BGZ

Training Course for Neighbourhood Facilitators: "Innovators for Creativity in the Neighbourhood"

EduArt

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1. Short Summary

The training course for neighbourhood facilitators aims at people who are already active in their local environment or who want to become active. It includes the acquisition of competencies like communication techniques and skills that help dealing with one's own environment in a creative way, perceive the interests of others and develop with them a common understanding.

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The course can be accesed throught this link

https://eduart.eurocultura.it/

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2. The Training Course for Neighborhood Facilitators

One of the concrete results of EduArt is the training course for agents, or "facilitators", of the neighborhood: all those people who work in the area in different roles and with different purposes. The training course is aimed at people who are already active in the social environment or who want to become so. In the sense of "active citizenship", they learn to deal with their living environment in a creative way, to define their own needs, to perceive the interests of others and to act as active and responsible citizens.

Adult continuing education, which is important for any citizen who wants to live with maturity in his or her community, becomes even more crucial in the case of those who serve in a leadership role for a group of collaborators, even when they are volunteers in informal activities. Neighborhood facilitators will undoubtedly benefit from becoming familiar with the topics proposed in this course.

The approach chosen is that of *empowerment*: a neighborhood facilitator needs to understand his role and the requirements associated with his work in the area, but also a set of skills especially related to communicating with different stakeholders, which are useful in facing the challenges of society. He or she needs social and cross-cultural skills and to strengthen his or her civic engagement, which he or she can use to support adult co-workers.

By addressing many soft skills issues, the facilitator will increase awareness of his or her role, abilities, and confidence in his or her work.

The course can be used as both classroom training and in an online format. There are nine thematic blocks around the topics of communicating and working with target groups:

(1) The Role of a Neighborhood Facilitator

(2) Innovation, Education, Arts and Creativity in the Neighborhood

(3) Meaning and Purpose of Adult Education

(4) Fundamentals of Communication, Communication Techniques, Target Group

   Orientation

(5) How to Handle Stereotypes, Biases, Discrimination, Cross-Cultural Dimensions

(6) Change of Perspective and Inclusion

(7) Conflict Management

(8) Group Moderation and Motivation

(9) Use of Digital Tools for Neighborhood Work

2.1 The Role of a Neighborhood Facilitator

2.1.1 Intro

Take a look at this video of Simon Sinek on inspiration and involvement:

[Simon Sinek: Come i grandi leader ispirano azione | TED Talk](#)

2.1.2 The role of the facilitator

Facilitation and traditional teaching

Facilitating training in non-formal educational settings can be very different from teaching in schools. Traditionally, a teacher is a person who primarily disseminates knowledge whereas facilitation involves accompanying people through a learning process in which they develop skills. The facilitator creates the right conditions for individuals to acquire knowledge and skills in a self-directed way, according to their specific needs. This is one of the aspects of *empowerment*.

What is meant by *empowerment*?

At the individual level, it means feeling, accepting, and using one's individual power to take **independent and motivated action**. In education, *empowerment* can be seen as a process of gaining **skills in public social action**, cooperative organization, and involvement in public decision-making processes. *Empowerment* for successful civic engagement thus addresses the dimension of power in social activities.

Facilitation seeks to focus on an individual's pre-existing knowledge, skills, and potential. The difference between empowerment and traditional education lies in the attitude toward the group of people learning. Using a metaphor, in traditional learning the teacher is the cook and hopes the group likes the dish and its ingredients. In a facilitative approach, everyone gets to cook; everyone is exploring the recipe, ingredients, and spices that help them best.

Facilitation is about granting participants' experience and knowledge more relevance than in traditional teaching. In this sense, facilitation is a step toward sharing expertise and appreciation.

Knowledge and experience represent two sides of the same coin when it comes to the types of learning that occur in facilitation or traditional teaching. As a facilitator, your methodological skills help learners bring their motivation and interests into play, and foster a collaborative learning process. Facilitators help learners find motivation, identify goals, develop action strategies, reflect on their existing skills, and identify their challenges. This also has some implications for his or her position within the group. In traditional educational settings, the role of teachers is clear: their place is to stand in front of the group.

As facilitators, however, we mostly still stand in front of the group, but more often we are in the background, observing from the sidelines, acting as moderators or coaches. Sometimes participants take the lead.

In terms of your role, you could address specific questions, such as:

Do I need to explain anything here or should I focus on active group work?

What part of the explanation I have prepared is really helpful?

Inspiring Civic Engagement

In recent decades, our perception of human beings has changed significantly with a participatory paradigm shift. According to the philosophies of democracy and participation, all human beings have the potential to take part in public discussions and decision-making processes. This implies that they should be able and motivated to realize this potential, as democratic social development relies on it.

How facilitators perceive terms such as "democracy," "empowerment," or "activism" has an influence on how their participants experience these topics. Moreover, participants are perceived as credible and authentic change-makers in their community if they also share a democratic and empowering attitude. In other words, civic competencies are largely an attitude - beyond knowledge and skills.

To be inspired is to be spurred to action. To surprise oneself. To discover opportunities, to combat challenges. To be encouraged to make an effort, to feel enthusiastic and confident. Inspiration comes from within and is a mirror of an individual's inner state, desires and expectations.

Inspiring are…

- **Values** and **Trust**:
  - Trust employees, their ideas and abilities,
  - Show justice and honesty (meet deadlines, honor promises, demonstrate transparency),
  - Leave room for experimentation and mistakes,
  - Remaining grounded in one's values and passions;

- The facilitator's **Attitude**:
  - If he/she is aware of the value of words (motivating, encouraging),
  - If he/she is self-critical,
  - If he/she is solution-oriented (creative) and not problem-oriented,
  - If he/she shows empathy and understanding, emphasizing successes and lessons learned,
  - If he/she invites for reflection,
  - If he/she encourages collaborators to get involved and get out of their comfort zone,
  - If he/she encourages collaborators to ask for help when needed.

Create good conditions for collaboration

People will only become fully active if they feel safe and respected. Therefore, as a facilitator you must establish ground rules based on humane and democratic principles, and be the first to demonstrate that you are complying with them through your behavior.

1. We can refer to trust as the certainty that, in the environment we share, everything will happen according to the values of mutual respect, autonomy and personal responsibility;
2. Transparency provides the grounds for participation, as only individuals who feel they have all the relevant information will be able to participate to the fullest. Transparency has to do with motivations and goals, conditions and rules - which will best be shared and not imposed;
3. It sounds obvious, but mutual knowledge grounds a good collaborative atmosphere: be sure that all participants know each other at least by name, and slowly share some more personal information.

In order to have a good group experience, we suggest a basic set of rules that you can discuss and apply to your environment:

1. The **rule of discretion**: "What we say here, stays here." This will make participants feel safe. Of course, the rule also covers pictures, personal stories, videos, and any content that cannot be shared without explicit permission (e.g., on social media).
2. The **stop rule**: "Whenever a participant feels uncomfortable for any reason, they are allowed to say, STOP." And it is not necessary to explain why.
3. The **disagreement rule**: "Anyone has the right to agree and disagree." Even minority perspectives have a right to be heard with respect, and those in the majority cannot relativize or minimize them; rather: they will need to practice empathy.

What does *empathy* mean?

Empathy is a process of emotional intelligence, which allows us to understand the feelings and needs of our collaborators, to understand or feel what the other person is experiencing, that is, to put ourselves in their position. Every member of the group must practice this! You can find many exercises about it: we suggest you devote a group session to try this skill.

There are four basic criteria to apply when using empathy:

- Adopt the other person's **perspective** and recognize that that is his/her truth;
- Avoiding the **judgment** of "right" or "wrong" about someone's behavior;
- Acknowledge the other person's **emotions** and his/her right to feel those emotions while feeling taken seriously;
- Communicating this **recognition** by letting the other person know that his/her has every right to have his/her own perspective and feelings, and that someone is listening to his/her seriously.

As the boundaries between facilitator and participants become more fluid, challenges can arise for facilitators. Sharing the same values and vision of a participatory and pluralistic civil society is a prerequisite for creating an atmosphere of trust in which participants can open up to others. On the other hand, situations continually arise where facilitators must give guidance, act as a role model, or inspire others through their experience or expertise.

In a shared and holistic learning environment, facilitators are also included in the process, cognitively, experientially, and emotionally. The relationship with participants has a direct impact on the learning process. The challenge is to establish a trusting relationship with the participants, while keeping in mind the desired outcome. In other words: we are part of the game, but we are also partners with a larger responsibility for the whole. A good relationship between facilitators and learners can lead to an experience where learning and facilitation seem to happen more or less automatically – an enriching process for both parties.

Giving constructive feedback

Feedback is not simply a synonym for "criticism": it is a constructive tool that improves the quality of communication through three aspects: appreciation (what I liked), criticism (what I didn't like) and inspiration (what I would propose).

When giving feedback, try to keep these rules in mind:

- Your feedback must be useful and relevant to the other person;
- Represent you: use first-person singular "I" sentences, not "you" or "we" (e.g., "I didn't understand your presentation," instead of "Your presentation was incomprehensible");
- Keep emotions separate from observations;
- Describe, not interpret (e.g., "You were gesturing a lot with your hands and head," instead of "You were agitated and nervous");
- Show respect for the whole person (e.g., "When you get agitated, your voice goes up and that makes me nervous," instead of "You have an annoying voice when you get agitated");
- Keep in mind which position you are giving feedback from.

Even when you receive feedback, there are some tips you can follow:

- If something is unclear to you, ask;
- Don't argue or comment;
- Silently decide which aspects or comments you accept and which you do not;
- If you want, you can thank the other person.

Being aware of diversity

Focusing on individual needs involves the awareness that everyone is different. Our participants have different styles, attitudes, experiences, or cultural and social backgrounds. *Most school systems often tend to homogenize this diversity.*

Facilitation means respecting and even appreciating difference(s) as an asset. Everyone gains from an increased awareness of diversity by realizing that different paths can lead to similar goals.

The challenges are clear. Diversity consciousness is a learning field, so we cannot assume that everyone recognizes our values. Moreover, our task is to act as role models and to persuade through authentic and credible actions. Here, abstract theory is demonstrated in concrete behavior in front of a group.

We should be clear, however, that conflict and violence exist in the world around us and are "silent visitors" in our learning space. And honestly speaking - wouldn't it be boring to live on an island of harmony without disagreements and conflicting opinions? Therefore, we facilitate the ability to learn to live with disagreement.

Conflict occurs when a person has a need and that need is not being met. At least two parties (individuals, groups, states, etc.) are involved in conflict. Sometimes it may seem that the satisfaction of one party's need is incompatible with the satisfaction of the other party's need.

Every conflict has its positives and negatives, and these depend on various factors. However, we know that conflict is disruptive and can be destructive. But conflict also contributes to the creation of positive relationships and the improvement of bad relationships through transformation. By using good conflict management, facilitators improve the quality and efficiency of communication in a group and equip participants with conflict management skills.

You will be able to learn more about this topic in a later section of this course

References:

Competendo – Facilitator Handbook #1 https://competendo.net/en/hb/stepstowardaction.pdf

Competendo – Facilitator Handbook #2 https://competendo.net/en/hb/holisticlearning.pdf

Competendo – Facilitation step-by-step https://competendo.net/en/images/f/fd/Fsbs-competendo.pdf

2.1.3 Stop and think

Facilitators stimulate the learning processes of others and create spaces for it. This involves using dynamic lenses to be able to observe group processes, predict needs and motivations, and adapt the process accordingly.

However, focusing on others can lead to a lack of attention and space for the facilitator's individual learning processes. This is an important consideration because facilitators are expected to be role models for learning.

Therefore, facilitators develop skills and abilities to learn from a variety of experiences and in a variety of contexts: formal and nonformal, group settings and individual personal interactions, outdoors and indoors, when communicating to larger audiences and delivering messages but also in their private lives, where they need to create space for personal reflection.

In other words, being a facilitator means committing to being a **lifelong learner**, which is why it's important to devote time and space to your own personal growth.

We propose a series of exercises for you to reflect on yourself and how you see yourself as a facilitator.

You can download the worksheets to excersise (please note: for access to learning material, registration to the training course is required). The worksheets are also added below.

WORKSHEET 1: [The good facilitator](#)

The good facilitator

What, in general, do you think characterizes a good facilitator?

If you'd like, download this worksheet and fill in this drawing.

You described an ideal facilitator.

Another way to describe it is through the so-called competencies.
Competencies are **skills**, **knowledge** and **attitudes** that you need to act effectively in a modern society. They help you in a whole range of activities, so we talk about "key competencies" or "soft skills". Some competencies have specific relevance to your role as a facilitator in non-formal education.

Describe the skills that qualify you for the role of facilitator:
Comparing your image of a good facilitator to the skills, knowledge, and personality you have may have uncovered gaps that you need to fill. What do you need to develop? Focus on concrete, practical goals for the coming months.
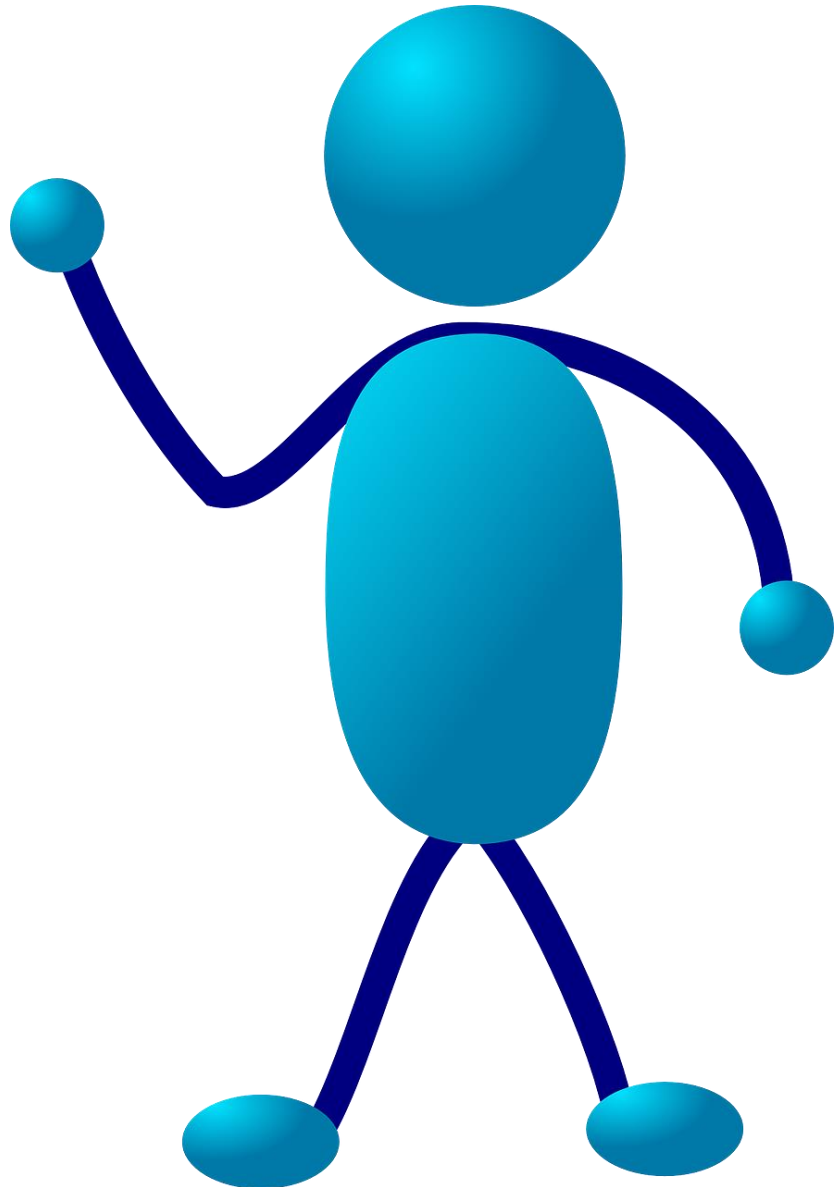
WORKSHEET 2: Personal characteristics

Personal characteristics

Facilitators usually rely on role models, experience in group processes, or participant expectations. You probably have an idea in your mind of what specific characteristics a good facilitator has. Our experience is that there is no clearly dominant personality style that is better suited to the job of facilitator than others. Diversity on a team makes a difference.

A more introverted facilitator will more intuitively understand the needs of quieter collaborators than an extroverted personality, who in turn better reflects the needs of very active people. For a person who likes to get to the point quickly, moderating an open-ended discussion can be a challenge; for a person who likes the discussion process, getting to the point is more difficult. In general, all characteristics have positive potential for facilitation. It's up to you and your team to perceive the different qualities of your members and use them effectively.

Try to describe your personality in a sentence that includes these areas. All of the characteristics form a specific individual profile. Which of these key words and aspects best characterize you? Every person has strong aspects that he/she can rely on, and weak sides that he/she would like to change or improve, or maybe just learn to deal with.

What are your weaknesses that might be difficult about playing the role of facilitator?

What are your strengths that help you play the role of facilitator?

WORKSHEET 3: With the group

With the group

As a facilitator you take on the responsibility of a mentoring role. Different people have different styles of approaching this role.
What does it mean to you?

Let it be

What situations do you remember in which you or another facilitator did not use as much authority or power as the situation required? What should have been done?

Authority

What situations do you remember in which you or another facilitator used too much authority or too much power?
What should have been done instead?

WORKSHEET 4: Values and Civil engagement

Values

Working in a certain environment addresses certain ethical values. Values are principles that guide us on what we want to do and how we do it. So the challenge is to act on these principles, not just under ideal conditions. It is important to reflect these values in a difficult atmosphere, such as in a conflict between participants. Explain what principles are important to you in relation to the fields below.

Self-Empowerment (self-realization)
Participation
Management
Initiative
Conflict
Democracy
Minority

Civic engagement

A civic initiative is an action of change driven by a desire to develop one's potential or to fill a gap in society or one's community. The impact of such an initiative can be described as the effect it has on the neighborhood, the environment, or society.

Citizenship education and skill-centered learning are related to the idea of empowerment. In a sense, empowerment is at the core of your work as a facilitator.

Please paraphrase it in your own words:

Empowerment is

In citizenship education, your participants are motivated to engage in society. **Describe their initiatives - and how they change society:**

How does your role influence the success of your group? What do your participants know/perceive best as a result of your work?

Your impact is visible in the skill gains of group members. **How do you achieve this result?**

WORKSHEET 5: Check list

Checklist

You can use this checklist to monitor your growth and lifelong learning process. It is an example that can be adapted to your needs and schedule: you can use it after courses or events or after events that you moderate for your group. Either way, you can reflect on yourself in relation to the event.

Event and date:	
Successes	*What went well? What am I satisfied with?*
Challenges	*What didn't work? What do I want to improve?*
Insights	*Thoughts, findings...*
For the future	
Priorities in my personal development	
My learning and growth goals	

Reference: Competendo – Facilitation step-by-step https://competendo.net/en/images/f/fd/Fsbs-competendo.pdf

2.1.4 Testing what we have learned

As a review of this module, we propose a useful tool to check the planning of an activity involving a group of participants (whether they are your collaborators or external users). It is the so-called "five fingers" method, where each finger represents a certain type of need to be taken into account in the organization.

1. **Social level**

- Do participants have enough time to get to know each other?
- Is there sufficient time to socialize during free moments?
- Are there sufficient methods for creating different combinations of participants in the case of group work?

2. **Physical level**

- Do the start, end, and break times of the activities allow participants to stretch their legs?
- Are there dynamic activities ("energizers") that can be enjoyed by everyone?
- Do the activities "force" participants to get out of their chairs from time to time?
- Are there food and drinks for participants? Do they give sufficient energy for the activities?
- Is the space in which the activity takes place friendly?

3. **Intellectual level**

- Are discussion sessions planned?
- Do the start and end times allow participants to arrange for an extra activity if necessary?
- Is there a bibliography or list of useful materials for further learning?
- Is there sufficient time for questions and answers?

4. **Emotional level**

- Is there time to process the emotions aroused?
- Are times planned for group or pair work?
- Is there enough time for individual reflection before and after activities?
- Are there methods that reinforce mutual trust in the group and invite an attitude of openness?

5. **Spiritual level**

- Do the activity start and ending times allow participants to have times of meditation if they wish?
- Do the activity times clash with participants' religious needs?
- Do the methods and activities chosen represent a culture that may not be shared by all?

2.1.5 Learning outcomes

In this lesson you learned to:

- Apply methods and attitudes that allow you to play the role of facilitator with greater awareness
- Stimulate civic engagement in your collaborators
- Plan an activity while respecting criteria that ensure the well-being of the participants

2.2 Innovation, Education, Arts and Creativity in the Neighborhood

2.2.1 Intro

Before we get started, take a few minutes to watch the interview with artist **Cibo** and to check out his social channels, Facebook and Instagram.

Keep the title of this module in mind and reflect on what elements of innovation, education, and creativity this artist has.

2.2.2 Innovation, Education and Creativity

Did you identify the elements of innovation, education, and creativity in Cibo's artwork?
We could schematically break them down as follows:

- **Innovation**: Cibo covers the defacements on the walls with artistic murals, instead of traditional coats of opaque paint the same color as the building
- **Education**: Cibo reminds the citizenry that the Italian Constitution repudiates Nazi-fascist symbols, which represent a memory of atrocities in our history
- **Creativity**: Cibo chooses an alternative path to denunciation or confrontation: it responds with the same medium, that of murals, but reversing the content in a positive way with the choice of food as an excellent example of Italian identity in the world

But you may realize that creativity is the very element that kicks off all the others. Let's take a look at what is meant by this concept, and why creativity doesn't just mean being gifted for artistic or do-it-yourself activities.

What is creativity?

Creativity is a skill that helps us process the wealth of information our minds gather, and make connections between different pieces of information in order to find a solution to a known problem in a new way, or to arrive at a new understanding of the problem itself.

Often, this involves making new connections where there have been none, and exploring the potential of seemingly unrelated topics. Creativity is less about providing answers to particular needs than it is about redefining the questions that drive the search for answers. Ultimately, building on prior knowledge and experience is the essence of most creative deliberation.

Thus, in many ways creativity is about exploration: exploring the knowledge we already possess, our environment and the rules within it, and problems in order to understand and address them in new ways. Thus, all creative processes begin with curiosity, or a willingness to explore.

Since learning more about the world and trying to understand the connections that drive it are linked to personal development and social experience, we can say that creativity is an essential skill required in learning processes.

Creativity for social innovation

Creativity requires an attitude of curiosity to explore the social environment. Basically, it is the ability to connect new things with old things, to build unexpected connections, and to develop new solutions to a problem or challenge.

In the context of groups, communities, or societies, the ability of creative individuals to make connections means a proactive adaptability to social change and an ability to recognize synergies and create something new from what already exists in discussions and groups.

Crucial to this social dimension of creativity is a mindset that demonstrates a willingness and ability to generate ideas and a motivation to think about and share new solutions. Creativity includes some analytical and reflective skills necessary to explore new insights, as well as the ability to implement these insights through activities - here creativity is understood as a methodological skill.

When ideas and practices become examples or inspiration for others, creativity can lead to social innovation.

Creativity is a necessary ingredient for innovation, not only because it helps generate ideas, but also because it can engage citizens in a dialogue about their needs and the meaning of innovative solutions. When civic competence is the goal of education and empowerment is the primary methodology, any solution accepted as an innovation can and should be a social innovation. The term "social" implies an impact on individuals, opening them up to opportunities to co-create, be involved and make decisions, while also keeping societal structures in line with the values of participatory democracy. In contrast, many solutions within business or technology that claim to be innovative actually solve a particular problem for a particular group of people, while the greater social impact often goes unexplored.

Creativity is a powerful way to engage community members in dialogue or activities that can transform their environment. Activities or interventions could help people to:

- build new connections,
- increase their understanding of the structures and relationships that connect citizens,
- find solutions for common space or common needs,
- motivate co-creation.

Creativity and participation

Creativity and participation are very closely linked. If a group is going to exercise creativity collectively, every member must be included and involved. The opposite is also true: to ensure everyone's participation, everyone must feel and see that their visions, ideas, experiences and skills are valued. They must feel actively involved in the co-creation process, feel that they are creating something with the community for the community.

Across Europe, it is increasingly common to see community-based civic initiatives that focus on solving social, cultural and political needs and problems, reflecting on values and rules, and promoting dialogue. In this process, creativity is a necessary raw material, motivating individuals to participate, persuade others, and collaboratively seek new solutions. Creativity in social groups prospers when respect for social diversity, creative participation, and co-creation set the stage for pluralistic and democratic societies.

Community-based facilitation has the primary task of shaping spaces where social diversity can be expressed, sociopolitical and cultural issues can be discussed and negotiated, people feel comfortable opening up to neighbors and other citizens, and where people can use their shared creativity. Flexibility and methodological adaptability to local contexts or the needs of people we may not know personally are essential.

The community activities we highlight in this chapter share the goal of identifying solutions that are beneficial to the local community or society. At the broadest level, they seek to achieve some form of social impact, an outcome and effect at the societal level. This impact can take many forms.
When planning or designing such initiatives, it is important to base them on real problems and needs, determined through direct involvement of community members and research of their attitudes, environment, and conditions. Methods that make use of our ability to change our perspectives and demonstrate empathy and curiosity about differences are an important component in community work.

In practice

You and your organization may have identified some areas of improvement or concern in your local area. It is important, as a first step, to clarify in detail what it is that you want to work on. Avoid general formulations: "We need a space for young people"; specify: "How can we prevent young people from leaving empty beer bottles and cigarette butts on the playground?".
Gather your collaborators and set all your ideas in motion. No constraints, no shame, no logical connections: in this phase, called "divergent", creative thinking must be free and open. Only then will you be able to devote yourself to bringing order to the proposals and try to combine ideas that you would not have expected.

Remember that in implementing the creative solution, it is crucial to involve the right group. If the problem to be solved is that young people leave the park dirty, it will not be productive for the Alpine group to clean it up!
Proceed to the next section to learn about some practical cases and gather insights or better understand these concepts.

Reference: Competendo – Facilitator Handbook #4, https://competendo.net/en/hb/creativecompetence.pdf

2.2.3 Stop and think

Here are two case studies:

Case study: Flash mob REACT! – Association Legambiente Vicenza

The Vicenza section of Legambiente, the biggest Italian environmental association, as part of the "REACT!" project, organized a flash mob in the center of Vicenza at the end of October 2021 together with some young people, going through the city in search of butts thrown on the ground. They circled them highlighting them and handing out "portable" ashtrays to smokers. The initiative aroused a lot of interest and curiosity in passers-by, who stopped to ask questions and express their enthusiasm for a high-impact initiative, particularly effective in raising awareness of the importance of individual actions.

This event combines the need to educate the community of citizens of Vicenza (sensitize them not to throw cigarette butts on the ground) with the proposal of a creative solution (the circles on the ground) and innovative (portable ashtrays).

It would have been, in fact, educational (perhaps) but not very creative to install some signs with the signal of the prohibition to throw away butts, or with some writing that would refer to fines and punishments.

Legambiente announced the event through its communication channels (social media and newsletters): you can see the Facebook post and the video of the day using this link.

Case study: Ci sto? Affare fatica! (I'm up for it? To work hard!)

The social cooperative Adelante, with the contribution of the Fondazione Cariverona, has been proposing for some years now the project "Ci sto? a fare fatica!" ("I'm up for it? To work hard!") for young people between 14 and 19 years of age during the summer period and is aimed at those who want to get involved, meet new people and get their hands dirty to make their own territory a better place. The project is supported by local authorities (administrations, associations, committees, etc.) and local adults.

The project stimulates minors and adolescents to make the most of summer time, a critical time, often empty of experiences and meaning - especially for the generations of pre-adolescents and adolescents - through concrete activities of volunteer work, active citizenship and care of the common good, supported and accompanied by the local adult community.

Examples of activities are:

- social interventions and services;
- extracurricular training;
- activities for the care of common goods;
- transition to adulthood by developing skills and responsibilities in the field of active citizenship.

Expected educational outcomes include:

- development of the culture of volunteering and active citizenship, particularly among young people;
- fighting conditions of frailty and disadvantage in adolescents and young people, preventing and reducing processes of marginalization and social exclusion;
- development and strengthening of the intergenerational relationship for the relational transmission of knowledge.

In practice, the work groups are organized into subgroups of ten young people, who carry out small jobs of green maintenance, cleaning of roads and paths, painting benches and fences, making decorative wall murals, etc.

Each group is accompanied by a young volunteer (tutor) with the role of guide and coordinator and by an adult "handyman" who transmits the technical/craft skills.
The work of the young people is rewarded with a so-called " fatigue voucher" worth €50 to spend in the main areas of everyday life (food shopping, clothing, school books, sports and leisure). Tutors also receive a "voucher" worth €100.

2.2.4 Testing what we have learned

**To test yourself on the content of this module, try the following exercises.**

All of these exercises are also useful in groups: you can submit them to your collaborators and combine the results for a more complete overview of action.

Train your divergent thinking

Activity 1: different ways to use a paperclip

Look at the picture of a paper clip, and if you have one handy, grab it.
What can you do with a paper clip, besides holding papers together? Try to be innovative. Find as many uses for it as you can.

Tip: you can also transform it, give it a new shape, deconstruct it...
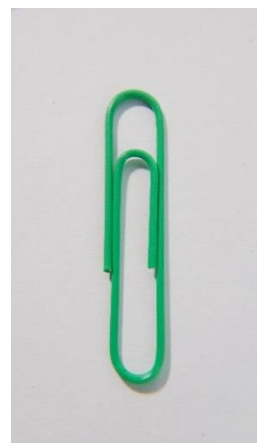
Activity 2: Shoot your name with photos

We usually ignore many of the shapes that surround us. Shifting our attention can allow us to perceive them more consciously. By choosing certain sections of photographs or adopting a different perspective, we can find numerous letters around us, even if they are not written.

A mug handle turns out to be a "D," for example, while the space between bricks may be "I" or "T."

Take pictures and write your name, one picture for each letter. After taking the photos, crop the images (if necessary) and assemble the name with the "Collage" function of your smartphone camera, or with a computer program (Paint, PowerPoint), or print the images and mount them on a sheet of paper.

Reflection:

- How was the activity for you?
- What was easy?
- What was difficult and what was your strategy to overcome the difficulty?
- What could you do to build your perception skills?

Reference: Competendo Facilitator Handbook #4, https://competendo.net/en/hb/creativecompetence.pdf p. 33

Activity 3: The shopping list

This is an exercise to generate content. Write a list of at least 25 ideas. Anything you can think of that you would or could do. If you do the exercise in a group, make it to 100!

Make it concrete

Activity 1: the Neighborhood map

Get a sheet of paper and a pen, or pencil, or colored pencils, or markers...whatever you feel most comfortable with.

Draw a map of your neighborhood, trying not to forget any relevant information.
Now think:

- Where can you meet the beneficiaries of the activities you propose?
- What public areas are there, in general?
- What places does your target group frequent?
- What are the needs of your target group?

Now try to place your project idea on the map.
Let's reflect: did you notice any difference between your idea, as it was in your mind, and its visualization on the map? What other places on the map might interact in your project?
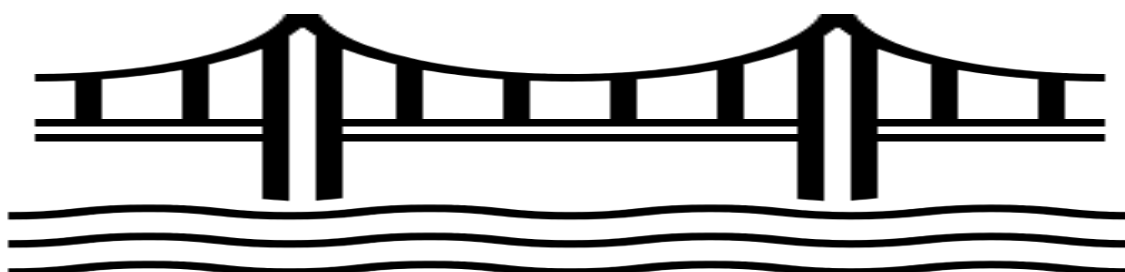
Reference: Competendo – Facilitator Handbook #1, https://competendo.net/en/hb/stepstowardaction.pdf p. 3

Activity 2: A bridge into the future

To better understand what changes your ideas can bring, it can help to imagine a bridge. On one side of the bridge is the present or past, on the other side is the future. The two sides are connected by a bridge, which represents the action. This bridge will be built by answering constructive questions. Answers can be written or drawn, depending on what works best for you.

1. Draw a bridge. The left side is the current state. On this side, you will note anything that comes to your mind as you answer the following questions.

2. After you have answered all the questions on the present/past side, you will travel to the far side, the future. On this side, write down what the future should look like. Be as specific as possible.

3. Next, think about your involvement and initiative. What problem would you like to address and what might be some possible steps to get there? Imagine what the bridge looks like, who are the people crossing it, what can happen and how.

If you are working in a group, start with each person working on their bridge independently, and then sharing them. You can build the bridge with a variety of materials. Just make sure the ideas and answers are written down.

Current Status	The Bridge	Desired status
What is needed? What is the problem?	How can I implement the changes I would like to see?	What does the situation look like now?
What exactly is bothering me?	Why me?	What exactly has changed?
Why is it a problem?	Who else has an interest in this change?	What is the improvement?
What makes the problem worse or delays a solution?		How do I recognize it?
What would the future look like if things continue as they are?		

Exerted from Competendo – Facilitator Handbook #4, https://competendo.net/en/hb/creativecompetence.pdf pp. 61-63

Focus with convergent thinking

Check which of the two methods suggested below best suits your needs.

Activity 1 Evaluating Option

Choose one (or more) ideas in rough format, concretely under consideration by your association. Probably some group members have slightly different views on the proposal. Now is the time to group, evaluate, and choose the idea you want to pursue. The exercise examines the potential behind an idea by evaluating it through the lens of a sort of market analysis matrix: to what extent is it possible to (re)invent something? And who benefits from our initiative?

Step One: Describe the same idea in slightly different ways, for example as revolutionary (totally new approach) or incremental (slight change to an existing, sufficient practice).

Hint: think about your project by putting yourself in someone else's shoes (e.g., a user, or a local administrator). This would help provide a deeper understanding of how the initiative might change and have a different impact.

Step Two: Evaluate what a project (or its various versions developed in Step One) might require in terms of opportunities, capabilities, and skills of the team or organization, with the table you can **download here.**

Reference: Facilitator Handbook #4, https://competendo.net/en/hb/creativecompetence.pdf p. 43

Activity 2: Checklist for testing an idea

An idea is the result of a process. More precisely, it is the preliminary result of thought or the current state, because thought, hopefully, will not stop. Seeing intellectual work in this way brings us closer to the idea of critical thinking. It is "the art of thinking about thought with the purpose of improving it."

Download the **checklist** to see if you have applied the standards inspired by the concepts of Critical Thinking to a sufficient degree.

Exerted from Competendo – Facilitator Handbook #4, https://competendo.net/en/hb/creativecompetence.pdf p. 44

2.2.5 Learning outcomes

In this lesson you learned to:

- Apply creative processes in developing projects and activities that involve social innovation factors

- Exercise divergent thinking to create innovative solutions to known problems

- Evaluate an idea or project according to objective parameters (convergent phase)

2.3 Meaning and Purpose of Adult Education

2.3.1 The Principles of Adult Learning

Please open this link.

2.3.2 How Adults Learn

Adults are characterized by maturity, self-confidence, autonomy, solid decision-making, and are generally more practical, multi-tasking, purposeful, self-directed, experienced, and less open-minded and receptive to change. All these traits affect their motivation, as well as their ability to learn.

Adult Learners' Traits

Self-direction
Adults feel the need to take responsibility for their lives and decisions and this is why it's important for them to have control over their learning. Therefore, self-assessment, a peer relationship with the instructor, multiple options and initial, but understated, support are all imperative.

Practical and results-oriented
Adult learners are usually practical, resent theory, need information that can be immediately applicable to their professional, personal or social needs, and generally prefer practical knowledge that will improve their skills, facilitate their work and boost their confidence. This is why it's important to create a training activity that will cover their individual needs and have a more utilitarian content.

Less open-minded and therefore more resistant to change.
Maturity and life experiences tend to lead to rigidity, which is the enemy of learning. It is therefore important for the trainer or facilitator to introduce new concepts that can be linked to established ones and promote the need to explore.

Slower learning
Aging affects learning. Adults tend to learn less quickly as they age but the depth of learning tends to increase over time.

Using personal experience as a resource
Adults have lived longer, seen and done more, have a tendency to connect their past experiences to anything new, and validate new concepts based on prior learning.

Motivation

Learning in adulthood is usually the result of a personal choice in order to improve one's skills and achieve professional, personal, or social growth. This motivation is the driving force behind learning.

Multi-level responsibilities

Adult learners have many commitments to deal with: family, friends, work, and the need for quality time for themselves. This is why it is more difficult for an adult to make space for learning. The trainer/facilitator must consider these issues and create flexible learning programs while also accepting that personal obligations may hinder the learning process.

High expectations

Adult learners have high expectations: they want to learn things that will be useful to them, they expect immediate results, and they look for training activities that are not a waste of time or money.

Motivating Adult Learners

Emphasize on the practical knowledge.

Always keep in mind that adult learners value practical knowledge more than facts and theories that are outside of their reality.

Finding solutions

Suggest problem solving exercises and case studies for students to find solutions.

Use humor

Humor would work great even with the most demotivated learners.

Chunk information

Chunking is essential, as it helps people remember and assimilate information. Small bits are easier to process.

Stimulate learners

Encourage them to think by coming up with puzzles or asking thought-provoking questions.

Make it visually-compelling

Aways keep in mind that 83% of learning occurs visually!

Get Emotional

Get your group of learners emotionally involved too: come up with controversial statements, tap on memories, add real-life stories.

Ask for feedback

Hearing our opinion or assessment asked makes us feel "important" and this increases our motivation. This is true in all situations, even more so when it comes to adult education.

Present the benefits of undertaking the training activities
It's maybe the most important step! Never forget to present (and later remember) the benefits at all levels (personal, professional, social etc.).

References:
https://elearningindustry.com/8-important-characteristics-of-adult-learners
https://elearningindustry.com/17-tips-to-motivate-adult-learners

2.3.3 Stop and think

Have you ever had to manage a group where arguments, friction, discontent prevented the normal course of a training or other activity?

Have you ever reflected on the factors that influence the dynamics of a group?

Read this short text that describes what factors influence group dynamics and gives some suggestions on how to handle situations that may arise.

When forming a group, it is important to take into account the factors that influence its dynamics. This is even more the case in training activities involving adults, who are carriers of very different backgrounds, experiences, education, gender, and culture.

Knowing what factors influence group dynamics helps us to understand what is happening and, if possible, to intervene so that interactions between members improve, thus arriving at the creation of cohesion, exchange, and respect that are at the basis of the good functioning of a group.

You, as a trainer or facilitator, need to be aware of who is participating and how culture, gender, power, status, or emotions can influence participation and interaction within the group. This becomes especially important if the group you are forming is multicultural or if you, yourself, come from a different culture than the one to which the majority of the participants belong.
The following factors all influence the way group members interact during training.

Culture
Culture influences how gender, power, status, or emotions emerge in a social environment. You will attempt both to respect cultural norms and to encourage and create an atmosphere in which all participants are comfortable, but also try to break down certain cultural aspects (such as, for example, creating work groups made up of people from different social classes). As a trainer working in cultural contexts other than your own, you will try to respect dress codes and prescriptions for social interaction.

Gender
Different cultures have specific roles for gender. Gender refers to the roles socially and culturally assigned to men and women. Gender is not biologically determined. In some environments, cultural prescriptions prohibit women from interacting in a social setting where there are men. Other issues may be related to cultural prescriptions regarding the ways in which women contribute to the discussion or the frequency of their contributions. As a trainer, it is important that you are aware of how gender influences the ways in which women and men participate.

The exercises you choose cannot violate cultural or gender norms, such as that women and men cannot touch each other. In some cases, you can adapt an exercise so that these norms are met (for example, forming pairs in which there is a man with another man and a woman with another woman, for exercises that require physical interaction).

Power
Power, in the field of training, appears in different forms. In terms of group dynamics, some people tend to assume leadership and others follow. Other people also dominate discussions by interrupting others, speaking loudly or often. As a trainer, your role is to ensure that all participants have the opportunity to participate and feel comfortable in participating. Different activities that reinforce group dynamics or tools used to ensure full participation will help you in creating and maintaining a positive atmosphere in which everyone feels comfortable.

Status
Culturally diverse groups have different ways of measuring status. Possible indicators of status, caste or class include: level of education, family ties, political or economic influence, and ownership of land or other property. In some cases, individuals belonging to a low social level may not feel comfortable with individuals belonging to a higher status, while in other situations the opposite may be true. Often participants are convinced that you, as a trainer, belong to a high social class and so they "submit" to you. As a trainer, you must be aware of social differences, but you must be careful not to imply or reinforce the idea that individuals from higher social classes have more rights.

Emotions
People also differ both individually and culturally in expressing their emotions. Some individuals are not embarrassed to express an intense emotion (e.g., crying to express sadness or anger), while others are unable to do so. Instead, in some cultures, discussion or intense emotions do not express a negative concept but express interest and involvement in a discussion or conversation. It is important that you are comfortable with emotions so that during training, as a trainer, you can deal with the emotions that participants might feel.

Reference: http://www.caritasroma.it/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/sezione3.pdf

2.3.4 Testing what we have learned

1) Children and adults learn the same way
True
False!

2) Learning is possible
only when one is a child because as one grows up the brain atrophies.
only if one is intelligent and therefore the brain is very responsive to new stimuli.
at any age but appropriate methods and tools must be used.

3) In adult education, experience plays an essential role, and therefore
new learning must integrate in some way with previous experience.
is only to deepen concepts already known but not to acquire new ones.
one who has little experience will learn little.

4) Scientific studies say that men's and women's brains function differently because
a man's brain weighs more than a woman's (1350 grams vs. 1200 grams).
different areas of the brain are activated.
men are known to be smarter than women.

5) The meanings one gives to concepts and things are influenced by
whether one is male or female.
the place, the culture one comes from.
whether one is very old.

6) Adults tend to
to learn more rapidly as they age because of their great experience.
to learn less rapidly as they age, and learning capacity also tends to decrease over time.
to learn less rapidly as they age but the depth of learning tends to increase over time.

7) Adult learners
want to learn only if they already know a little about the subject.
they want to learn things that will be useful for them, they expect to have immediate results.
want to learn without having to study too much because, having many commitments, they do not.
have the time to do so.

8) The dynamics of a group are influenced by:
the age of the participants.
by the topic of the training.
by the participants' culture of origin.

2.3.5 Learning outcomes

In this lesson you learned:

- what the principles of adult learning are

- how to motivate adult learners

- how to recognize the factors that influence group dynamics and act accordingly

2.4 Effective Communication

2.4.1 Intro

Let's get into the topic: if you think effective communication is an irrelevant or maybe even useless skill,

<p align="center">watch this <u>short video</u> and you will surely change your mind!</p>

2.4.2 Intro Effective communication

The word *communication* comes from Latin and literally means "to put in common." We communicate, therefore, when we share something with an interlocutor.

Factors of communication

There are seven critical elements of the communication process: the sender, the message, encoding, the communication channel, the receiver, decoding and feedback.

The **sender** is the person who wants to convey a message with the purpose of passing information and ideas to others. The sender's job is to take deep breaths and try to stay out of "attack/ blame" mode. Perhaps reminding themselves that if they believe the other person to generally be a good-hearted person, whatever happened or however the receiver responds to the message is not to purposely harm the sender.

The **message** is the topic of the communication. The information may include wants, needs opinions, preferences, ideas, tasks, and emotions. The topics may be an area of challenge for the sender to express and the receiver to hear because of differences or an uncomfortable past with the subject matter.

Encoding involves converting a subject matter that is theoretical and intangible (i.e. feeling loved or respected) into symbols such as words, actions, pictures or gestures. Here is where the sender can fail at making special efforts to use "softened" words that are gentle, concise, positive and non-blaming. Additionally, non-verbal cues that can be overlooked to enhance clear communication are giving eye contact, using a respectful tone of voice, providing a gentle touch, and softening facial features.

The **communication channel** is the means or method by which the message is sent. The channels include face-to-face, letters, telephone, and social media formats (i.e. text, e-mail, Facebook, Instagram, etc.). This can be an area of miscommunication as communicating, for example, over e-mail or text can easily be misconstrued because of the lack of non-verbal communication (i.e. facial expressions, tone of voice, and body language) as well as the unreliability of technology at times.

The **receiver** is the person who receives the message or for whom the message is meant for. The receiver is the one who tries to understand the information in the best possible manner. The receiver is best to take some deep breaths, let go of defenses, and remind themselves that they are not a bad person but that this is an opportunity to clarify and work things out.

Decoding is the process of the receiver converting the message in a way so that they may extract its meaning to their complete understanding. Things that the receiver may do that can get in the way of decoding the message content properly are being distracted, interrupting the sender, thinking about what one wants to say while the sender is speaking, and making judgments and assumptions.

Feedback is the process of ensuring that the receiver has understood the accurate meaning of the sender's message. This is an important step that can go wrong such as when the receiver argues, counterattacks, and defends themselves. Conversely, reflecting in advance of offering feedback involves repeating or paraphrasing what the receiver heard the sender say. It may involve asking the question, "Did I understand what you were saying correctly?" This may avoid unwanted misunderstandings.

Factors affecting communication

Sometimes communication can be "disrupted," that is, hindered; thus, the message is not fully received or even distorted in its content. The distortion, called "disruption," may depend on any of the elements of communication:

- **by the receiver**, if, for example, he or she is inattentive during communication
- **by the sender**, in case he/she makes a mistake in writing, pronunciation, has too low a tone of voice
- **from the channel**, if, for example, there is telephone line noise and interference during a conversation
- **from the reference**, if one of the interlocutors is not familiar with the topic or the more general reference situation
- **from the encoding**, if it is not properly used by the sender or if it is not well known by the addressee, resulting in misunderstandings, equivocation or total failure to understand the message
- **from the context**, if the situation does not correspond to the one the broadcaster assumes, as happens during a candid camera where one of the interlocutors does not know that the context is a "television shot," with all the consequent misunderstandings.

Cannot not communicate

Any behavior communicates something, and since behavior has no opposite, we cannot not behave. Whatever you do or say, whatever choice you make (from your clothes to your car, from what you read to the sport you play-or don't play) communicates something to others and to yourself. Whatever situation we find ourselves in, we will always have some behavior (if we continue undeterred typing on the PC while one of our colleagues/colleagues is talking to us, what are we communicating to him/her while remaining silent?). If we agree, with this insight, in recognizing all human behavior as communicative, then it follows that it is impossible not to communicate. We cannot escape communication. In other words: if all behavior is communication, and if it is impossible not to behave, it will be impossible not to communicate.

The 3 components of communication

On a daily basis we work with people who have different opinions, values, beliefs, and needs than our own. Our ability to exchange ideas with others, understand others' perspectives, solve problems and successfully utilize the steps and processes depend significantly on how effectively we are able to communicate with others.

The act of communicating involves **verbal**, **nonverbal**, and **paraverbal** components. The verbal component refers to the content of our message, the choice and arrangement of our words. The nonverbal component refers to the message we send through our body language. The paraverbal component refers to how we say what we say - the tone, pacing and volume of our voices.
These three components are used to:

- send clear, concise messages
- receive and correctly understand messages sent to us.

Verbal Messages

Our use of language has tremendous power in the type of atmosphere that is created at the problem-solving table. Words that are critical, blaming, judgmental or accusatory tend to create a resistant and defensive mindset that is not conducive to productive problem solving. On the other hand, we can choose words that normalize the issues and problems and reduce resistance.

Sending effective messages requires that we state our point of view as briefly and succinctly as possible. Listening to a rambling, unorganized speaker is tedious and discouraging - why continue to listen when there is no interchange? Lengthy dissertations and circuitous explanations are confusing to the listener and the message loses its concreteness, relevance, and impact. This is your opportunity to help the listener understand YOUR perspective and point of view. Choose your words with the intent of making your message as clear as possible, avoiding jargon and unnecessary, tangential information.

Nonverbal Messages

The power of nonverbal communication cannot be underestimated. In his book, Silent Messages, Professor Albert Mehrabian says the messages we send through our posture, gestures, facial expression, and spatial distance account for 55% of what is perceived and understood by others. In fact, through our body language we are always communicating, whether we want to or not!
Nonverbal messages are the primary way that we communicate emotions:

Facial Expression: The face is perhaps the most important conveyor of emotional information. A face can light up with enthusiasm, energy, and approval, express confusion or boredom, and scowl with displeasure. The eyes are particularly expressive in telegraphing joy, sadness, anger, or confusion.

Postures and Gestures: Our body postures can create a feeling of warm openness or cold rejection. For example, when someone faces us, sitting quietly with hands loosely folded in the lap, a feeling of anticipation and interest is created. A posture of arms crossed on the chest portrays a feeling of inflexibility. The action of gathering up one's materials and reaching for a purse signals a desire to end the conversation.

Paraverbal Messages

Paraverbal communication refers to the messages that we transmit through the tone, pitch, and pacing of our voices. It is how we say something, not what we say. Professor Mehrabian states that the paraverbal message accounts for approximately 38% of what is communicated to someone. A sentence can convey entirely different meanings depending on the emphasis on words and the tone of voice. For example, the statement, "I didn't say you were stupid" has six different meanings, depending on which word is emphasized.

Some points to remember about our paraverbal communication:

- When we are angry or excited, our speech tends to become more rapid and higher pitched.
- When we are bored or feeling down, our speech tends to slow and take on a monotone quality.
- When we are feeling defensive, our speech is often abrupt.

The Importance of Consistency

In all of our communications we want to strive to send consistent verbal, paraverbal and nonverbal messages. When our messages are inconsistent, the listener may become confused. Inconsistency can also create a lack of trust and undermine the chance to build a good working relationship.

When a person sends a message with conflicting verbal, paraverbal and nonverbal information, the nonverbal information tends to be believed. Consider the example of someone, through a clenched jaw, hard eyes, and steely voice, telling you they're not mad. Which are you likely to believe? What you see or what you hear?

Listening

The key to receiving messages effectively is listening. Listening is a combination of hearing what another person says and psychological involvement with the person who is talking. Listening requires more than hearing words. It requires a desire to understand another human being, an attitude of respect and acceptance, and a willingness to open one's mind to try and see things from another's point of view.

Listening requires a high level of concentration and energy. It demands that we set aside our own thoughts and agendas, put ourselves in another's shoes and try to see the world through that person's eyes. True listening requires that we suspend judgment, evaluation, and approval in an attempt to understand another is frame of reference, emotions, and attitudes. Listening to understand is, indeed, a difficult task!

When we listen effectively we gain information that is valuable to understanding the problem as the other person sees it. We gain a greater understanding of the other person's perception. After all, the truth is subjective and a matter of perception. When we have a deeper understanding of another's perception, whether we agree with it or not, we hold the key to understanding that person's motivation, attitude, and behavior. We have a deeper understanding of the problem and the potential paths for reaching agreement.

References:
https://www.familycounselling.com/lets-talk-about-it-the-art-of-communication/
https://www.cadreworks.org/resources/communication-skills#:~:text=The%20verbal%20component%20refers%20to,and%20volume%20of%20our%20voices.

2.4.3 Stop and think

Effective communication

<div style="text-align:center">

SELF-ASSESSMENT TEST

</div>

Circle your answer to each statement. At the end of the test, add up all your scores and read what your level of effective communication is.

Communication context	rarely	some times	often	always
When someone says something you disagree with, do you tend to keep listening without judging?	1	2	3	4
Do you try to evaluate in advance the effects of what you are going to say and how you are going to say it?	1	2	3	4
After a "communication process," do you ask yourself if you were effective in making yourself understood?	1	2	3	4
Can you withhold judgment and criticism toward the person who is speaking to you while you are listening?	1	2	3	4
When you are speaking do you watch your interlocutor to observe his or her reactions to what you are saying?	1	2	3	4
If you think you know the answer do you tend to let the person asking the question finish?	1	2	3	4
When you communicate with someone do you highlight the differences you have with them to show that you have your own identity?	1	2	3	4
If someone raises his voice with you do you make an effort to listen and let him finish?	1	2	3	4
When someone expresses his opposition to your thinking do you accept his/her objection and listen to him/her to the end?	1	2	3	4
Do you always look the interlocutor in the eye when he/she speaks?	1	2	3	4
Do you know how to wait without impatience for the best opportunity to communicate what you want to say?	1	2	3	4
When you can, do you take notes so that you can remember better?	1	2	3	4
Are you aware that words do not mean exactly the same thing to everyone?	1	2	3	4
Are you used to asking questions to help your interlocutor clarify his or her thoughts and ideas?	1	2	3	4
Do you ask your interlocutor questions to find out if he/she understood what you are saying?	1	2	3	4
Do you usually repeat overheard messages and instructions to make sure you understand them well?	1	2	3	4
Do you listen with curiosity and interest to another person's point of view, even if it is different from yours?	1	2	3	4
Do you tend to take an interest in everything that is said, even if it is of little consequence?	1	2	3	4
Do you bother to ask the meaning of words you don't know?	1	2	3	4
Are you really able to change your point of view and think like your interlocutor?	1	2	3	4
When you speak, are you focused more on your interlocutor than on yourself?	1	2	3	4

If, after repeating a concept to one of your co-workers several times in the same way, he does not understand you, do you try to change the way you tell him by taking responsibility for the misunderstanding?	1	2	3	4
When speaking in public can you look everyone in the eye by shifting your gaze evenly to the audience?	1	2	3	4
Do you change the type of communication depending on whether your interlocutor is male or female?	1	2	3	4
Are you used to questioning yourself and listening even if you think you know everything about a particular topic?	1	2	3	4
Your total score per type of answer				
Your total score				

Check here below your level of effective communication

25 to 50 = poor
You tend to listen little and be more focused on yourself. You have difficulty seeing things from your interlocutor's point of view and often persist in wanting to be right. You see only one truth, your own, and have a tendency to blame others if they do not behave as you would like. You feel you don't have to question yourself because you already know everything there is to know. If you really want to be effective in your communication you have a lot to learn....

50 a 75 = sufficient
You do not always listen all the way through, but when you do, people pay attention and respect to you. Sometimes you are not very attentive to your interlocutor's reactions, however, you at least try to make yourself understood and use the tool of questioning if you do not understand or if you notice that they have not understood. You still have a tendency to be curious and observe others even if you lack something to be effective in any situation. Promising.

75 a 100 = excellent
You are an excellent communicator. Your attention to others and to what they say makes your interlocutors regard you with respect and importance and seek you out to talk to you. People are comfortable with you and you appreciate them for who they are. You hardly lose your temper and if it happens you try to reason and bring things back to calm. You know how to show interest and if needed ask questions to understand and make yourself better understood. When dealing with people you almost always manage to get what you are looking for and you emanate an aura of positivity.

References:
https://www.caritascaserta.it/FORMAZIONE%202016/SECONDO%20LIVELLO/9%20TEST%20COMUNICAZIONE%20EFFICACE%202016.pdf

2.4.5 Testing what we have learned

1) Human communication is
the basis of social interaction
an activity that generates joy
a way to meet other people

2) Which of the listed here below is not an element of the communication process?
message
recipient
channel
radio

3) The channel is:
a medium through which water travels
the medium through which a message travels
the medium through which I see a program

4) What does the verb "communicate" mean?
It literally means "to shout at someone"
It literally means "to put in common"
It literally means "to listen to someone"
Literally means "to speak to someone"

5) Verbal language uses conventional signals
true
false

6) Communication can use...
the verbal channel
only images
words, pictures, gestures, posture, facial expressions

7) All behavior is communication
True
False

8) Posture is among the channels of communication:
preverbal
verbal
symbolic
nonverbal

9) Who is the sender?
The one who sends the message
The one who receives the message
The one to whom the message is addressed

The one who rejects the message
10) Can verbal communication produce misunderstandings?
Yes, because words do not always have a univocal meaning, understood in the same way by any listener.
No, because words always have an unambiguous meaning, understood in the same way by any listener

2.4.6 Learning Outcomes

In this lesson you learned:

- what the principles of effective communication are
- that nonverbal and paraverbal language matter much more than words
- to recognize the factors that influence communication and act accordingly
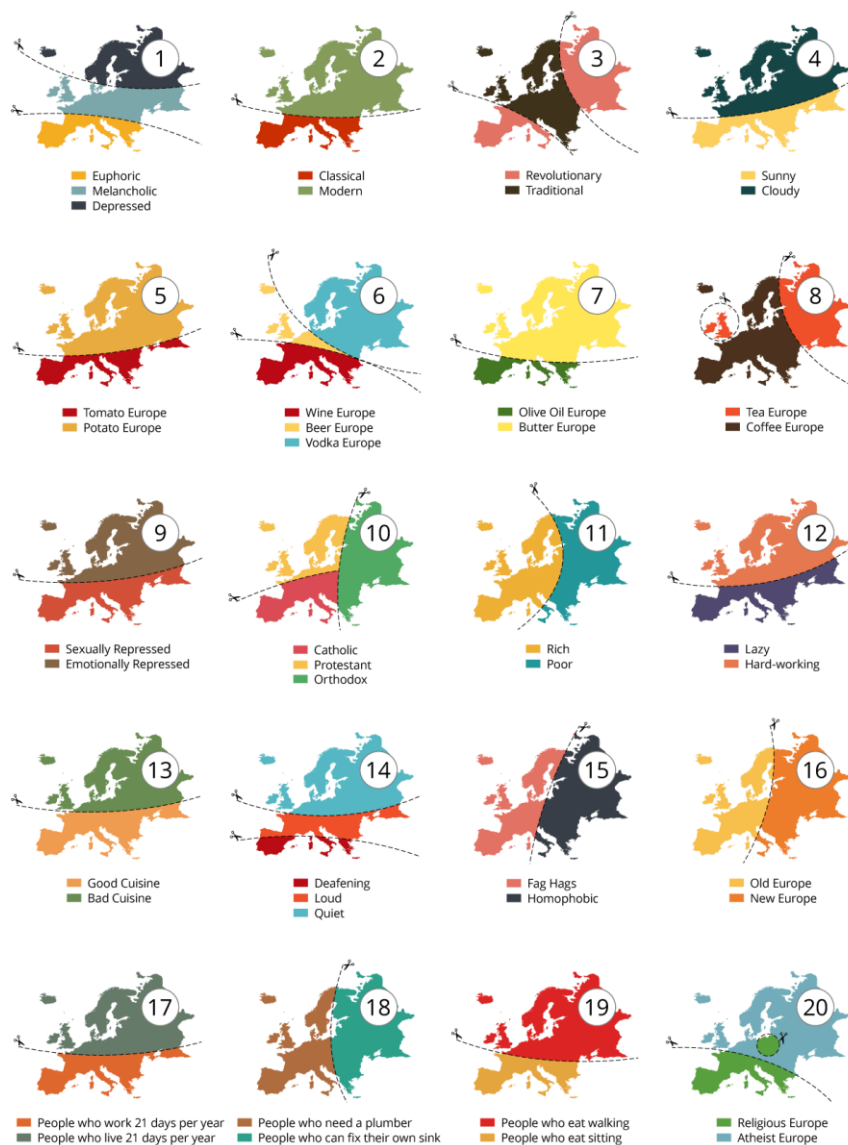
2.5 Stereotypes and Prejudice

2.5.1 Intro

The image below will surely bring a smile to your face.

But how often do we define a person or a people through stereotypes or prejudices?

2.5.2 Stereotypes and prejudice

A **stereotype** is an exaggerated belief, image or distorted truth about a person or group. It is a generalization that does not account for individual differences. Stereotypes can be based on images that we see in the media, or on viewpoints passed on by parents, peers and other members of society. Stereotypes can be positive or negative about groups of people.

Prejudice is an often negative preconception or attitude toward members of a group. It can have a strong influence on how people behave and interact with others—particularly with those who are different in some regard—even if on an unconscious level.

Common features of prejudice include having negative feelings and holding stereotyped beliefs about members of the group, as well as a tendency to discriminate against them. In society, we often see prejudices based on characteristics like race, sex, religion, culture, and more.

When people hold prejudicial attitudes toward others, they tend to view everyone with the defining characteristic as being "all the same." They paint every individual who holds specific characteristics or beliefs with a very broad brush and fail to look at each person as a unique individual.

Prejudice vs. Discrimination

Sometimes, prejudice is confused with discrimination. While prejudice involves having negative attitudes toward members of a certain group, discrimination occurs when those feelings are acted upon.

Types of Prejudice

There are numerous types of prejudice, some of which include:

- **Ageism**, such as believing that someone is "too old" or "too young" to work in a particular role or participate in a specific activity

- **Classism**, which may include having a negative belief about someone based on their income or looking down on someone because they are "poor" or a member of the working class

- **Homophobia**, often defined as feeling a sense of discomfort, fear, distrust, or hatred for people who are members of the LGBTQ+ community and do not identify as heterosexual

- **Nationalism**, which involves believing that the interests of your state's group are more important than those of other groups

- **Racism**, which involves having a negative attitude toward members of a certain racial or ethnic group rooted in systems of power and oppression

- **Religious prejudice**, which involves feeling negatively toward someone because of their religious beliefs, practices, or ideologies

- **Sexism**, which involves holding certain stereotypes or beliefs about someone based on their sex or gender, such as feeling as if they can't (or can) do something based on this factor

- **Xenophobia**, which involves disliking or fearing someone who the person considers "foreign" or "strange," often in the context of their native country

Causes of Prejudice

- **Stereotypes**: In many cases, prejudices are based on stereotypes (and stereotypes are based on prejudices). A stereotype is a simplified assumption about a group based on prior experiences or beliefs. A gender stereotype might be that only little girls can wear dresses or only little boys can play with trucks. Examples of racial stereotypes include "Black people are good at basketball," "White people can't dance," or "Asians are good at math."

- **Categorizing:** We are inundated with too much information to sort through all of it in a logical, methodical, and rational fashion. So, we often depend upon our ability to place people, ideas, and objects into different categories in order to make the world simpler and easier to understand. Being able to quickly categorize information allows us to interact and react quickly, but it also leads to mistakes. For example, we tend to minimize the differences among people within certain groups and exaggerate the differences between groups.

- **Prejudgments**: In one classic experiment, participants were asked to judge the height of people shown in photographs. They were told that for every woman of a particular height, there was a man of the same height. Therefore, they were not to rely on the person's sex to determine the height. Despite being offered a $50 cash prize for whoever made the most accurate judgments, participants consistently rated the men as being a few inches taller than the women. Because of their prejudgment that men are taller, the participants were unable to judge the heights accurately.

- **Outgroup Homogeneity Bias**: People tend to view members of outside groups as being more homogenous than members of their own group. This perception that all members of an outgroup are alike holds whether the group is based on race, nationality, religion, age, or another group affiliation.

- **Historical Events**: Sometimes prejudice develops in response to historical events. An example of this is holding negative beliefs against all Muslims as a result of the attacks that took place on September 11, 2001. This is known as Islamophobia and still impacts Muslim today.

- **Family, Friends, and Social Groups**: A 2018 study involving children between the ages of 3 and 9 found that if the parents held even a subtle ethnic prejudice, this predicted whether their kids held an implicit prejudice, regardless of parenting style. This suggests that the beliefs of parental figures can influence if a prejudice develops. Another 2018 study found similar results, but with friends versus family. This one involved 1,009 teens who were either 13 or 16 years of age and found that the attitude of their peers affected the participants' level of individual prejudice.

Impact of Prejudice

When prejudice exists, it can affect people and societies in many different ways.

- **Poorer Health:** Studies have connected the presence of prejudice with poorer physical health, both directly and indirectly. Examples of direct impacts are living in an unhealthy environment and limited access to health resources as a result of prejudice. Indirect impacts include prejudice-related stress and altered health behaviors.

- **Increased Discrimination:** Stereotypes not only lead to faulty beliefs, but they can also result in discrimination. They can impact the ability of the person being discriminated against when trying to get a job, secure housing, and more. It may even result in violence.

- **Reduced Multiculturalism and Segregation** According to one study, the level that people identify with their native country impacts their level of prejudice against people wishing to immigrate to their country. If there is a high level of prejudice against a certain immigrant group, immigration policy is likely to reflect those prejudices potentially making it harder for members of that group to immigrate. Prejudice and discrimination can also lead to segregation.

Today's Prejudices

As the world becomes more interconnected—more collaborations between countries, more intermarrying between different groups—more and more people are encountering greater diversity of others in everyday life. Just ask yourself if you've ever been asked, "What are you?" This question is frequently asked to people about their ethnicity, national origin, gender identity, religion, and other group affiliations. Such a question would be preposterous if you were only surrounded by members of your own group. Categories, then, are becoming more and more uncertain, unclear, volatile, and complex (Bodenhausen & Peery, 2009). People's identities are multifaceted, intersecting across gender, race, class, age, region, and more. Identities are not so simple, but maybe as the 21st century unfurls, we will recognize each other by the content of our individual character instead of against the backdrop of stereotypes.

How to Reduce Prejudice

In addition to looking at the reasons why prejudice occurs, researchers have also explored different ways that it can be reduced or even eliminated. Training people to have more empathy for members of other groups is one method that has shown considerable success.
By imagining themselves in the same situation, people are able to think about how they would react and gain a greater understanding of other people's actions.

- Other techniques that can be used to reduce prejudice include:
- Gaining public support and awareness for anti-prejudice social norms
- Increasing contact with members of other social groups
- Making people aware of the inconsistencies in their own beliefs
- Promote laws and regulations that require fair and equal treatment for all people

References:
https://nobaproject.com/modules/prejudice-discrimination-and-stereotyping
https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-prejudice-2795476

2.5.3 Stop and think

We now introduce you to a nice role-playing game.

Play it to the end and you will probably discover things about yourself you never thought of!

The spaceship

In an imaginary future, Earth is dying... There are no more forests, rivers, seas, animal species... And you have only one means to save yourself: a spaceship, which unfortunately is the only one left on the whole planet. On board you have 6 places to leave Earth and head to a sister planet, where it is possible to live. Along with you are 10 people ready to leave. You don't know them well, you have little information about them, but you will have to decide which 5 passengers will be allowed to board with you. Mind you: with them, you will have a chance to form the first nucleus of a new civilization. The rebirth of humanity is in your hands....

Listed below are all your possible traveling companions. Choose the ones you would take with you and briefly write beside each one the reasons for your choice (even for those you will leave behind on Earth).

Cook	
Blind craftsman	
Architect	
Roma girl	
Scientist	
Athlete	
African immigrant	
Dr. Smith	
Policeman	
Religious	

Now that you have made your choice, see below to learn about the characteristics of all possible travel companions and reflect:

- Did you make the right choices?
- What did you base your decisions on?

The traveling companions

Cook	The man knows how to cook only the dishes he has prepared for years for inmates at a maximum-security prison located on a remote island in the ocean. This experience has made him a cranky, short-tempered and uncooperative man.
Blind craftsman	The craftsman is one of the most famous young carpenters in the world, famous for his wooden housing constructions and his communication skills. He would be able to teach these skills to anyone.
Architect	The architect is a lady with a fixation on nutrition and daily exercise: she spends her time between jogging and various workouts, eating mostly vegetable and fruit smoothies.
Roma girl	A loyal, cheerful and generous young lady; she cherishes friendships and has studied in our country since kindergarten. She has a talent for music and plays a violin that she always carries with her.
African immigrant	A determined woman who never gives up in difficult situations; she came to our country where she earned a degree in agriculture. She could be a key resource in resuming the cultivation of the fields for both food resources and medicinal herbs.
Athlete	The athlete is a 75-year-old woman who recently won the "third age" Olympics. In her spare time, in addition to sports, she cares for her grandchildren and volunteers at a hospital facility, being a retired doctor.
Religious	The man believes himself to be a prophet sent to our planet by a boasted deity; he is charismatic and leads a group of followers willing to do anything to follow him. The police have already carried out numerous investigations, given the numerous complaints of physical and psychological abuse.
Policeman	The policeman is a tireless young Boy Scout leader; he is proficient with his inseparable rifle, given the many medals he has earned in national competitions; he would only use the weapon to procure food during hunting trips.
Dr. Smith	The doctor is a young law graduate looking for her first job. She has already done all sorts of internships and apprenticeships; now she is looking forward to entering the working world.
Scientist	The scientist is the man who patented the most powerful bacteriological weapon of mass destruction. Only, after receiving several pressures, he apparently went crazy and used it to destroy the planet.

2.5.4 Testing what we have learnd

Try out this short quiz to check what you have learned in this unit

1) A typically exaggerated and/or oversimplified belief about a certain group of people is known as
Stereotype
Prejudice
Discrimination
Assumption

2) The unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, especially on the grounds of race, age, or sex. Definition?
Prejudice
Discrimination
Stereotype

3) "All British people do is drink tea" is an example of:
Prejudice
Discrimination
Stereotype

4) "All Muslims are terrorists!" is an example of:
Prejudice
Discrimination
Stereotype

5) "All Jamaicans like reggae music & smoke weed" is an example of:
Prejudice
Discrimination
Stereotype

6) "Americans are fat, because they eat a lot!" is an example of:
Prejudice
False
Stereotype

7) "Only men can work at a construction site" is an example of:
Prejudice & Discrimination
Prejudice & Stereotype
Discrimination & Stereotype
All of the above

8) Unfavourable opinion or feeling formed beforehand or without knowledge, thought, or reason is an example, defines as?
Prejudice
Discrimination
Stereotype

9) To show unreasonable feelings, opinions, or attitudes, especially of a hostile nature, regarding an ethnic, racial, social, or religious group, defines as?
Discrimination
Prejudice
Stereotype

10) Stereotypes are a kind of…
Cliché
Prejudice
Inaccuracy
All of the above

What is a Stereotype

Stereotyping is assuming that "they're all alike." It's looking at a whole group of people and assuming that they all share certain qualities. For example, when you meet an elderly lady, you might assume that she has certain traits – that she likes to knit, or is a grandmother. But these assumptions are stereotypes, and there's no guarantee that they are right! After all, the lady might not have any grandchildren or might prefer dancing. Stereotypes are very common in popular culture, and can be found in literature as well – mostly due to a lack of information or awareness on the part of the writer but also for comedic effect.

Stereotypes are wrong on several levels:

They're inaccurate. Most stereotypes are based on racism, sexism, and xenophobia (fear/hatred of outsiders).

They're offensive. An effective writer doesn't go around offending people recklessly. Discussing certain sensitive topics might become offensive, but when readers take offense at your work it's important to take this seriously and try to adjust your views when necessary.

They're boring. Stereotypes are common images in the culture – that's how they become stereotypes in the first place. So we've all seen these images countless times, and they've become tired and predictable. If you rely on stereotypes, readers will begin to suspect that you're not very interesting or creative.

Definition of Terms

A stereotype is an exaggerated belief, image or distorted truth about a person or group—a generalization that allows for little or no individual differences or social variation. Stereotypes are based on images in mass media, or reputations passed on by parents, peers and other members of society. Stereotypes can be positive or negative.

A prejudice is an opinion, prejudgment or attitude about a group or its individual members. A prejudice can be positive, but in our usage refers to a negative attitude.

Prejudices are often accompanied by ignorance, fear or hatred. Prejudices are formed by a complex psychological process that begins with attachment to a close circle of acquaintances or an "in-group" such as a family. Prejudice is often aimed at "out-groups."

Discrimination is behavior that treats people unequally because of their group memberships. Discriminatory behavior, ranging from slights to hate crimes, often begins with negative stereotypes and prejudices.

How do we learn prejudice?

Social scientists believe children begin to acquire prejudices and stereotypes as toddlers. Many studies have shown that as early as age 3, children pick up terms of racial prejudice without really understanding their significance.
Soon, they begin to form attachments to their own group and develop negative attitudes about other racial or ethnic groups, or the "out-group". Early in life, most children acquire a full set of biases that can be observed in verbal slurs, ethnic jokes and acts of discrimination.

How are our biases reinforced?

Once learned, stereotypes and prejudices resist change, even when evidence fails to support them or points to the contrary.

People will embrace anecdotes that reinforce their biases, but disregard experience that contradicts them. The statement "Some of my best friends are _____" captures this tendency to allow some exceptions without changing our bias.

How do we perpetuate bias?

Bias is perpetuated by conformity with in-group attitudes and socialization by the culture at large. The fact that white culture is dominant in America may explain why people of color often do not show a strong bias favoring their own ethnic group.

Mass media routinely take advantage of stereotypes as shorthand to paint a mood, scene or character. The elderly, for example, are routinely portrayed as being frail and forgetful, while younger people are often shown as vibrant and able.

Stereotypes can also be conveyed by omission in popular culture, as when TV shows present an all-white world. Psychologists theorize bias conveyed by the media helps to explain why children can adopt hidden prejudices even when their family environments explicitly oppose them.

About Hidden Bias

Scientific research has demonstrated that biases thought to be absent or extinguished remain as "mental residue" in most of us. Studies show people can be consciously committed to egalitarianism, and deliberately work to behave without prejudice, yet still possess hidden negative prejudices or stereotypes.

2.5.5 Learning Outcomes

In this lesson you learned to:

- Understand that people have negative attitudes and what is meant by prejudice and stereotypes.

- Be able to recognise your own and others' stereotypical and prejudicial attitudes.

- Be aware of the negative consequences of prejudice and stereotypes.

2.6 Change and Inclusion

2.6.1 Intro

Before we get started, take a few minutes to watch the video of Taiye Selasi [(TED)](TED) titled "Don't ask where I'm from, ask where I'm a local".

2.6.2 Change and Inclusion

Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

Milton J. Bennett (1993) defines cross-cultural sensitivity in terms of stages of personal growth. His model of development assumes continuous improvement in confronting cultural differences, moving from ethnocentrism through stages of greater recognition and acceptance of differences that Bennett calls **ethnorelativism**.

The main concept behind Bennett's model is what he calls **differentiation**, which is how an individual develops the ability to recognize and cope with differences. "Differentiation" refers to two phenomena: the first is that individuals see the same thing in different ways, and the second is that **cultures differ from one another in ways that maintain different patterns of differentiation or worldviews**. This second aspect refers to the fact that according to Bennett, cultures offer different ways of interpreting reality and perceiving the world around us. This interpretation of reality or worldview is different from one culture to another.

Developing intercultural sensitivity means learning to recognize and address the major differences between cultures in their perception of the world.

Denial	Defense	Minimization	Acceptance	Adaptation	Integration
Ethnocentric stages				Ethnorelativism stages	

Below you can read some typical statements that identify each stage. Where do you fit in?

Denial of diversity	There is no "other": we are all the same.
Defense of diversity	My group is better than the others. Others should behave and live like we do. We could teach them so much!
Minimization of diversity	We are all human beings and we are all equal. There is no such thing as privilege.

Acceptance of diversity	My group is one of many. We would like to know more about others and understand their perspectives.
Adaptation to diversity	I understand other perspectives and am able to put myself in the other person's shoes. I am able to explain other perspectives not based on my own values, but on the other person's values.
Integration of diversity	I am able to adapt my strategies and behavior. I enjoy being a part of diverse groups.

The stages described by Bennett provide a useful framework for studying groups, content, and teaching methods that are best suited for developing intercultural sensitivity. The developmental model clearly indicates that the purpose of cross-cultural learning work is to get to a stage where difference is considered normal and integrated into each individual's identity, and where different cultural patterns can be considered.

It is clear, then, that intercultural learning is a process. This process requires knowing yourself and where you come from before you can understand others. It is a difficult process because it involves deep-seated ideas about what is good and what is bad, about the organization of the world and of your own life. In intercultural learning, what we take for granted and cling to is challenged. Cross-cultural learning, as Bennett has shown, is a challenge to one's identity - but it can become a way of life and, at the same time, a way to enrich one's identity.

Global Citizenship Education

The concept of Global Citizenship Education was born and developed in the 2000s as the most recent evolution of global education, including intercultural education, development education and environmental education.

The term **global citizenship education** indicates the contents of a form of education that today is considered essential, inserted in the multifaceted, multiform and globalized culture of contemporary societies. What this term wants to indicate is the need to recognize that our view of the world is linked to our culture and has its own peculiarities, and we must meet other worldviews with respect and curiosity.

Changes in perspective and different points of view must become our primary tool for learning. All of this evokes a status of **citizens of the world** with responsibilities and duties of active and participatory engagement, for the creation of a more just and equitable world: we will thus think of our lives in relation to the global world and realize how much our lives are connected with people and societies of the South of the world.

In 2015, UNESCO proposed a widely accepted definition: "Global citizenship refers to a sense of belonging to a larger community and a common humanity. It emphasizes political, economic, social and cultural interdependence and the interconnectedness of the local, national and global levels." The goals of the GCE are related to:

- invite people to think of themselves as **global citizens**;
- promote **mutual understanding** among individuals and cultures and introduce models of conflict resolution;
- promote a set of **common principles** based on the recognition of human rights;
- promote **active participation** at all levels: local, regional, state, provincial, national and global.

These objectives refer to an idea of participation linked to the concept of active citizenship, underlining the importance of empowering citizens on their own transformative capacities at environmental, political and social level. The related themes can be summarized in four main areas:

- **human rights** (children's rights, gender rights and rights to self-determination of peoples and nations);
- **environment** (sustainability, production and consumption models, climate change, biodiversity);
- **social and economic justice** (poverty, health and well-being, inequality and discrimination, migration),
- **interculturalism** (identity, cultural diversity, indigenous and traditional knowledge systems, peace).

Global Citizenship Education assumes that people today live the learning process in a global context and, even if unevenly, interact on a planetary level. The GCE wants to offer to each inhabitant of the planet the possibility to know and understand, in the course of his or her life, the issues related to global development and to interpret their meaning at a local and personal level, as well as to exercise his or her rights and responsibilities as a citizen of an inter-dependent and constantly evolving world, also contributing to its progress towards greater justice and sustainability.

Changing perspective

Think back to the video you saw at the beginning of this module. Imagine that you have a dark-skinned boy in front of you who, after telling you his name, explains, "I'm German but my parents are from Nigeria". Now imagine that, instead of that sentence, he says, "I feel like I belong in Lagos and Berlin."

Do you notice the differences in your perception? The second one is about overlapping experiences, without the limiting conditions of saying "German" or "Nigeria," with all the clichés that these words bring with them, and that will perhaps have very little to do with that person's identity.

They might therefore take away our passport, but not our experience. Let us ask ourselves what his or her nationality or place of origin really tells us about the other person, and how much each person's personal history might not be tied to an identification document.

The myth of national identity and the word **provenance** cause us to fall into the trap of placing ourselves in mutually exclusive categories. In reality, we are all **multi…**

Try now to extend this reasoning not only to intercultural differences, but to religious differences, gender differences, political beliefs, etc., in short: to everything that makes us different from each other. You will see that you can apply the same classification.

Think about your community group and the individual identities of its members. Particularly in neighborhood associations, these will often be very similar people who come from similar backgrounds and have similar opinions. This is natural and happens because it is easier to start a partnership with someone you have something in common with. However, good teamwork does not mean that everyone thinks and acts the same way.

Diversity research shows that diversity within a team (not just in gender or ethnicity, but also in background, experience, lifestyle, values, and even language) contributes to higher quality work outcomes. Diverse teams can be more innovative and creative than homogeneous teams and are able to provide non-standard solutions to problems. However, they are also more difficult to manage.

A facilitator can encourage the team to invite people they probably would not have considered in the first place. Team members may also recognize on their own that they are not diverse enough. In such a situation, the facilitator can help them prepare a profile of one or more people they need, and a strategy for finding them.

References:

Competendo – Digital Toolbox https://competendo.net/en/Main_Page

- Facilitator Handbook #1
- Facilitator Handbook #3

https://www.cci.tn.it/che-cose-leducazione-alla-cittadinanza-globale/

https://www.coe.int/en/web/north-south-centre/global-education

2.6.3 Stop and think

Here's a case study and some activities to exercise your mind to "shift perspective".

Case study: Glocal - the world in your neighborhood

A neighborhood is a miniature of the world. The world's ongoing processes and challenges are reflected in the neighborhood ecosystem.

By Marta Gawinek-Dagargulia, SKORO

In Ursus, a district in Warsaw, many average citizens do not follow or comprehend the global problems covered in the media, but usually they do get involved in activities that aim at improving everyday life in the district. District inhabitants more easily claim their rights to the city and public space and are therefore more encouraged to participate and contribute with ideas.
This is how grassroots self-organisation and creative actions are developed and they can be inspirations to decision-makers searching for innovative solutions at a higher level for the global challenges.

Sharing ideas and strategies also empowers local communities, giving them appreciation, connecting them with others in the world and making them more resilient. District inhabitants represent very different socio-political views, mirror the diversity of the society and present a wide variety of arguments. This is also where bottom-up initiatives are driven from. Social changes might be initiated by individuals, but require mass involvement. People who identify with their district and are encouraged to stand for a cause are the ones to trigger social change.

Neighbourhood dinners

Challenge: breakdown of social relations, atomization of the society, inability to associate for social change Regular evening meetings promoting the culture of sharing, facilitated by SKORO activists. Neighbours brought food and drinks to a previously prepared big table. The networking events at the dinner encouraged the meeting of neighbours, talking about the district life and exchanging about current issues and ideas. Done with local or fair-trade global products, a neighbourhood meeting respects the rights and the well-being of the farmers in their own region and of the producers in remote countries.

Ursus exchange (Wymienialinia Ursus)

Challenge: littering, one-off production, responsible use of goods, creating a sustainable system of reuse. SKORO invited inhabitants of the district to bring the goods they do not need anymore and exchange them for something of use. Simple ideas have great power and serve the planet and its global ecosystem by neither consuming new products (saving energy and raw material) nor producing waste.

The key to the success of community events turns out to be their regularity, consequence in conduction (it happens no matter how many join) and simply the creation of a comfortable and relaxed space in which participants can initiate discussions with ones another. Sustainability in its social (strengthening relations among people), financial and ecological (reusing goods) dimensions can be tracked in every action and connected to a global dimension.

Acoustic walk on the grounds of a former factory

Challenge: Physical and socio-political vacuum (lack of ideas) after former industrial spaces close, especially considering the socio-cultural legacy of the place and involving those who are affiliated with the place

The walk took place in the former URSUS Factory of Agricultural Machinery, attended by several hundred people, former workers and young people. It was accompanied by the voices and unique stories of former factory workers and was guided along the production halls and the area of the plant. The author, Jaśmina Wójcik says "I believe that art can change reality and influence human attitudes" and so she initiated many other artistic interventions which can be an inspiration for other communities built around industrial areas all over the world: a participatory museum of the factory, a book with memories about the space, an art installation of a TRAKTOR-IDEA-URSUSA, a statue formed out of parts of the original brand of a tractor gifted by tractor drivers and lovers from all over Poland. In such an event you can easily connect the local situation with industrial workers in other parts of the world and we can discuss in common the importance of proper wages and working conditions for a decent life.
Invite foreign guests

Challenge: To tackle stereotypes and fear of the "stranger"

Personal relations with others outside our district strengthened the feeling of being part of a great whole.

Sharing stories underscores that human needs are universal and many problems faced in the district are also shared all over the world. Hosting people from other countries, especially those not very well known, creates space for very human deeds that bring people closer: hospitality evokes gratitude, willingness to share and be together and in solidarity. This is how an international community can be created in small steps. Additionally, exchange stimulates open mindedness and expands horizons. Meeting others from the world shows alternatives, but also invites individuals to self-develop, learn languages and gain skills that empower them to play an active role in society.

Reference: Facilitator Handbook #3, https://competendo.net/en/hb/theeverydaybeyond.pdf pp. 47-49

Activity 1: The meaning of nation

1) Take a pen and paper and define 7 typical characteristics of people of the following nationalities:

a.   Italian;
b.   Ghanian;
c.   American.

2) Compare similarities and differences between the different nationalities.

3) Now think about yourself: check how well you meet the criteria of the different groups. Are you 100% Italian or do you have characteristics of all groups?

Let's think: Based on these results, how important and how applicable are the so-called "national characteristics"?

Activity 2: What do we know? What do we NOT know?

1) Choose any object (food, clothing, electronics...)

2) Answer the following questions about this item:

a.   What do I know about this object?
b.   What do I not know about this object?
c.   Who is involved with it at the global level?

Stop and think: based on your results, the most important point to work on is what you don't know about the item. How can you find out more? Ask the right stakeholders the questions. You could even write an email to the manufacturing company, requesting the information you're missing.

How do you feel about becoming a critical thinker?
Could you imagine doing this more often?

Exerted from Competendo – Digital Toolbox https://competendo.net/en/What_Do_We_Know

2.6.4 Testing what we have learned

Please read this short story and then try out the activity to fine-tune your perspective-shifting skills.

Once upon a time, there was a family made up of three people: a mother, a father and a 12-year-old son. They decided to travel, work and get to know the world, so they left with their donkey. When they arrived in the first village, people commented: "Look at that boy how rude he is. Him on the donkey and the poor parents, already elderly, pulling him." The wife said to her husband, "We don't allow people to speak badly about our son. You get on the donkey" The husband listened to her and got on the donkey. In the second village, people murmured, "Look at that shameless fellow. Let the boy and the poor wife pull the donkey, while he sits comfortably on its back." The husband thus asked his wife to get on while he and his son pulled the donkey. In the third village, the usual murmur. "Poor man! - they said - After working all day, he lets his wife get on the donkey. And poor son: who knows what he'll get, with a mother like that!". Discouraged, they all decided to get on the donkey and continue their vacation. When they arrived at the next village, they listened to what the townspeople said: "They are beasts, more beasts than the donkey that carries them. They will break its back!" Annoyed by the criticism, they all decided to get off and walk with the donkey. But the criticism was not over. When they arrived at the new village they heard some people laughing among themselves, "Look at those three idiots; they are walking, even though they have a donkey that could carry them!".

Activity: Description, Interpretation, and Evaluation

Get a pen and paper. Look at the first picture below and start writing something about it (the first words that come to your mind)

We now introduce you to three categories, explaining what they mean:

- **Description**: neutral observation
- **Interpretation**: give a sense to what is observed
- **Evaluation**: give a judgment (a quality) to what you observe

To help you keep the three aspects separate, review the following example:

Description: I see a woman covering her mouth.

Interpretation:

- She is yawning, so she is bored.
- She is burping, and trying to be polite by covering her mouth
- She seems happily surprised
- She is laughing out of embarrassment

Evaluation:

- I think she is a good person trying to be polite
- I think she restrains herself too much, she can be more relaxed
- It is a natural reaction to good news
- She should be ashamed to laugh so openly

Now look at the next image, divide your sheet into three columns (one for each category) and start filling in just the description one.

Monitor your thoughts and try to correct yourself if you go out of the category.
When you're done with the description, move on to the interpretation, and when you're done with that, conclude with the evaluation (look for both a positive and negative evaluation).

Reflection: What was the most difficult aspect of the exercise? How do you feel if you are interpreted and/or evaluated (either correctly or misunderstood)?

Extend the exercise to situations in your daily life where you tend to rush straight to evaluations, without going through the intermediate levels: do you have neighbors who don't take care of common spaces and you think they are rude? Are you bothered by electric scooter drivers, particularly foreigners? Do young people in your neighborhood litter the park where the kids play? And so on. Go back to interpreting their actions before evaluating them.

Remember that the processes we use to describe, interpret, and evaluate are dependent on both culture and personal experience, and limit our ability to understand other cultures and other people.

Reference: Facilitator Handbook #3, https://competendo.net/en/hb/theeverydaybeyond.pdf pp. 74-75

2.6.5 Learning Outcomes

In this lesson you learned to:

- Recognize your awareness of cross-cultural differences
- Change perspective in observing the world, being aware that your point of view is always linked to your own culture and experience
- Separate the stages of description, interpretation, and evaluation when observing an object or situation

2.7 Conflict Management

2.7.1 Intro

Let's get into the topic.

Before you get started, take a few minutes to watch a short, fun video on conflict management (from YouTube).

2.7.2 Conflict management

Active listening

The first step to improve your conflict management skills is to assess your listening skills.

To assess your listening skills, try the test below and check your score.

Listening skills

Choose the numbers according to the frequency of your behavior:
1 - most of the time   2 - often   3 - sometimes   4 - never

	Listening behavior	P	Frequency			
1	You stop listening to someone who says something you don't agree with		1	2	3	4
2	You focus on what someone is saying to you even though you don't care		1	2	3	4
3	When you assume you can guess what someone is going to say, you stop listening		1	2	3	4
4	You repeat in your own words what the other person has just said		1	2	3	4
5	You listen to another person's point of view even if it is different from yours		1	2	3	4
6	You take in everything that is said, even if it is not very important		1	2	3	4
7	You ask for the meaning of words you do not know		1	2	3	4
8	You think about how to retort while someone is still talking to you		1	2	3	4
9	You pretend to listen carefully even when you are not listening at all		1	2	3	4
10	You think about other things while others are talking		1	2	3	4
11	You just follow the meaning of the speech, without worrying about details		1	2	3	4
12	You realize that words don't mean the same thing to everyone		1	2	3	4

		1	2	3	4
13	You listen only to what you are interested in, ignoring the rest of the message	1	2	3	4
14	You look at the other person when you talk to him or her	1	2	3	4
15	You focus on the speaker's words without caring about his or her expression	1	2	3	4
16	You know which words and phrases will trigger your emotional response	1	2	3	4
17	You know what you want to achieve with your communication	1	2	3	4
18	You wait for the best opportunity to communicate what you want to say	1	2	3	4
19	You think about how your interlocutor might react	1	2	3	4
20	You choose the best way (written, oral, telephone) to communicate	1	2	3	4
21	You observe if the other person is hostile, worried, indifferent, shy, etc.	1	2	3	4
22	You recognize when you are "ignored" by the other person	1	2	3	4
23	You tend to assume that the other person already knows what you are about	1	2	3	4
24	You let the other person express his or her hostility to you without interrupting him/her	1	2	3	4
25	You practice regularly to improve your listening skills	1	2	3	4
26	You take notes so you can remember better	1	2	3	4
27	You can stay focused despite sounds and noises	1	2	3	4
28	You listen without judging or criticizing the speaker	1	2	3	4
29	You repeat messages and instructions to make sure you understand them correctly	1	2	3	4
30	You get an idea in advance of what the speaker is trying to tell you	1	2	3	4
	TOTAL				

SCORING TABLE
For each of questions 1, 3, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 15, 23, 30 give the following scores by marking them in column P: (1) almost always (2) often (3) sometimes (4) never
For each of questions 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29 give the following scores by marking them in column P: (4) almost always (3) often (2) sometimes (1) never.

SCORE	
120 – 110	Excellent listening skills, really centered on the interlocutor towards whom you use empathy
109 – 75	Good listening skills; you can improve them
74 – 45	Average listening ability; you are not always able to focus on the interlocutor and this has a significant impact on your ability to fully understand and interact with them
Less than 45	Listening focused on yourself; good training is needed to fully understand the other person's point of view

Most of us probably think we listen well, but do we really?

Based on the results of the test, here are some tips.

The basis of effective communication is active listening, that is, the ability to listen with a high degree of attention and participation. This soft skill is often underestimated, but it helps to establish trusting, lasting and productive relationships.

On the one hand, actively listening to customers or users leads to a greater understanding of their needs and to the consequent creation of targeted products and services; on the other hand, actively listening to employees makes it possible to understand the motivational levers and resolve any dissatisfaction that slows down the work process.

What is active listening?

This term, which was first coined in 1942 by Carl Rogers, an American psychologist, is an act that we do voluntarily, and therefore requires our attention and intention. It is an apprenticeship and, as such, we can acquire and perfect it. **Listening is active because it requires our participation**, so it implies commitment and concentration. We are not referring, therefore, to a passive activity.

Listening means concentrating on the other person, on those who have decided to share their experience and thoughts with us. When we put this tool into action, we must silence the voices within us. Active listening requires understanding but does not demand a response. Listening itself encourages the interlocutor to keep talking. **Whoever feels listened to is as if he or she receives an invitation to continue speaking**, a stimulus to open up and share with others what he or she has inside.

There are barriers that make active listening difficult. Some of the most important are:

- **Beliefs**: our beliefs influence the way we perceive the words of our interlocutor. Listening to someone who does not share our ideas can generate tension and/or rejection. By practicing active listening, however, we will focus only on the other person and not on ourselves.

- **Expectations**: what we expect from the other person or the situation leads us to listen in one way or another. How many times have you disconnected from the conversation because you already knew how it would end? Because you guessed what they were going to say? Expectations do not lead to active listening because they distract us from what is really important: understanding others.

- **Skills**: each of us is born with different skills (potential). Some are better at listening, some at communicating, some are good at both, and some are not particularly good at either. Listening requires learning and training, so it is "like a sport" that we can all practice and improve.

- **Attitude**: what is my attitude toward a conversation I don't want to have? When faced with someone I don't want to be with, but am obligated to? Listening is an exercise of willingness that requires patience and attitude.

To improve your active listening skills, it is important to:

- Eliminate any potential sources of distraction (phone, email, thoughts...).
- Do not interrupt.
- Keep eye contact.
- Do not judge or interpret what is being said; just listen, setting aside any prejudices, presumptions and expectations.
- Perceive both the words and the gestures and movements of the speaker. Non-verbal language also communicates and must be "listened to."
- Paraphrase from time to time, that is, summarize what is being said to make sure you understand the meaning, and possibly ask questions.
- Give feedback from time to time; that is, make affirmative gestures with your head such as nodding to communicate that you are still listening.
- The three R's rule - **receive**, **reflect**, and **recap** - helps us improve our active listening skills.

Conflict management styles

Effective, honest and transparent communication is critical to the success of any team. Effective communication means being able to express yourself to any interlocutor (colleague, co-worker, superior or client) both verbally and non-verbally. If this is lacking, the risk is that misunderstandings and frustrations will arise.

Conflict does not only mean armed conflict, but also a relational sphere. A fundamental part of a relationship is knowing how to confront and manage conflict in such a way that there are no misunderstandings and, above all, that the two parties are placed on an equal level of importance. To be able to manage this, however, it is also necessary to be aware of oneself, one's character and one's talents.

The only way to be sure of being able to carry on a conflict is to enter into the view that it **is not necessary to win or lose within a conflict, but to have clear relational and individual equality**.

Thomas-Kilmann and conflict management

Thomas and Kilmann are conflict management scientists who, in the 1970s, designed a questionnaire that could classify everyone into a certain type of conflict management identity. They identified five conflict resolution approaches based on two specific characteristics: assertiveness and cooperativeness.

Assertiveness refers to an expressive ability that allows one to clearly state one's thoughts and stance in such a way that the other person is less likely to misunderstand the ideas expressed by the assertive person. On the other hand, with **cooperativeness** in situations of conflict is meant a behavior that tends to approach ideas different from one's own, so much so that sometimes one's own ideals are belittled.

Thomas and Kilmann help us to frame the identities that can be found within a conflict through a questionnaire they designed (the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument®) to allow anyone to identify with a particular style of behavior and better understand how to react and how one reacts within a conflict.
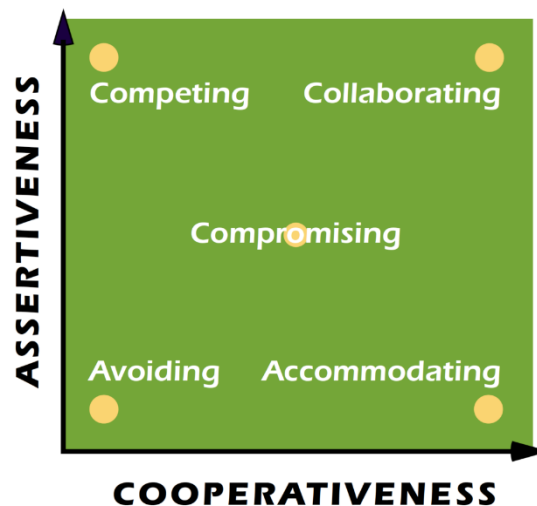
This diagram describes 5 **styles of conflict management**:

Competing style

People who favor this style tend to be inflexible because they pursue their own goals without concern for those of others, confident in their position. They often operate from a position of power.

This style is useful when you need to resolve conflict urgently; when the solution is unpopular or when the other side is trying to use a situation to its own advantage.

Caution must be used to avoid using this style inappropriately as some individuals may feel they have lost in an argument and feel resentful.

Collaborating style

The collaborative style seeks to meet the needs of everyone involved. Someone using this style may well be assertive, but unlike the ''competitive'' style, it recognizes that everyone's opinions matter equally.

You go deeper into the problem, identify everyone's concerns and desires, and try to find a third alternative - perhaps with a creative solution - that meets the different needs.

Compromising Style

This style aims to find an expedient, mutually acceptable solution that partially satisfies both parties in the conflict while maintaining some assertiveness and cooperativeness. Is best to use it when the outcome is not crucial and you are losing time; for example, when you want to just make a decision and move on to more important things and are willing to give a little to get the decision made

Accommodating Style

The opposite of competing, there is an element of self-sacrifice when accommodating to satisfy the other person. This style should only be adopted if it is the only way to resolve a conflict and the impact of non-resolution is a worse solution than the concessions needed.

Avoiding style

People who prefer this style try to sidestep the conflict, to put it off until a later time, or to pass it on to someone else, thus worrying about neither their own nor someone else's wishes.

The only situations in which adopting this style may be truly acceptable are those in which one sincerely believes that someone else is in a better position to resolve a conflict.

Which of these 5 conflict management styles is best?

There is no right answer. Each of these styles may be the most appropriate in a given situation: **competition** is useful, for example, in emergencies when quick and decisive action is needed; **collaboration** when both positions are too important to compromise or to integrate the insights of people with different viewpoints; **compromise** when positions are moderately important but it is not worth engaging in more assertive models, or again when a quick resolution to conflict must be found; **avoiding** when a conflict is trivial, there are more important conflicts to prioritize, or when the resolution is beyond our reach; **accommodating** when we realize we are making a mistake or when winning that conflict is far more important to the other person than it is to us.

Each of us is capable of using these five styles to resolve a conflict, and the choice of which one to use should consider the specific situation.

Often, however, whatever conflict situation we find ourselves in, by inclination we tend to use only certain approaches among the 5 possible conflict management styles and as a result we risk using one that is not appropriate to the context.

Reference: https://kilmanndiagnostics.com/overview-thomas-kilmann-conflict-mode-instrument-tki/

2.7.3 Stop and think

Our brain is pretty lazy. It doesn't like to change and tends to get stuck in the mental patterns it has always used. So, without realizing it, we tend to move always on the same track, repeating the patterns we have used in the past. We are so attached to our way of being and thinking that, even unconsciously, we are ready to defend it against any attempt to change. The reason is clear: our identity is at stake. Knowing this, being aware of it, allows us to get around it with a few tricks.

Edward de Bono, considered the greatest authority in the field of creative thinking, in his book "**Six thinking hats** " (1985) described an effective technique of creative problem solving.

This system serves to expand the number of perspectives and ideas useful in solving a problem, but also to get out of one's own mindset and into a different one, allowing us to understand other points of view and, probably, making us aware of the ways of thinking and the reasons that lead other people to act differently from what we would like. It is therefore a very useful tool to use in conflict management as well.

By playing different roles, we get out of the frame of mind that most belongs to us. **Changing hats encourages a change in point of view, making us more aware of our thinking style and taking us into new areas**. It is really a good way to ease tension and bickering, bringing the group to think constructively.

The technique follows precise rules and each of the six hats is assigned a color in order to make its function clearer.

By wearing one hat at a time, you separate the elements that tend to overlap in a decision-making or creative process. This keeps you away from confusion, because when you're faced with a problem or conflict many nuances, including emotional ones, intervene simultaneously that you can't handle in one block. Better to deal with one thing at a time.

One then imagines metaphorically wearing one hat after another and automatically acquiring the associated characteristics and attitude.

Note: The six-hat method can be used alone or in groups. If you are gathered with several people, the important thing is for everyone to try out different roles so that everyone shifts his or her perspective (you can assign hats to individual participants or create small subgroups for each hat). If you are alone, playing the different roles will help you **challenge yourself**.

Six Thinking Hats

White Hat: the Neutrality

It is the objective, unbiased hat that focuses on facts and information. When you wear it, you don't interpret a fact or express an opinion. You list figures, numbers, data, answer specific questions, because the more specific you are, the less you get into personal considerations.
You can also write down facts that are "believed" to be true or highly probable, but you must be aware of them and make it clear that you are not 100% certain (it is better if you can quantify the probability that an event will happen or not).

It is not easy to be neutral. It takes some effort because each of us has a predisposition to favor or deny an idea, or believe in something beyond the objective data. However, if you behave like an unemotional computer, you will have great data on your hands.

Useful questions to ask yourself while "wearing" this hat are:

- What data are available to me?
- What other information do I need?
- Where can I find this information

Red Hat: the Emotions

This hat represents **emotional and intuitive thinking**; logic is not required. The red hat can praise or criticize an idea based on subjective feelings.

Red is the color of passions. Every choice we make is influenced by the sensations and feelings we have, such as dislike or sympathy. In itself this is not a bad thing, since they are the basis of intuition and "sixth sense" that has led human beings to many discoveries - but also to many disasters, overestimating the value of the first thing that comes to mind.

Emotions push us towards a goal and away from a danger, and they should be respected. However, it is good to keep them separate from the facts so as not to weaken the effectiveness of our thinking. It is a very useful way to see ourselves more clearly and to bring out what is often acting under the surface.

Useful questions to ask yourself while "wearing" this hat are:

- What do I feel in my skin about this idea?
- If my "heart" could give me advice on this idea, what would it be?
- What does my gut tell me?

Black Hat: the Negative

This is the hat of **thoughtful judgments**. Use it for a dose of critical-logical thinking that can show you when an idea is lacking or not appropriate.

Those who put on the black hat highlight anything that isn't working or might not work in the future. **Mistakes**, **risks**, **weaknesses**. Warning: this is not about demolishing a solution or ridiculing it, but objectively highlighting the shortcomings that can weaken it.

Using the black hat is different from black pessimism, because the world of negative feelings is the task of the red hat.

Useful questions to ask yourself while "wearing" this hat are:

- What are the weaknesses of this idea?
- What are the potential problems associated with this idea?

Yellow Hat: the Positive

The hat of praise and optimistic thinking. It focuses on the reasons why an idea will work and how it will bring benefits. This hat can find good news from a seemingly hopeless situation.

Yellow thinking is positive but still tied to a **logical basis**, just as it is with black. You can also hypothesize about opportunities not yet possible at the moment, but always keeping your feet on the ground. The euphoria and enthusiasm about why you should embark on an adventure keep it for the red hat.

With this hat, you also don't have to worry about coming up with new ideas. You can come up with concrete, already-used solutions, and that's perfectly fine. It's easy to confuse the yellow hat with the green hat of creativity. Keep in mind that the former tends to the efficiency of an idea and the latter tends to the innovation of an idea.

Useful questions to ask yourself while "wearing" this hat are:

- What are the benefits of this idea?
- What opportunities might this idea present?

Green Hat: the Creativity

This hat represents creativity. It provides stimulation, new ideas and quirky alternatives. Use it to shake things up and get ideas going into new directions. It's a time for creative and divergent thinking. Green is the color of fertility and it is with this hat that you grow an idea, going beyond what is obvious and already established. It's a leap forward, or rather a sideways leap (Edward de Bono is the daddy of lateral thinking).

If with black and yellow hats you have made judgments on the existing, now you change gears and move towards the new. You go outside the box and challenge yourself, or the group, to arrive at a completely new and unexpected concept. You hunt for alternatives, starting with the constraints and conditions set by the other hats. Otherwise you risk arriving at an idea that is completely out of whack, a useless piece of junk.
Useful questions to ask yourself while "wearing" this hat are:

- How can I improve this idea?
- What other ideas might be useful to me?
- Are there other approaches I haven't considered yet?

Blue Hat: the Control

Thought, to be effective, needs to be organized. The role of the blue hat is that of a team's coach, **organizing the game to achieve a goal.**

The blue hat steps in with questions, takes care to summarize the results, summarizes the conclusions, and directs the thinking of all participants. Basically, it makes the whole process more productive and focused. If you're on your own, you need to listen to yourself a lot and be able to manage the whole process.

It represents the big picture. It doesn't focus on the problem but on how people approach the problem. For example, you can use the blue hat to analyze the problem-solving process, determine how a meeting should be held, and suggest which hat should be worn at a particular time to move the discussion forward.

Useful questions to ask yourself while "wearing" this hat are:

- From a broader perspective what does this idea look like?
- Can I make this creative thinking strategy even better?
- What hat should I wear again to get more useful information out of it?
- What is the next step?

Activity

Try now to practice the six-hat technique. Read the suggested context below and take the time to "wear" all six hats, one after the other. Ideally, you should have a sheet of paper on which to pin or write down what each hat would say.

If you want to do this activity with the beneficiaries of your association/organization, remember that, as facilitator, you will have to assign (if you wish, even secretly) a hat to each participant, explaining its characteristics, explaining the context of implementation (see below) and then start the discussion.

Of course you will be able to address a real problem or situation or one that is more relevant to your association activity.

> The car is used for short trips within the municipality, sometimes with elderly passengers, every morning of the week and sometimes in the afternoons and weekends.
>
> The association pays for insurance, repairs and maintenance in general. Volunteers travel an average of 10 000 - 12 000 km per year.

2.7.4 Testing what we have learned

Download the test and check what you have learned about conflict management (test below).

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

The basis of effective communication is	Trust Active Listening Non-verbal language
To implement active listening, it is necessary to	Anticipating what the other person will say Remembering our history with that interlocutor Put aside one's own beliefs
Eliminating distractions is a good way to facilitate active listening	True False
To improve active listening skills, it is useful to	Interrupting the other person with our considerations Maintain eye contact Making nods of attention (e.g., nodding)
Paraphrasing and/or summarizing from time to time what you think you understood helps active listening.	True False
In a well-managed conflict	One party will be the winner You must put your own needs aside Relational equality is fundamental
Assertiveness means	The ability to approach each other's ideas The ability to express one's position clearly Success in getting one's needs met
A collaborative attitude is the best way to manage conflict, taking into account everyone's position.	True False
A competitive attitude in conflict management is very assertive and very cooperative	True False
The style of conflict management that avoids them is	Compromising Elusive Accommodating

ANSWERS

The basis of effective communication is	Active listening
To implement active listening, it is necessary to	Abandoning one's own beliefs
Eliminating distractions is a good way to facilitate active listening	True
To improve active listening skills, it is useful to	Maintain eye contact Making nods of attention (e.g., nodding)
Paraphrasing and/or summarizing from time to time what you feel you have understood helps you to listen actively.	True
In a well-managed conflict	relational parity is fundamental
Assertiveness means	The ability to clearly express one's position
A collaborative attitude is the best way to manage conflict, taking into account everyone's position.	True
A competitive attitude in conflict management is very assertive and very cooperative	False
The style of conflict management that avoids them is	elusive

2.7.5 Learning outcomes

In this lesson you learned to:

- Recognize your own and others' relational and thinking styles

- Use effective communication modes and flexible relationship strategies based on different aims

- Apply lateral thinking to solve problems and conflicts within a team

2.8 Facilitate and Motivate

2.8.1 Intro

Before we begin, download and test your ability to work in a team (test below).

Working in a team

Answer "Yes" or "No" to the questions below.

1	Do you find team games more challenging than individual games?	Yes	No
2	Can you easily excuse mistakes made by your friends or co-workers?	Yes	No
3	Do you generally accept people who hold opinions different from yours?	Yes	No
4	Do you prefer to talk with other people before making an important decision?	Yes	No
5	If you realize that you are playing the role of leader in a team, do you emphasize it by pointing it out?	Yes	No
6	If you have a project, do you feel you need to find collaborators?	Yes	No
7	Do you feel competitive in your personal or work life?	Yes	No
8	In your opinion, do mixed groups of people with different skills and abilities lead to better results in a project?	Yes	No
9	In your opinion, should different points of view be heard to make a decision?	Yes	No
10	You are assigned to work with someone who has completely different views from you. Do you think you will still be able to work with him/her?	Yes	No
11	Do you enjoy playing cards?	Yes	No
12	Do you worry if you find out that on an organized trip you have been assigned a roommate who is very different from the one you were told?	Yes	No
13	Do you find it difficult to praise someone?	Yes	No
14	Do you ever get a feeling of envy?	Yes	No
15	Do you experience teamwork as a burden, when you might be quicker and more efficient on your own?	Yes	No
16	Do you enjoy going to the cinema with others?	Yes	No
17	Do you prefer to avoid criticism from your co-workers?	Yes	No
18	Have you ever given yourself credit where credit was due, but not exclusively to you?	Yes	No
19	Would you reprimand a co-worker in public?	Yes	No
20	Do you enjoy playing soccer or volleyball?	Yes	No
RATING SCHEME			
Score one point for each affirmative answer to questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 20 and one point for each negative answer to questions 5, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, keeping in mind that only answers that are actually functional for the assessment are considered; then calculate the total and check your score against the diagram below.			

More than 14 points	You are certainly a valuable member of a team and have a strong collaborative spirit: you know how to offer your contribution and value that of others.
From 12 to 14 points	Sometimes you feel that you have difficulty working in a team, but you can still adapt to difficult situations. Much depends on the fact that you lack affinity with your teammates.
Less than 12 points	You are more suited to individual work, so much so that only in this dimension are you able to give the best of yourself. However, try to mitigate this aspect of your personality, because very few professional activities can allow you to operate independently. In most cases, in fact, it is necessary to reach compromises.

2.8.2 Facilitating and motivating a group

Neighborhood facilitators inevitably find themselves managing a group of collaborators and/or participants.

Although this group comes together because of individual will, and not because of obligation, the dynamics that emerge can sometimes be complex.

It is good, therefore, to spend time also on the inner growth of individual members, to improve their collective activity, and not to focus only on the practical aspects that community work requires.

There are some questions that everyone is asked to think about, to keep the focus of his or her participation:

- Why do I want to be part of this group?
- What is my role in the group?
- What is or what are my roles in the group?
- What can I give, and what can I expect to receive?
- What common goal do we have?

Even classic team-building activities that take the group out of the usual context of cooperation and into informal situations (e.g., a game of some team sport, a scavenger hunt, a field trip) can have a great impact on motivating and strengthening the bonds that keep the group together.

As a facilitator (e.g. president of the association) you will have the role of a peer leader, as this is not a hierarchical structure but a group of volunteers with common goals, values, ideals and passions.

You will mainly be responsible for ensuring a positive and peaceful atmosphere in the implementation of activities, and you will make suggestions on the distribution of tasks along with other organizational tasks.

It is therefore important that you feel as involved as the others in reflecting on your role and your motivation to be a team player, and for this you can either propose to your co-workers or take part in the exercises proposed in the **Stop and Think** section.

2.8.3 Stop and think

The following are some different types of exercises, which can be carried out individually as a self-assessment or, in the case of face-to-face activities, with a phase of individual reflection and a phase of group discussion based on the participants' responses.

Activity 1

Try to answer the following questions:
* What is it like for me today to team up with my team members?
* What is my commitment to my team members?
* What do I ask of my team members?
* The three key points of our being a team are.
* What actions do we take to support team development?

Activity 2

Try to answer the following questions:
1. I feel like the team is blocking growth processes when....
2. I feel the team is moving toward a process of growth when...?
3. Team members should see the organizational system as...
4. I would give up my role in the team if ... *(answer at least two questions of your choice)*
5. I feel valued by the team when ...
6. I feel delegitimized when....
7. People, in order to work in teams, should...
8. I feel my irritation toward the team increasing when...
9. To improve my skills within the team, I think I need to...
    (answer at least two questions of your choice)
10. To facilitate learning in this meeting, it would be helpful to avoid...
    (mandatory if this exercise is done during a face-to-face meeting)

Activity 3

Try filling out the identity card (below) about your commitment within your association.

If the activity is done face-to-face, then share the tweets of all participants.

Volunteer ID card

Name:

Role:

About me	Vision *(values and ideals: I imagine...)*	What I do and how I do it	What needs do I address?
	Mission *(wishes: within... I would like to...)*		Who do I do it for?
Who inspires me		In a tweet	

2.8.4 Testing what we have learned

As a summary of what you've been thinking about in this module, we suggest watching some short videos:

- good teamwork and bad teamwork – YouTube
- Rowing and teamwork – YouTube

2.8.5 Learning outcomes

In this lesson you learned to:

- Know how to work in teams by managing your role in interactions with team members

- Recognize success factors and obstacles to team working

- Implement behaviors for team cooperation and interfunctionality

2.9 Digital Tools

2.9.1 Intro

Take a look at this interesting video about Event Promotion: 6 Advanced Tactics to Promote Events with Social Media.

2.9.2 Organizing the Event with Digital Tools

As a neighborhood facilitator, one of your key activities will be to organize meetings and events related to the type of organization you represent.

The evolution of information technology and online communication provides a wide range of tools that facilitate the management of these events. Let's assume that you have to organize an event: let's see what the steps are and, for each one, what kind of digital tools can be a useful support.

Get to know the users

Every neighborhood facilitator needs to know the people who use his or her association's services. How old are they? How many are there? What gender are they? What work do they do? What interests do they have? How much time do they have available? How much commitment do they want to provide? What other contacts do they have? Each facilitator knows, based on his or her own experience, what information about participating and/or sympathizing members of his or her organization he or she needs.
For this purpose, the most useful digital tools are those that allow you to create online forms or surveys, of whose answers the creator can always have the summary under control. Listed below are some of the free ones:

- **Google Forms** (freely available to anyone with a gmail account, offers a wide range of question types);

- **Doodle** (best known for organizing meetings (expressing preferences on dates and times), also allows you to create surveys);

- **Menti** (free version allows short surveys of max. 3-4 questions, to be done live, e.g. during a meeting).

Remember: these tools are very useful, but they have certain characteristics that may be limitations. You need to understand what kind of information you want to collect: sometimes traditional tools such as constantly reading local magazines, observing the habits of your target group in the field, interviewing some of them in person, and so on will be more effective.

Let's make it a habit

It may be useful or necessary to contact users of the organization on a regular basis. It may be necessary to monitor willingness to participate in activities, change of interests, to gather suggestions or for many other reasons.
In this case, you can design a questionnaire, even a very quick one that needs little "maintenance," to be submitted on a regular basis. It will be essential to focus in great detail on what information you want to collect. If users find it useless or boring, they will soon stop filling it out.
Many organizations meet at regular intervals. Today's tools make it possible to replace old flip charts with online boards, which can then be sent in digital format (images or pdfs) to all members, can be saved in a shared digital archive, take up no physical space, and have an infinite lifespan. These whiteboards work either with a computer and projector, in the case of in-person meetings, or with a shared screen, in the case of streaming meetings.

Here below are some of these tools:

- **Jamboard google** (available for free, with unlimited whiteboards, for anyone with a gmail account; each whiteboard has 20 slides on which you can write text, use post-it notes and some symbols);

- **Padlet** (available in the free version, requires registration only of the person who creates the whiteboard: other users can join via links; allows you to share many different types of files);

- **Miro** (only 3 whiteboards are available in the free version; allows you to share lots of different file types and integrate other tools);

- **Mural.co** (available in free and paid versions; English-language site);

- **Canvanizer** (available in free and paid versions; English-language site; templates designed specifically for enterprise and business design).

Let's share

The organization probably has a management team, or a team of closer associates, who will certainly need access to the same information. It is possible to make almost any type of document digital, and to save it on online storage systems: instead of saving files to your own computer, you save them to online folders, which are then accessible by multiple devices and multiple people who share access details (accounts and passwords) and have an internet connection.

What's more, saving files online ("in the cloud") avoids the risk of losing all the content in the event of damage to a computer.

Here are some of these tools:

- **Suite google** (available for free to anyone with a gmail account; includes many tools, from documents (like Word) to sheets (like Excel), from contacts to the gallery; has the advantage of allowing real-time editing of the same document even by multiple users);

- **Dropbox** (free version, it is an online storage space of 2 GB with access from up to 3 devices and the possibility to share files with other email addresses);

- **Box** (free version, it is a 10 GB online storage space with integration of Microsoft and Google tools, with possibility to share files with other email addresses);

- **WeTransfer** (free version, useful for sending large files without attaching them to emails: allows you to upload files online and send an email with a link to the recipient, who can download them within 7 days).

Choosing the channel

Based on the characteristics of the users and the type of messages to be sent, the organization will have to set up its communication and choose the most appropriate channel.

The main channels to exploit for online communication are three: newsletters, social media and messaging apps. With newsletters you can send emails to a very large number of recipients and you have the possibility to set up the layout with colors, images and graphics (unlike emails sent with traditional providers); with a social media profile, on the other hand, you publish content that will be visible to all users with whom you are connected; with messaging apps, lastly, you can send messages to the phone numbers of your contacts (in this case, broadcast lists or business features help to simplify the work of sending them).

The following is a list of some of these tools:

- Newsletter

    - Mailup
    - Mailchimp
    - phpList

- Social media

    - Facebook
    - Instagram
    - TikTok
    - LinkedIn

- Messaging apps

    o WhatsApp
    o Telegram

Which and why?

It is essential to choose the right channel for the communication you want to provide: an important communication, made through the wrong channel, will never reach the desired recipients. For this reason, it is necessary to know well your catchment area (very simply: different ages correspond to different channels), but also to be aware of which tools your organization needs: e-mails allow you to send a lot of text, a few images and links to other content; some social networks allow you to create pages, groups, events, while others only allow you to publish images and videos; messages are probably the most viewed, but you should not exaggerate with their length. As a rule, you choose the channels depending on the type of communication you want to do in the given case.

Each channel corresponds to a communication style: we cannot write the same amount of text on a newsletter and on a Facebook post, for example. We must remember that the attention threshold of social users is very low, and the tendency to scroll through the various posts reading only the very first words, or even looking at the image and moving on, requires a careful assessment of how to set the message in order to capture the attention of users.

In addition, the life of online content is different in every channel: newsletters are normal emails that remain in the recipient's inbox until he/she decides to delete them; posts on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, LinkedIn etc. remain visible on the home page for a very short time but are saved in the profile of those who publish them. In this sense, the risk of materials getting lost in the magnum sea of social media posts is very high.

How?

Making ourselves recognizable in the mass of information by which we are submerged when we are online: we must find a style that characterizes our organization. In this way, even the most distracted user, once he has got to know the organization, will notice its posts or emails, and will know that the organization is active even if he does not want to stop and check what has been published.
If your organization has a logo, it's a good idea to include it in all publications (preferably always in the same position). You can choose a color or color palette (preferably one that echoes the logo), a font, a symbol, etc., and always use them.

As already mentioned, it is also good practice to adapt the amount of text to the type of channel you use, and to the reading habits of your audience. If you use Instagram, for example, very few words per post will be more than enough; in the information about an event on Facebook, you'll have to expand more to avoid floods of questions; in a linked article, or written directly on a newsletter, you'll go in depth - probably knowing that those who read it will take the time they need to do so.

Promoting the event

Organizations working in neighborhoods very often have the primary purpose of promoting more or less large events. After the preparatory phases described above, here are some tips for preparing and carrying out an activity.

In the preliminary phase, it is very important to determine how to promote the event: choose the most appropriate channel(s) and plan the timing of the promotion (how many promotional activities do I plan and at what rate?).

The content should be different in the various phases: first, more immediate and appealing, to intrigue the public and encourage it to keep updated, then more detailed to provide all the necessary information to participants.

In the promotion phase you can also invent a hashtag, to be added to the organization's one (if you already have one) or to be kept constant before, during and after the event.

It may be useful, I would say necessary, to collect adhesions and/or gather information about the participants: for this purpose the tools already described in the section "Get to know the users" will be greatly useful.

Going live

We are in the heart of the event: everything is ready, the participants arrived and the activity kicks off.

What about those who couldn't join the group? There are ways to make people participate even if they are far away! If the type of activity is suitable for, you can set up a live streaming so that those who are not able to be there in person can follow the event on their computer or smartphone. A computer with video camera and microphone will be needed.

Also consider the option of recording the event to make it available at any later time, uploading it to YouTube or any other platform available to your organization

Here are some free software for streaming:

- Skype;
- Google meet;
- Zoom;
- Microsoft teams;
- Facebook (diretta);
- Cisco webex.

If the type of event is not suitable to be filmed, or if there are not the means to do so, it is still possible to document what is happening on the social channels of the organization: you can post photos, short videos, a few sentences of news, etc. Always remember to use the hashtag you have chosen.

Memories

After the event, try not to let it fall into oblivion, but rather create memories in the participants. Without exaggerating with words and/or images, you can simply schedule an email or a post on your social networks with a collage of photos from the event, or a short video feedback from some participants (10-15 seconds) or a screenshot of the online boards used, etc.
Respecting the criterion of brevity, a satisfaction questionnaire can be prepared using tools such as those described in the paragraph "Get to know the users" asking for an evaluation of the event. Simple open-ended questions about what they liked and didn't like and requesting suggestions for improvement are sufficient.
This will strengthen participants' memory and spirit of participation.

2.9.3 Stop and think

Take the time to read and reflect: The Manifesto of Non-Hostile Communication

2.9.4 Testing what we have learned

Check your new knowledge with test below.

TEST

If I create a doodle, it's because I want to

- Do a customized survey
- Collect preferences for the date and time of a meeting
- Promote an event

Jamboard is

- a poll module
- a streaming channel
- an online blackboard

Google documents can be edited simultaneously by multiple users, who see changes in real time

- True
- False

It is useful for sharing files

- Mailup
- Dropbox
- Google drive

A very popular social media among the youngest is

- TikTok
- Newsletter
- LinkedIn

To give information about the many ongoing projects of my association I will choose

- Screenshot
- Story on Instagram
- Newsletter

To collect subscriptions to an event I can use

- Padlet
- Google forms
- Skype

Google meet is a tool for video calls

- True
- False

If live streaming is not possible, there are no other ways to document an event in real time

- True
- False

Event organization history

- Promotion - direct
- Promotion - direct - reminder
- Market survey - direct - satisfaction analysis

If I create a doodle, it's because I want to

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- Collect preferences for the date and time of a meeting
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If live streaming is not possible, there are no other ways to document an event in real time

- True
- False

Event organization history

- Promotion - direct
- Promotion - direct - reminder
- Market survey - direct - satisfaction analysis

2.9.5 Testing what we have learned

In this lesson you learned to:

- Structure the activities of your organization by following a rational and orderly process

- Select one or more digital tools appropriate to the phase of activity you are carrying out

- Adopt a style of communication on the web that follows respectful and civil principles

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