater amount of things to learn in a very short time, especially if they have not been following technology for the past few years.

While having to avoid any expression of ageism, the trainer must be sure that the message is properly passed, and acknowledge that older age might indeed create cognitive or emotional challenges for the participant. Several concepts are difficult and unknown so repeating, talking slower and using visual aids may be part of the trainer's routine.

Evaluation of ICT level

a questionnaire is relevant in order to evaluate the group, the program must be flexible based on learners' skills and knowledge and readapted if necessary.

- We recommend the following questions:
 - 1) Do you own an ICT tool?
 - 2) How many times per week do you use it?
 - 3) What are the main activities you carry out on the tool(s)?
 - 4) What is/are your favourite(s) device(s) and why?
 - 5) Do you use social networks? Etc.

Recruitment

It's preferable to ensure to have more or less the same ICT level between participants. The minimum level to attend the training should be made clear before participants can register themselves.

The title/content of the workshop should be attractive and connected to their expectations/concerns/hobbies/points of interest.

Teaching approach

The teaching approach should be **individualized**. For instance, if one of the participant is slower than the rest of the group, the trainer should focus on him/her and let the group test what was previously mentioned.

The training should be **practically-oriented and related to everyday life situations**. The trainer should ask to the participants the types of tools, websites, apps they use in their daily life, as to gather their needs.

Supporting materials

Make sure to have the documents corresponding to the content of your session.

We recommend that participants work on the same exploitation system in order to ensure the homogeneity of the training.

Prepare hard copies of the presentations and explanations given during the classes. You should pay special attention to interface design, and using user-friendly platforms/presentations.

Make sure to provide digital presentations of what they have learnt in order to allow participants to train at home and practice their new knowledge/skills.

You can also add materials from websites or other useful links that could be interesting for the learners.

Elderlyusers' requirements

- Issues linked to ageing: Some of the most common issues concern visual and hearing impairments or just low vision or progressive hearing loss. Thus, the interfaces of the developed solutions have the following requisites: big characters, possibility to turn up the volume, to zoom in, use video subtitles, no bright colours, simple and readable fonts. Also limited mobility is a major concern for the developers of IT solutions. The proposed devices must be light, easy to carry and reach.
- Social exclusion: Some of the users might live alone and have no opportunities to meet their relatives or friends. In this case, they wouldn't have any support in the use of a new IT solution. For this reason, it is suitable to keep the device as simple as possible and also to organize training sessions for the users. For this purpose, IT solutions may also include serious games, promoting at once social interaction and cognitive training.

Assessmentmethod

Make sure that progress made by participants can be measurable (by using a questionnaire at the end for example) The trainer can also provide a certificate, at the end of the whole training course, in order to certify the completion of the training by the participant.

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