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A STEM-Driven Vocational Curriculum for Future Careers

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About

The Digital Response to Unemployment Problems in Western Balkans (DRUPWB) project addresses the pervasive issues of unemployment and skill mismatches in the Western Balkans through an innovative approach to vocational education and training (VET). In modern economies, continuous economic restructuring, innovation, and globalization have led to significant transformations in labor markets, creating skill gaps that are particularly pronounced in the transition economies of the Western Balkans. These regions face unique challenges, including the rapid obsolescence of traditional skills, insufficient on-the-job training opportunities, and low levels of adult and lifelong learning education.

DRUPWB aims to tackle these challenges by developing a comprehensive, four-modular non-formal educational curriculum focused on intellectual services, including STEM, soft skills, and diverse teleworking job market skills. This curriculum will be designed to be adaptable to various learning environments, including schools, universities, and online platforms. The project also envisions the creation of an innovative digital hub platform to provide unemployed and NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) young and adult users with access to e-learning educational programs and links to potential employers.

The goals of the DRUPWB project are multifaceted, targeting both immediate and long-term improvements in the vocational education sector and employment outcomes for the Western Balkans. The specific goals include:

1. **Developing a Non-Formal Educational Curriculum:** The project will explore and develop a four-modular non-formal educational curriculum in vocational education, focusing on employment in intellectual services, including STEM, soft skills, and various teleworking job market skills. This curriculum will be disseminated through the day-to-day activities of partner VET providers in Lithuania, Germany, Croatia, Montenegro, Albania, and Bosnia and Herzegovina.
2. **Creating a Digital Hub Platform:** An innovative digital hub platform will be developed to serve unemployed and NEET young and adult VET users. This platform will provide e-learning opportunities based on the newly developed curriculum and offer links to potential future employers and employment opportunities.
3. **Enhancing Knowledge and Skills:** The project aims to improve the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of at least 540 unemployed and NEET young and adult people from the involved partner countries. The focus areas include entrepreneurship, self-employment, programming, and virtual assistant work.
4. **Strengthening VET Providers:** The capacities of partner VET providers and their associated partners will be strengthened through the use of the new curriculum. This will be achieved through six seven-day local training sessions for 60 VET trainers and educators and an international study visit for 30 VET trainers and educators.
5. **Supporting Inclusion in the Labor Market:** The project will enhance the capabilities of VET providers in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro to develop and implement tailor-made programs for including individuals with low and unfavorable formal qualification structures in the labor market. This will involve the participation of key staff members and experts in the development and piloting of new curriculums and online educational opportunities.

By achieving these goals, the DRUPWB project aims to address the structural imbalances in the labor market, improve the alignment of VET provisions with local, regional, and national development strategies, and ultimately contribute to the economic and social development of the Western Balkans.

Introduction

Why This Curriculum?

As we are witnessing rapid technological advancements and shifting economic models, it is evident that the need for adaptive and forward-thinking education has never been more critical. The Erasmus+ curriculum is designed to address these challenges by providing learners with the skills and knowledge required to thrive in the modern workforce. This curriculum is crafted to bridge the gap between traditional education and the evolving demands of today's job market, ensuring that participants are well-equipped to navigate and excel in their professional journeys.

For Whom Is This Curriculum Designed?

This curriculum is tailored for a diverse group of learners, including:

- **NEET Individuals:** Those who are Not in Education, Employment, or Training, particularly young adults aged 18-29, who face significant barriers to entering the workforce.
- **Adult Learners:** Individuals seeking to upgrade their skills, change careers, or enhance their employability in a competitive job market.
- **Aspiring Entrepreneurs:** Those interested in starting their own businesses or freelancing careers, looking for practical guidance and skills development.
- **Vocational Education and Training (VET) Students:** Learners enrolled in VET programs who require both theoretical knowledge and practical experience to succeed in their chosen fields.

Structure of the Curriculum

The curriculum is structured into 4 comprehensive parts, each presenting curriculum on its own, and focusing on a specific area of vocational education and training. These curriculums blend theoretical knowledge with practical application, ensuring a holistic learning experience. The overall document is developed in format of a set of curriculums, each dedicated to the specific field, and each presented in a way that it can be used as a separate document.

1. Virtual Assistance Program

This curriculum provides comprehensive training on the roles and responsibilities of a virtual assistant, focusing on essential skills such as client management, data security, and effective collaboration within virtual teams. Participants will learn how to brand and market their services, establish a home-based business, and utilize various digital tools to enhance productivity. By the end of the program, learners will be equipped to manage tasks remotely and build successful careers as virtual assistants.

2. Self-Employment Program

Designed for aspiring freelancers, this curriculum covers the fundamentals of starting and managing a freelance career. It includes detailed guidance on different freelancing models, client acquisition strategies, and effective management practices. Participants will also gain insights into data security, branding, marketing, and pricing their services competitively. The program aims to prepare learners to navigate the freelancing landscape confidently and achieve success as independent professionals.

3. No-Code Programming Program

This curriculum introduces learners to the world of no-code development, enabling them to create web and mobile applications without traditional coding skills. The curriculum covers various no-code tools and platforms, focusing on automating workflows and managing data efficiently. Participants will engage in hands-on projects to develop practical applications, making technology accessible to a broader audience. By the end of the module, learners will have the skills to build digital solutions and drive innovation in their fields.

4. Starting and Running a Small Business Program

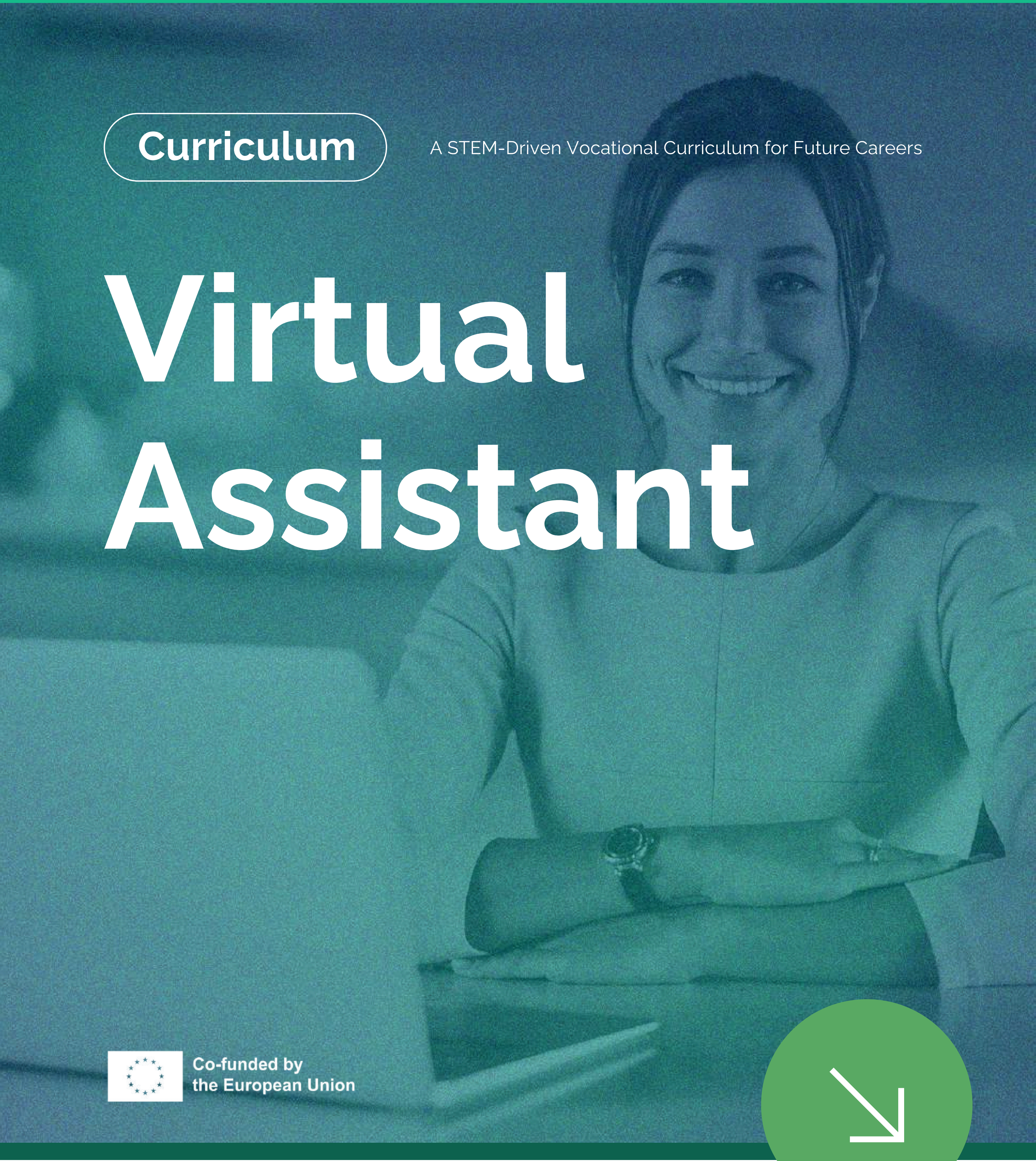
This comprehensive curriculum offers in-depth guidance on launching and managing a small business. It covers essential topics such as business planning, market analysis, financial management, and marketing strategies. Participants will also learn about client management and regulatory compliance, ensuring they are well-prepared to handle the challenges of entrepreneurship. The program aims to equip aspiring entrepreneurs with the knowledge and skills needed to establish and grow successful small businesses.

Educational Approach

The material incorporates principles of both andragogy (adult learning) and pedagogy (youth learning), ensuring that the educational needs of all participants are met. This blended approach includes:

- **Flexible Learning Paths:** Accommodating the varying needs of both youth and adult learners through adaptable learning schedules and methodologies.
- **Hands-On Projects:** Providing practical, real-world applications to reinforce theoretical concepts and maintain learner engagement.
- **Interactive Learning:** Utilizing modern educational technologies and interactive methods to foster an engaging and inclusive learning environment.

By integrating these elements, the curriculum aims to create a dynamic and supportive educational experience that empowers learners to achieve their full potential and succeed in their professional endeavors.



Curriculum

A STEM-Driven Vocational Curriculum for Future Careers

Virtual Assistant

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Introduction

A virtual assistant is a freelance administrator, designer, organizer, desktop publisher, researcher, editor, typist, secretary, coordinator and all other role players in an office environment that an employer needs to do.

The training program offers comprehensive guidance on working as a virtual assistant (VA), delineating their roles and responsibilities while drawing comparisons with those of personal assistants. It delves into the various types of virtual assistants, elucidating their essential skills and requisite tools for success in this domain. Whether you're pondering how to carve out a niche, secure employment, or establish a thriving home-based business, this course provides detailed insights and actionable steps. It also contrasts different VA positions and outlines the prerequisites for each.

Furthermore, the course addresses client management and effective collaboration within virtual teams. It underscores crucial data security measures and imparts the knowledge and techniques vital for excelling in virtual support, whether embarking on a new career path or enhancing existing skills. Additionally, it explores the challenges commonly faced by virtual teams and offers strategies for overcoming them.

Moreover, for those contemplating the establishment of their own virtual assistance business, the course offers comprehensive guidance on effective branding, marketing, and pricing strategies. It meticulously outlines the advantages and disadvantages of launching a VA business and provides practical advice on acquiring and serving clients.

The Covid-19 Pandemic made many people aware of the possibilities of working from home and collaborating online, driving the global need for remote support and the VAs capable of supplying it. Training will help you to learn how to provide remote support from experienced professionals as a professional virtual assistant.

Educational Approach of the Curriculum

The Virtual Assistant curriculum is designed to serve a diverse group of learners, including both youth and adults, with a particular focus on NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) youngsters. NEET individuals are typically aged between 18 and 29 and face unique challenges, such as social and economic barriers, that prevent them from participating in traditional educational or employment opportunities. By targeting this group, the curriculum aims to provide them with practical skills and knowledge that can enhance their employability and integration into the workforce.

The program is structured to accommodate the varying needs of youth and adult learners, ensuring that the content is accessible, engaging, and relevant to all participants.

Incorporating the principles of andragogy—adult learning theory—alongside strategies effective for youth education is crucial for the success of this program. Andragogy emphasizes self-directed learning, leveraging the experiences and motivations of adult learners, and fostering a practical, problem-solving approach to education. For NEET youngsters and other youth, the curriculum also incorporates elements of pedagogy that focus on guided learning, mentorship, and motivational support. Engaging NEET learners requires an understanding of their specific contexts and challenges, thus the curriculum includes flexible learning paths, hands-on projects, and real-world applications to maintain their interest and encourage active participation.

By blending these approaches, the curriculum aims to create an inclusive learning environment that supports the development of both youth and adult learners, equipping them with the skills necessary for a successful career as a virtual assistant.

Coined by German educator Alexander Kapp in 1833 and later adopted by philosopher Johann Friedrich Herbart, the term "andragogy" experienced a resurgence in Europe post-World War I. **Its prominence grew internationally, notably in France, England, Switzerland, Yugoslavia, and Canada. The United States saw its widespread adoption in the late 1960s, influenced by adult education pioneers Edward Lindeman and Malcolm Knowles. Knowles delineated six principles of VET students learning, emphasizing:**

1. Internal motivation and self-direction
2. Integration of life experiences into learning
3. Goal orientation
4. Relevance of learning to life
5. Practical application
6. Respect for VET learners.

To ensure the effective adoption of program content by VET participants, the learning and teaching process should prioritize practical knowledge and skills. This approach facilitates easier comprehension and application of the curriculum.

The curriculum outlined here emphasizes interactive learning and teaching methods within the VET education framework, leveraging available ICT technologies. However, it's crucial to recognize that trainers will be working with adults, including individuals of varying ages and levels of prior knowledge, particularly in ICT skills. Therefore, the curriculum is designed to offer flexibility, with options for live classes tailored to individual students' needs, as well as online learning modules accessible online.

When teaching VET students, it's important to:

- Establish clear training and pedagogical objectives.
- Tap into participants' professional expertise; for instance, inquire about their application of virtual assistance curriculum in their work.
- Acknowledge and leverage participants' existing knowledge and experience, assessing it through oral or multiple-choice questions.
- Foster participant interaction, encouraging the exchange of professional insights and inviting discussion on familiar topics.
- Emphasize practical learning experiences, tailoring examples, case studies, and simulations to real-work contexts.
- Recognize the diversity within the participant group, accommodating varying levels of skill and experience.
- Assess the participants' prior knowledge, considering factors such as age and work experience.
- Emphasize the importance of group dynamics, recognizing that education extends beyond mere information transfer. Respect the VET participants' autonomy and avoid patronizing attitudes.
- Be mindful of any limitations within the group dynamics and involve virtual assitants to be in the training process.
- Clarify assessment techniques upfront, framing them as tools to gauge learning rather than as tests.
- Acknowledge that many participants may have work-centric life paths, and tailor pedagogical methods accordingly to avoid evoking negative school-related memories.

The curriculum is structured into *four (4) modules*, comprising a blend of guided theoretical classes, hands-on work-based learning, and independent study by participants

This curriculum introduces Blended learning “which is part of the ongoing convergence of two archetypal learning environments” (Bonk & Graham, 2006, p. 2). However, the influences of the two types of delivery are not equal, and how to blend looks different if you are starting from an in-person school to how it looks if you are coming from a distance education background.

Traditional face-to-face, in-person, classroom-based teaching and learning has been used for centuries as the ubiquitous delivery method. Distance and distributed teaching and learning opportunities are much newer, particularly in reference to technology-enabled learning. When online education became available, it was used first in distance education, with students studying fully online. Notions of blending classroom-based learning and online or distance education came later.

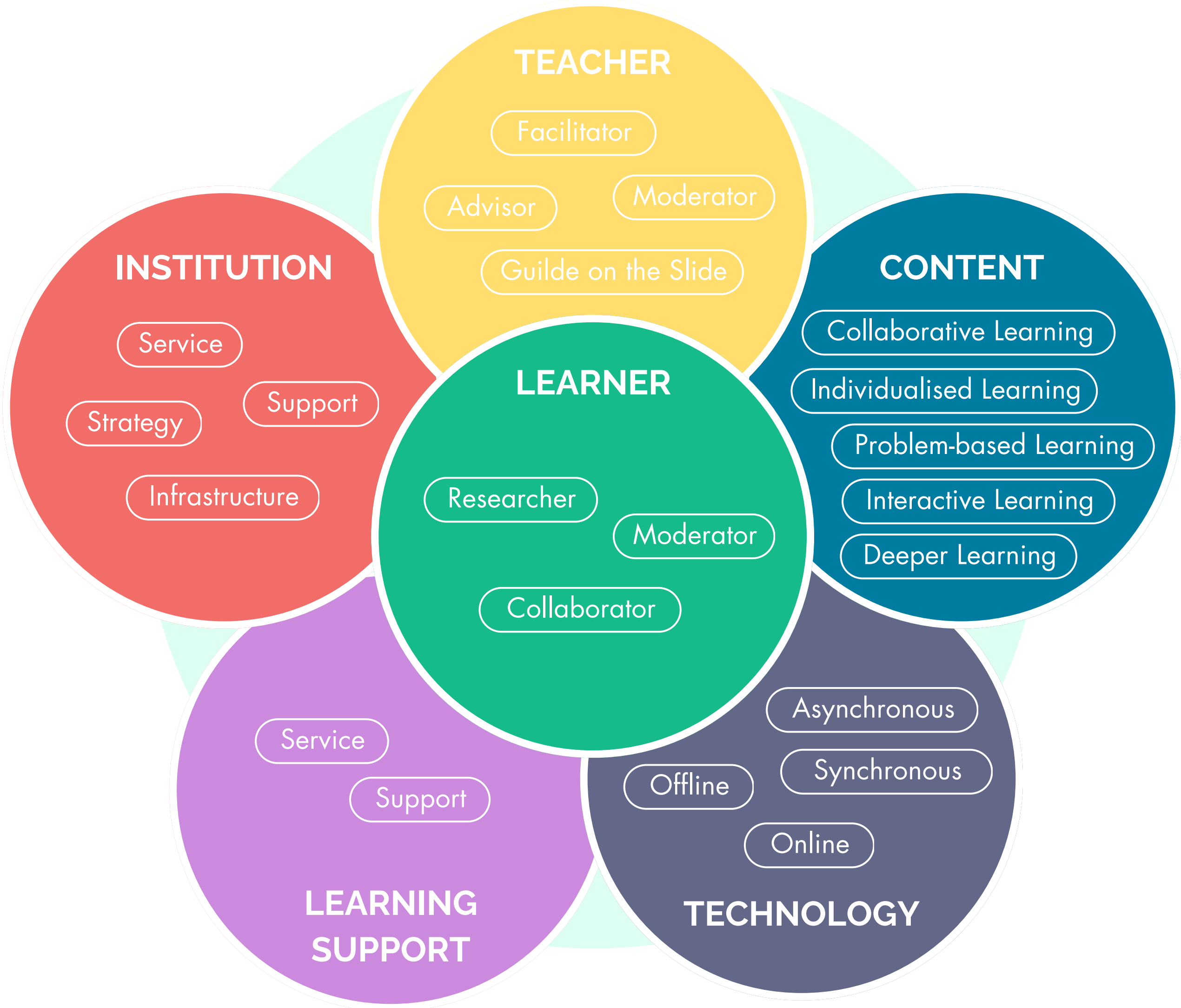

Figure 1.1. The CABLS framework

Resource - https://openbooks.col.org/blendedlearning/chapter/chapter-2-theories-supporting-blended-learning/
The CABLS framework is designed to "facilitate a deeper, more accurate understanding of the dynamic and adaptive nature of blended learning" (Wang et al., 2015, p. 390).

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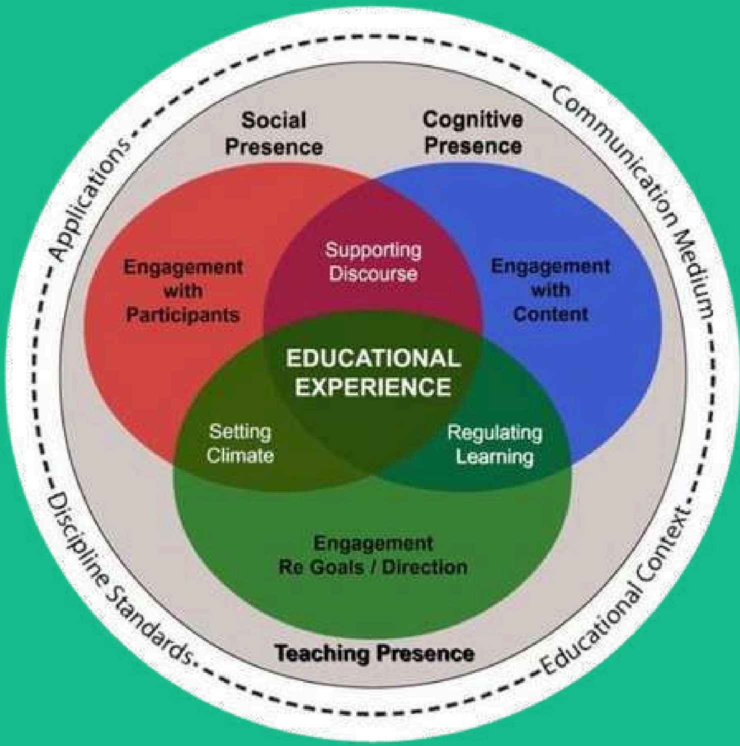


Figure 1.2. The Community of Inquiry model, the same resourse as above

Another type of blend adds technology in the classroom. Often called technology-enabled learning, adding technology to in-person teaching and learning may foster engagement and improve learning outcomes. The SAMR model, is an approach for the progressive implementation of new technology.

SAMR MODEL

Substitution
Tech acts as a tool substitute with no functional change

Augmentation
Tech acts as a tool substitute with functional improvement

Modification
Tech allows for significant task redesign

Redefinition
Tech allows for the creation of new tasks previously inconceivable

Figure 1.3 SAMR model, the same as above

The program spans a total duration of 66 hours, distributed as follows:

Requirements for enrollment in the program include:

- Previous qualification at level 1, attained upon completion of basic education (which correspondents to finished primary school).
- Minimum age of 18 years.

The virtual assistant job is ideal for you if:

- You excel in multitasking and managing various tasks efficiently.
- You possess strong organizational skills and attention to detail.
- You are proficient in communication, both written and verbal.
- You are tech-savvy and adaptable to using different digital tools and platforms.
- You enjoy providing support and assistance to individuals or organizations.
- You thrive in a remote working environment and can work independently with minimal supervision.
- You are dedicated to delivering high-quality work and meeting deadlines consistently.
- You are proactive and resourceful in problem-solving situations.
- You are committed to continuous learning and improving your skills.

Guided learning and teaching sessions	Work-based learning activities	Independent study by participants
32 hours	26 hours	8 hours

Material conditions necessary for executing the program for virtual assistants include:

- **Theoretical Teaching:**

1. Projector for visual presentations
2. Teacher's computer with Internet access for accessing online resources and materials

- **Practical Teaching:**

Digital in simulation for hands-on training and practice

Legal framework

- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR): The GDPR governs the protection of personal data within the EU. Virtual assistants often process personal data, so compliance with GDPR requirements regarding data collection, storage, and processing is essential.
- E-Commerce Directive: This directive establishes legal guidelines for online service providers, which may include virtual assistant platforms. It covers issues such as electronic contracts, liability of intermediaries, and online advertising.
- Consumer Rights Directive: This directive protects consumers' rights when purchasing goods and services online. It includes provisions related to transparency, information requirements, and the right to withdraw from distance contracts, which may apply to transactions involving virtual assistants.
- Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD): This directive regulates audiovisual media services, including on-demand services and video-sharing platforms. Virtual assistants that provide access to audiovisual content may need to comply with certain AVMSD requirements.
- Product Liability Directive: This directive establishes liability rules for defective products within the EU. While it primarily applies to physical products, it may also have implications for virtual assistants if they cause harm or damage due to defects in their design or functionality.
- Directive on Copyright in the Digital Single Market: This directive aims to modernize EU copyright rules for the digital age. Virtual assistants that interact with copyrighted content may need to comply with provisions related to copyright licensing, content filtering, and user-generated content.

This curriculum is composed of for (4) modules:

MODULE 1:
Introduction to Virtual Assistance

MODULE 2:
Essential Skills for Virtual Assistants

MODULE 3:
Tools and Technologies for Virtual Assistance

MODULE 4:
Business Development and Client Management

Introduction to Virtual Assistance

This module serves as an introduction to the field of virtual assistance, covering its definition, historical context, and evolution. Participants will gain a comprehensive understanding of the role of virtual assistants in various industries and their importance in modern workplaces.

- **Duration:** 12 hours
- **Theoretical Teaching:** 8 hours
- **Practical Teaching:** 4 hours

Literature in English Language:

- "Virtual Freedom: How to Work with Virtual Staff to Buy More Time, Become More Productive, and Build Your Dream Business" by Chris Ducker
- "The Virtual Assistant Solution: Come up for Air, Offload the Work You Hate, and Focus on What You Do Best" by Michael Hyatt
- "The 4-Hour Workweek: Escape 9-5, Live Anywhere, and Join the New Rich" by Timothy Ferriss
- "The Ultimate Guide to Virtual Assistants: Everything You Need to Know about Sourcing, Hiring, and Working with Virtual Staff" by Gina Horkey
- "Virtual Assistant Assistant: The Ultimate Guide to Finding, Hiring, and Working with Virtual Assistants" by Nick Loper

Specific Teaching Aids:

- Presentation slides summarizing key concepts, definitions, and historical background of virtual assistance
- Case studies and real-world examples showcasing successful virtual assistance practices and trends
- Interactive exercises and group activities to facilitate discussions on the role of virtual assistants and their importance in modern workplaces
- Multimedia resources such as videos, podcasts, and online articles to supplement theoretical teachings and engage participants
- Guest speakers from the virtual assistance industry to share insights, experiences, and best practices
- Printed handouts or digital materials containing relevant information, industry statistics, and additional resources for further reading

Objectives:

- Define the concept of virtual assistance and its significance in contemporary work environments.
- Trace the historical development and evolution of virtual assistant roles.
- Identify current trends and opportunities within the virtual assistance industry.
- Understand the role of virtual assistants across different professional settings.
- Recognize the importance of effective communication and collaboration skills in virtual work environments.

Topics Covered:

- Definition and Scope of Virtual Assistance
- Historical Development and Evolution of Virtual Assistant Roles
- Current Trends and Opportunities in the Virtual Assistance Industry
- Role of Virtual Assistants in Different Professional Settings
- Importance of Effective Communication and Collaboration in Virtual Work Environments

Learning Activities:

- Lectures and presentations
- Case studies and real-world examples
- Group discussions and interactive exercises
- Guest speakers from the virtual assistance industry

Session 1

Introduction and getting to know each other

Welcome and orientation - Provide an overview of the course and logistics, including the schedule, expectations, and guidelines for learning.

Ice breaker and team building activities

Steps

Begin with a warm welcome to all participants, Introduce yourself and briefly mention your background and role, Encourage participants to feel free to ask questions and interact throughout the session, Present a brief overview of the course, including its objectives and key learning outcomes, Explain the course schedule, including the duration of each module and break times, Provide details about the platform being used (e.g., Zoom, Microsoft Teams) and how to access course materials, Outline expectations for participation, attendance, and engagement, Ice breaking - Two Truths and a Lie, Team building – Common ground

Duration

40 min

Session 2

Overview of virtual assistance

Lecture (interactive presentation, e.g. slides, videos, infographics), summarizing, reflection, case studies, Q and A.

Steps

intoduction of the topic, outline what will be covered in this segment: definition, scope, and relevance of virtual assistance, interactive presentations slides and infographics (Sl 1 - Definition and scope of virtual assistance, Sl 2 - Types of Virtual Assistants, Sl 3 - Tools and Technologies, Sl 4 – Industries and Sectors), Summartizing and Reflection, Present one or two brief case studies of successful virtual assistants, Open the floor for questions from participants, Conclusion.

Duration

20 min

Session 3

Historical development and evolution

Lecture (chronological framework), summarizing, reflection, case studies

Steps

Briefly outline what will be covered in this segment: the history, development, and evolution of virtual assistance, Chronological Framework lecture, In slides: Birth of Virtual Assistance, Growth and Diversification, Discuss the current state of the virtual assistance industry, Introduce emerging trends such as AI-driven virtual assistants and automation, Summarize the key points, Ask participants to reflect on the historical development and its impact on the current state, Present one or two brief case studies showcasing the evolution of virtual assistance (case study 1 - A traditional secretary transitioning to a virtual assistant role, cs 2 - A modern virtual assistant leveraging AI tools to enhance productivity, Discuss how these individuals adapted to changes in the industry and the impact on their careers, Q&A, Conclusion

Duration

40 min

Session 4

Importance in modern workplaces

Presentation (the role and significance of virtual assistance in modern workplaces), Case studies (Showcase innovative uses of virtual assistance in different industries and functional areas.), group discussions, concept mapping

Steps

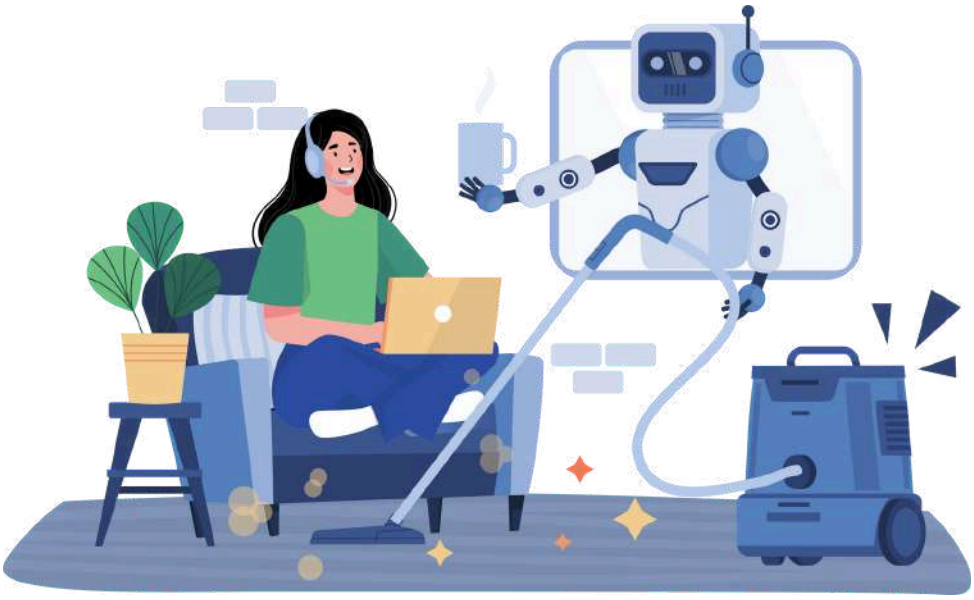
Briefly outline what will be covered in this segment: the role and significance of virtual assistance in modern workplaces, Sl 1 - Overview of Virtual Assistance (Explain why virtual assistants are increasingly important in the modern workplace), Sl 2 - Benefits of Virtual Assistance (Discuss key benefits such as cost savings, increased efficiency, and flexibility, se infographics to illustrate benefits), Sl 3 - Roles and Responsibilities Outline the various roles virtual assistants can play in different industries (e.g., administrative, technical, creative support), sl 4 - Trends and Innovations (Discuss current trends in virtual assistance, such as AI integration, remote work culture, and the gig economy, Present two to three case studies showcasing innovative uses of virtual assistance - A virtual assistant supporting a tech startup, A virtual assistant offering bookkeeping services, A virtual assistant providing social media management, Group discussion on topics/questions "How can virtual assistants improve productivity in small businesses?" or "What are the challenges and solutions for integrating virtual assistants into large corporations?", group sharings, Concept mapping - Provide a central theme (e.g., "Importance of Virtual Assistance in Modern Workplaces") and ask participants to brainstorm related concepts and ideas, Use a whiteboard or digital tool, Discuss the completed concept map, highlighting key points and connections, Q&A, Conclusions

Duration

20 min

Session 1

Understanding the responsibilities and tasks of virtual assistants



Lecture (presentation), summarizing, group discussion, reflection, Q and A

Steps

Briefly outline what will be covered in this segment: the various responsibilities and tasks of virtual assistants, Sl 1 - Overview of Virtual Assistant Responsibilities, Sl 2 - Administrative Tasks, Sl 3 - Explain technical support tasks (e.g., IT support, website maintenance), Sl 4 - Discuss creative tasks (e.g., content creation, graphic design, social media management), showcase examples, Introduce specialized tasks (e.g., bookkeeping, legal assistance, customer service), Present an overview of essential tools and software used by virtual assistants, Include screenshots and brief demos of popular tools (e.g., Trello, Slack, Canva), Share brief case studies of virtual assistants successfully handling a variety of tasks, Summarize the key points covered in the lecture, group discussion Example questions: "How can virtual assistants effectively manage multiple clients?" or "What strategies can virtual assistants use to prioritize tasks?", Example scenarios: Handling a sudden influx of emails, creating a social media campaign for a client, troubleshooting a technical issue, group sharing, refelction, Q&A, reflection

Duration

70 min

Session 2

Comparison with traditional personal assistants

Lecture (presentation), summarizing, work in groups and presentaion in plenary, reflection

Steps

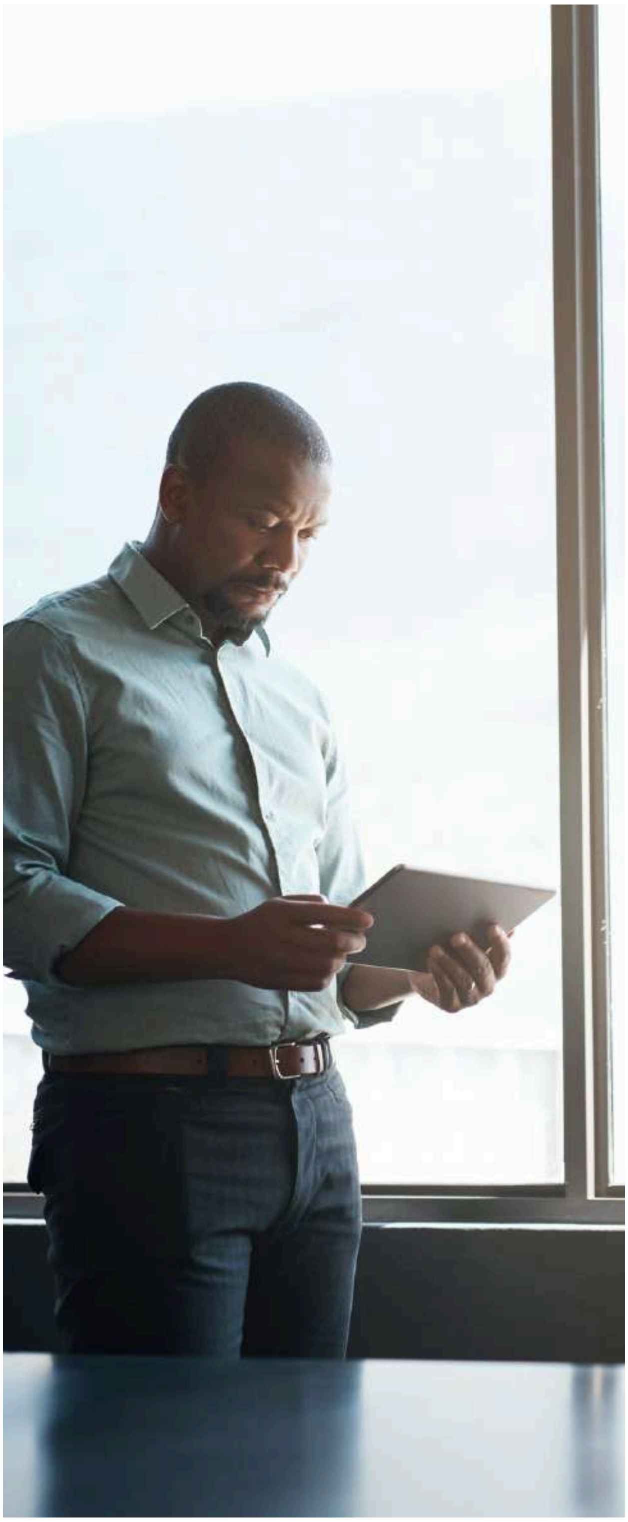
Briefly outline what will be covered in this segment: the comparison between virtual assistants and traditional personal assistants, Sl 1 - Overview of Personal Assistance Roles, Define both virtual assistants and traditional personal assistants, Sl 2 - Key Differences in Work Environment, Compare the work environments: remote/virtual vs. in-office, Sl 3- Compare the types of tasks typically handled by virtual assistants and traditional personal assistants, use illustrations, Sl 4 - Highlight the tools and technologies used by virtual assistants (e.g., cloud-based tools, communication platforms), Compare with tools used by traditional personal assistants (e.g., physical files, in-office software), Sl 5 - Compare the cost implications of hiring virtual assistants vs. traditional personal assistants, Present brief case studies showing successful implementations of both virtual and traditional personal assistants, Assign each group a task to create a comparison chart or list highlighting the differences and similarities between virtual assistants and traditional personal assistants, Group presentation, discussion, Prompt reflection questions: "What advantages do you see in the virtual assistant model?" or "How might traditional personal assistants benefit from adopting virtual tools and practices?", Conclusion

Duration

50 min

Session 1

Current trends shaping the virtual assistance industry



Lecture (presentation), note taking and summarizing, socratic method (to explore and analyze complex ideas, concepts, and arguments in depth), discussion

Steps

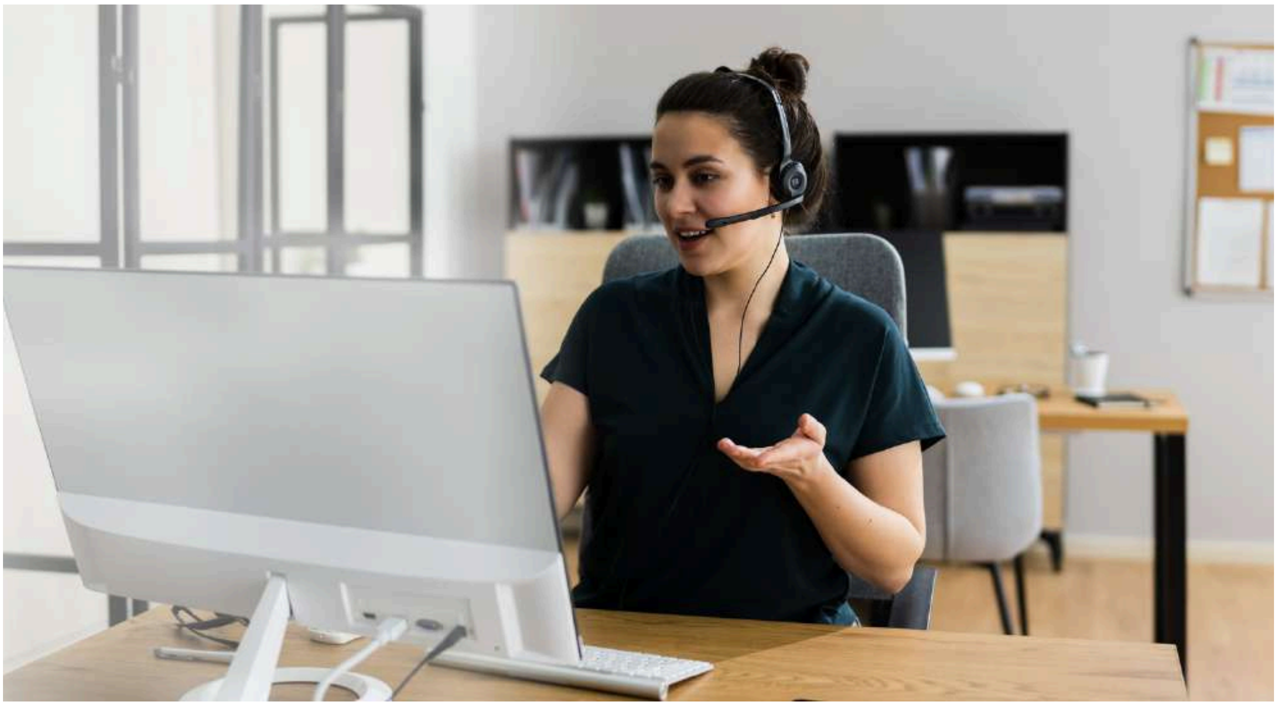
Briefly outline what will be covered in this segment: current trends in the virtual assistance industry, Sl 1- Explain its relevance and growth in the modern workplace, Sl 2- Trend 1 - Increased Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), Sl 3 - Trend 2 - Specialization and Niche Services, Highlight the benefits of specialization for both clients and virtual assistants, Sl 4 - Trend 3 - Globalization and Remote Work, Sl 5 - Trend 4 - Gig Economy and Freelance Platforms, Sl 6 - Trend 5 - Continuous Learning and Upskilling, Sl 7 - Trend 6 - Data Security and Privacy Concerns, Ask participants to take notes during the lecture on key points and trends, Invite a few participants to share their summaries with the group, Explain the Socratic method and its purpose in exploring and analyzing complex ideas, Example questions: "How do you think AI will change the role of virtual assistants in the next five years?" or "What are the potential challenges and benefits of specialization for virtual assistants?", group discussion, sharing and conclusion

Duration

80 min

Session 2

Opportunities for virtual assistants in various sectors



Lecture (presentation), video lectures, podcasts, highlighting, reflection

Steps

Provide participants with access to curated resources such as video lectures and podcasts covering opportunities for virtual assistants in different sectors, Briefly introduce the purpose of the self-paced learning module and the importance of exploring opportunities in various sectors, Include interviews with industry experts, success stories of virtual assistants, and discussions on emerging trends and opportunities, Provide prompts or guiding questions to help participants focus on essential aspects such as the skills required, challenges faced, and growth potential in each sector,

Provide reflection questions to guide participants in thinking critically about the opportunities available for virtual assistants in different sectors, Encourage participants to discuss any common themes or trends they observed across different sectors and to exchange ideas on how virtual assistants can leverage these opportunities effectively, conclusion

Duration

40 min

Session 1

Importance of effective communication in virtual teams

Lecture (presentation with slides, videos, infographics), case studies discussion, summarizing, reflection

Steps

Slide 1- Define effective communication and its importance in virtual teams, Explain the challenges unique to virtual communication (e.g., lack of non-verbal cues, time zone differences), Sl 2- Strategies for Effective Communication (e.g., clear and concise messaging, active listening, use of collaboration tools), Use examples and case studies to illustrate each strategy, Sl 3- Introduce communication tools and technologies commonly used in virtual teams (e.g., video conferencing, project management software, instant messaging), Sl 4 - Provide tips for building trust and fostering strong relationships among team members, Sl 5 - Address common communication challenges in virtual teams (e.g., misinterpretation, information overload), Present one or two case studies depicting real-world scenarios where effective communication was crucial for the success of virtual teams, Divide participants into small groups to discuss the case studies and identify key communication strategies employed, summarizing, reflection, sharing, conclusion

Duration

60 min

Session 2

Strategies for successful virtual communication

Lecture (presentation), video lectures, podcasts, highlighting, socratic method, reflection

Steps

Slide 1 - Present practical strategies for effective virtual communication (e.g., clarity, active listening, feedback), Sl 2 - Highlight the use of communication tools such as video conferencing, instant messaging, and collaboration platforms, Sl 3- Address common communication barriers in virtual settings (e.g., language barriers, cultural differences), provide participants with curated video resources to cover topics such as effective remote meetings, virtual collaboration, and managing virtual team dynamics, Use the Socratic method to engage participants in critical thinking and discussion, reflection

Duration

60 min

Session 1

Hands-on exercises to foster collaboration among participants

Case studies, hands-on-actiities in the groups, presentaions, Q and A, simulations, discussions, reflection

Steps

Present one or two case studies depicting scenarios where successful collaboration led to positive outcomes, Encourage participants to analyze the case studies and identify key elements of effective collaboration, Hands-on-activities: Devide group into 4 and give different tasks, for example: Brainstorming session to generate innovative solutions to a given problem, Role-playing exercise simulating a collaborative project meeting, Design challenge where groups collaborate to create a solution or prototype, Team-building game or challenge that requires cooperation and communication, presentations, discussions, reflection

Duration

100 min

Session 2

Group activities to simulate virtual teamwork situations

Case studies, hands-on-actiities in the groups, presentaions, Q and A, simulations, discussions, reflection

Steps

Briefly outline the activities planned for the session, Divide participants into small groups, ensuring diverse representation in each group, Assign each group a virtual teamwork scenario to simulate using digital tools and technology, Provide instructions and guidelines for completing the simulation, including roles and responsibilities within the team, e.g. Collaborating on a project using a shared online workspace (e.g., Google Docs, Trello), Conducting a virtual brainstorming session to solve a problem or generate ideas, Participating in a virtual team meeting to discuss project progress and allocate tasks, Managing a virtual project using project management software (e.g., Asana, Trello, etc.), Allow groups to apply digital tools and technology to facilitate their virtual teamwork simulation, facilitate a brief discussion to highlight key learnings and insights from the experience, Prompt reflection questions such as: "What did you learn about virtual teamwork and collaboration from today's simulations?" or "How can you apply the skills and strategies developed today in your own virtual team settings?", Conclusion

Duration

140 min

Module 1

Introduction to Virtual Assistance

Theoretical Teaching (8 hours):

Methodology: Theoretical teaching sessions will be conducted through interactive lectures, presentations, and multimedia resources. Participants will engage in discussions, case studies, and Q&A sessions to deepen their understanding of virtual assistance concepts.

- Topics Covered: Definition and scope of virtual assistance, historical development, current trends, role in different industries, and the importance of effective communication and collaboration in virtual work environments.

Practical Teaching (4 hours):

Methodology: Practical teaching sessions will involve hands-on activities, role-playing exercises, and simulations to reinforce theoretical concepts learned. Participants will have the opportunity to practice essential skills and techniques under the guidance of instructors.

- Activities: Role-playing scenarios, task prioritization exercises, time management simulations, and collaborative projects will be utilized to enhance practical skills.
- Integration: Practical sessions will be integrated with theoretical content to provide a comprehensive learning experience, allowing participants to apply theoretical knowledge in practical scenarios.

Learning Outcomes:

- By combining theoretical insights with practical applications, Module 1 aims to equip participants with a solid foundation in virtual assistance, preparing them for further modules and real-world challenges in the field.
- Define virtual assistance and its significance in modern business operations.
- Identify various tasks and responsibilities typically undertaken by virtual assistants.
- Explain the benefits and challenges associated with virtual assistance.
- Describe the diverse roles virtual assistants can play in different industries and organizations.
- Analyze the skills and qualities necessary to excel as a virtual assistant.
- Explore current trends in the virtual assistance industry, including technological advancements and emerging market opportunities.
- Identify potential career paths and specialization areas within the virtual assistance field.
- Demonstrate understanding of communication skills for remote collaboration, including written, verbal, and non-verbal communication.

Essential Skills for Virtual Assistants

This module focuses on developing the fundamental skills and competencies required for success as a virtual assistant. Participants will learn practical techniques for communication, organization, time management, and problem-solving, essential for thriving in a virtual work environment.

- **Duration:** 16 hours
- **Theoretical Teaching:** 8 hours
- **Practical Teaching:** 8 hours
- **Independent study by participants:** 8 hours

Module 2 focuses on developing essential skills and competencies vital for success as a virtual assistant. It comprises both theoretical and practical components to ensure participants gain a comprehensive understanding and practical experience in applying these skills effectively.

Literature in English Language:

- "Getting Things Done: The Art of Stress-Free Productivity" by David Allen
- "Eat That Frog!: 21 Great Ways to Stop Procrastinating and Get More Done in Less Time" by Brian Tracy
- "Deep Work: Rules for Focused Success in a Distracted World" by Cal Newport
- "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change" by Stephen R. Covey
- "Atomic Habits: An Easy & Proven Way to Build Good Habits & Break Bad Ones" by James Clear

Specific Teaching Aids:

- Time management matrix templates to help participants prioritize tasks effectively (based on Stephen Covey's Time Management Matrix)
- Task management tools and software demonstrations (e.g., Asana, Trello) to familiarize participants with practical applications
- Role-playing exercises simulating time-sensitive scenarios to practice time management and prioritization techniques
- Organizational tools and techniques workshops (e.g., mind mapping, to-do lists, calendar scheduling) for hands-on practice
- Problem-solving case studies and group discussions to develop critical thinking skills and decision-making abilities
- Stress management techniques and relaxation exercises to promote well-being and productivity
- Self-assessment quizzes or surveys to identify personal strengths and areas for improvement in time management and organizational skills

Objectives:

- Develop effective communication strategies for virtual assistants, including written and verbal communication.
- Implement time management techniques to prioritize tasks and optimize productivity.
- Utilize organizational skills and task management systems to efficiently manage workload.
- Apply problem-solving and decision-making techniques to resolve challenges encountered in virtual work settings.
- Practice stress management and self-care strategies to maintain well-being and productivity.

Topics Covered:

- Effective Communication Strategies for Virtual Assistants
- Time Management and Prioritization Techniques
- Organizational Skills and Task Management Systems
- Problem-Solving and Decision-Making in Virtual Work Settings
- Stress Management and Self-Care Practices for Virtual Assistants

Learning Activities:

- Skill-building workshops and exercises
- Role-playing scenarios
- Group projects and collaborative tasks
- Guest lectures by industry professionals
- Self-assessment and reflection activities

Session 1

Understanding the importance of communication in virtual assistance

Introduction and context setting, commnication tools and technologies, feedback and reflection

Steps

Discuss the importance of effective communication in building rapport, understanding client needs, and delivering quality service remotely, Provide examples and case studies showcasing successful implementation of communication tools in virtual assistance settings, Introduce reflective practices such as journaling, self-assessment, and peer feedback sessions to enhance communication effectiveness, Summarize the key points covered in the theoretical session on the importance of communication in virtual assistance

Duration

60 min theoretical

Session 2

Developing clear and concise written communication skills

Presentation (Introducing foundational concepts and principles of clear and concise writing), Work in groups (modelling and demonstration), peer review and collaboration

Steps

Introduce foundational concepts such as clarity, brevity, coherence, and consistency in writing, Discuss common pitfalls to avoid, including jargon, ambiguity, redundancy, and verbosity, Provide hands-on practice in modeling and demonstrating clear and concise writing, Divide participants into small grops, Assign each group a scenario or prompt that requires them to draft a written communication piece (e.g., email, memo, report summary), instruct each group to exchange their work with another group for peer review, Encourage constructive feedback, Summarize the key takeaways from both the theoretical and practical sessions

Duration

30 min theoretical / 30 min practical

Session 3

Enhancing verbal communication skills for remote interactions

Presentation (Understanding challenges - technological limitations, lack of non-verbal cues, distractions, and communication barriers), role-playing exercise, feedback and coaching

Steps

Discuss the challenges associated with verbal communication in remote interactions, including technological limitations, lack of non-verbal cues, distractions, and communication barriers, Divide participants into pairs or small groups, Assign each group a scenario or role-playing prompt that requires them to engage in a remote interaction (e.g., virtual meeting, phone call, video conference), Encourage participants to actively listen, communicate clearly and effectively, and adapt their communication style to the remote setting, After completing the role-playing exercise, facilitate a feedback session where participants provide constructive feedback to their partners or group members, Summarize the key takeaways from both the theoretical and practical sessions, Reinforce the importance of ongoing practice and feedback in improving verbal communication proficiency

Duration

30 min theoretical / 30 min practical

Session 1

Techniques for managing time effectively in a virtual work environment

Introducing the concept of time management and its importance in virtual work environments, presentation of tools and resources, Q and A

Steps

Discuss the benefits of effective time management, including increased productivity, reduced stress, and improved work-life balance, Present digital tools such as task management apps (e.g., Todoist, Trello), time tracking software (e.g., RescueTime, Toggl), and calendar applications (e.g., Google Calendar, Microsoft Outlook), Open the floor for questions and discussion on time management techniques and tools presented, Encourage participants to explore and experiment with the presented tools and strategies in their own virtual work routines

Duration

60 min theoretical

Session 2

Strategies for prioritizing tasks and optimizing productivity

Presentation – task prioritization and prodctivity and principles and frameworks for task prioritization, such as the Eisenhower Matrix, ABCDE method, or Pareto Principle (80/20 rule), Work in groups, peer review and collaboration

Steps

Introduce the concept of task prioritization and its importance in optimizing productivity, Present popular principles and frameworks for task prioritization, Open the floor for questions and discussion on task prioritization strategies, Divide participants into small groups, Assign each group a set of tasks or scenarios to prioritize using one of the presented frameworks (Eisenhower Matrix, ABCDE method, or Pareto Principle), Summarize the key principles and frameworks for task prioritization discussed in the theoretical session, Encourage participants to continue practicing and refining their task prioritization skills in their daily work routines

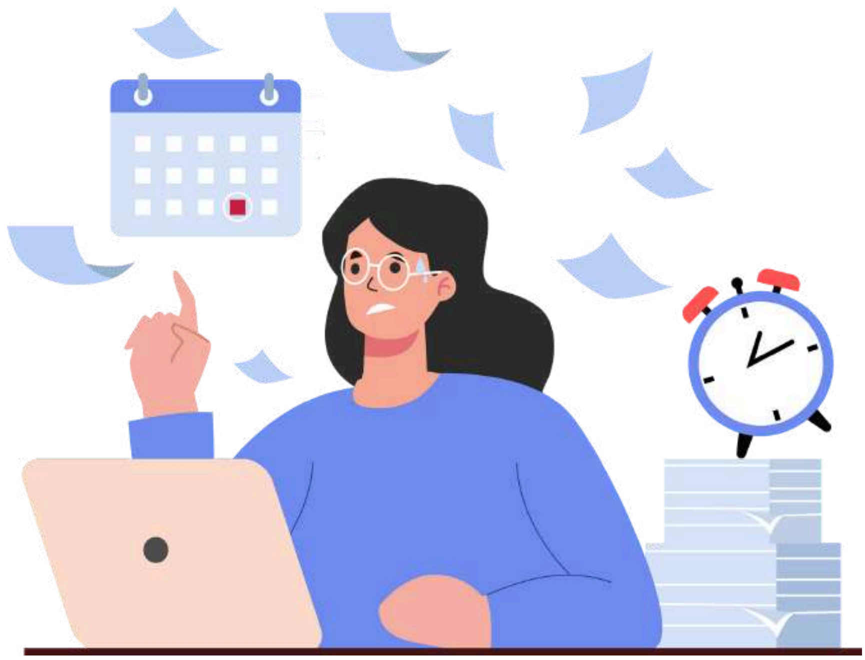
Duration

30 min theoretical / 30 min practical

Session 3

Balancing multiple tasks and deadlines as a virtual assistant

Presentation (challenges of task management faced by virtual assistants, such as remote work, diverse responsibilities, and time zone differences), role-playing exercise, group discssion and peer learning, feedback and coaching



Steps

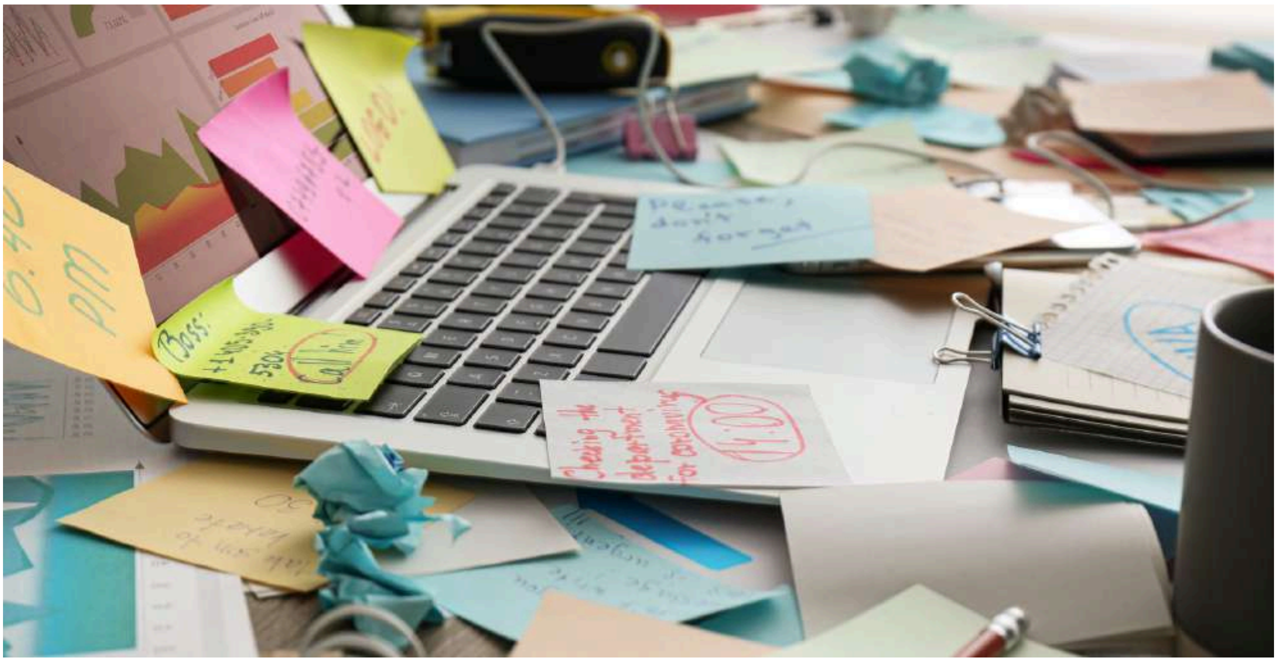
Discuss common challenges faced by virtual assistants, including remote work, diverse responsibilities, and time zone differences, Explore the impact of these challenges on task prioritization, time management, and meeting deadlines, Encourage participants to share their own experiences and insights on balancing multiple tasks and deadlines in a virtual work environment, Divide participants into pairs or small groups, Assign each group a scenario or role-playing prompt that simulates common task management challenges faced by virtual assistants (e.g., juggling multiple client requests, handling urgent deadlines), After completing the role-playing exercise, facilitate a group discussion where participants can share their experiences and insights, Provide constructive feedback and coaching to participants based on their performance during the role-playing exercise, Highlight strengths and areas for improvement in task management skills, communication, and problem-solving, Summarize the key insights and strategies discussed in both the theoretical and practical sessions

Duration

30 min theoretical / 30 min practical

Session 1

Establishing organizational systems for managing workload efficiently



Introducing the concept of organizational systems for managing workload efficiently, Case studies and examples (TM principles, eg prioritization, time blocking; TM systems, eg Getting Things Done, Kanban; TM methodologies, eg Agile, Scrum), Q and A

Steps

Explain the importance of having structured systems in place to effectively handle tasks, deadlines, and priorities, Emphasize how organizational systems can enhance productivity, reduce stress, and improve time management skills, Present case studies and examples of various time management principles, systems, and methodologies, Discuss time management principles such as prioritization, time blocking, and setting SMART goals, Provide examples of popular time management systems such as Getting Things Done (GTD), Kanban, and Pomodoro Technique, Use real-life examples and success stories to illustrate the effectiveness of these principles, systems, and methodologies, Open the floor for questions and discussion on the presented concepts, case studies, and examples, Open the floor for questions and discussion on the presented concepts, case studies, and examples, Summarize the key points

Duration

60 min theoretical

Session 2

Utilizing task management tools and software for effective task tracking

Presentation – benefits of using task management tools, Presentation of task management softwares, eg Trello, Asana, Todoist, or Microsoft To Do. Work in groups in these tools, peer review and collaboration, coaching

Steps

Discuss the advantages of using digital task management solutions over traditional methods, Introduce popular task management software options such as Trello, Asana, Todoist, or Microsoft To Do, Showcase how these tools can be customized to fit different workflow preferences and project requirements, Divide participants into small groups and assign each group a specific task management tool to work with (e.g., Trello, Asana), Instruct groups to create a sample project or task list within the assigned tool, including tasks, due dates, assignees, and any other relevant details, After completing the hands-on practice, facilitate a peer review session where groups share their sample projects or task lists with each other, Offer coaching and feedback to participants based on their performance and engagement during the practical session, Summarize the key benefits and features of task management tools and software

Duration

30 min theoretical / 60 min practical

Session 3

Implementing strategies to stay organized and focused while working remotely

Presentation (challenges of working remotely, such as managing distractions, maintaining work-life balance, and staying focused without direct supervision), slides, videos, grpahics, Q and A

Steps

Begin by addressing the challenges commonly faced while working remotely, such as managing distractions, maintaining work-life balance, and staying focused without direct supervision, Utilize slides, videos, and graphics to illustrate the impact of these challenges on productivity and well-being, Open the floor for questions and answers to address any concerns or queries raised by participants regarding the challenges of working remotely, Summarize the key challenges and strategies discussed in the theoretical session on staying organized and focused while working remotely

Duration

30 min theoretical

Session 1

Approaches to problem-solving in virtual work settings

Presentation (Introducing the importance of effective problem-solving skills in overcoming these challenges and achieving success in virtual work environments), Introduction to differnet techniqes for problem-solving strategies applicable to virtual work settings, such as: root case analysis, brainstorming and idea generation, decision making frameworks, e.g. SWOT analysis, pros and cons analysis...
Q and A

Steps

Begin by emphasizing the critical role of effective problem-solving skills in overcoming challenges and achieving success in virtual work environments, Use real-life examples and case studies to demonstrate the impact of effective problem-solving on productivity, innovation, and team performance in virtual work environments, Explain the principles and methodologies behind each technique: Root cause analysis: Identify the underlying causes of problems to address them at their source, Brainstorming and idea generation: Encourage creative thinking and generate a diverse range of potential solutions, Decision-making frameworks: Utilize structured frameworks such as SWOT analysis, pros and cons analysis, and decision trees to evaluate options and make informed decisions, Open the floor for questions and answers to address any queries or concerns raised by participants regarding problem-solving approaches in virtual work settings, Summarize the key points

Duration

90 min theoretical

Session 2

Decision-making techniques for resolving challenges independently

Work in groups on SWOT analysis, peer review and collaboration, coaching

Steps

Divide participants into small groups, ensuring diversity in experience and perspectives, Instruct groups to conduct a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) of the given challenge, Provide support and guidance as needed, ensuring that each group understands the purpose and process of SWOT analysis, After completing the SWOT analysis, encourage groups to share their findings with the rest of the participants, Offer coaching and guidance to each group based on their SWOT analysis, Summarize the key points discussed during the practical session on decision-making techniques

Duration

30 min practical

Session 3

Adapting to unexpected situations and finding creative solutions

Presentation (adaptability strategies), slides, videos, grpahics, case study creativity techniques and methods for generating innovative solutions (work in groups on brainstorming, mind mapping, lateral thinking), Q and A

Steps

Begin by discussing the importance of adaptability in navigating unexpected situations, Present strategies and techniques for developing adaptability skills, such as embracing change, maintaining a growth mindset, and seeking opportunities in challenges, Use slides, videos, and graphics to illustrate the concepts and provide real-life examples of successful adaptability in various contexts, Open the floor for questions and answers to address any queries or concerns, Present a case study or scenario that requires creative problem-solving and innovative solutions, Divide participants into small groups and assign each group the task of brainstorming creative solutions to the case study, Encourage groups to use mind mapping techniques to visually organize their ideas and explore different possibilities, Provide support and guidance as needed, Conclude the session with a brief Q&A where participants can share their insights and ask questions about the practical exercises

Duration

30 min theoretical / 30 min practical

Session 1

Practicing stress management techniques for maintaining well-being

Work in groups (a variety of stress management technique: relaxation techniqes (e.g. deep breathing, mindflnes mediation, physical activity and exercise, TM and prioritization, cognitive-behaviroral techniques, social support and commnication skills, coaching

Steps

Divide participants into small groups, ensuring diversity in experience and backgrounds, Assign each group a specific stress management technique to focus on, such as: Relaxation techniques (e.g., deep breathing, mindfulness meditation), Physical activity and exercise, Time management and prioritization, Cognitive-behavioral techniques (e.g., reframing, thought stopping), Social support and communication skills, Instruct groups to practice their assigned technique together for a specified duration, Offer coaching and guidance to each group based on their practice of the stress management technique, Emphasize the importance of consistency and continued practice for mastering stress management techniques, Summarize the key stress management techniques practiced during the session

Duration

90 min practical

Session 2

Incorporating self-care practices into daily routines as a virtual assistant

Work in groups, planning, peer review and collaboration, coaching

Steps

Divide participants into small groups, Assign each group the task of developing a plan for incorporating self-care practices into daily routines as virtual assistants, Provide guidelines and prompts to help groups structure their plans, Instruct groups to review and discuss each other's plans for incorporating self-care practices, Offer coaching and guidance to each group based on their self-care plans, Summarize the key points discussed during the practical session on incorporating self-care practices into daily routines

Duration

30 min practical

Module 2

Essential Skills for Virtual Assistants

Theoretical Teaching (8 hours):

Methodology: Theoretical teaching sessions will be conducted through lectures, presentations, and group discussions. Participants will explore theoretical frameworks, best practices, and strategies for effective communication, time management, organization, and problem-solving.

- Topics Covered: Effective communication strategies, time management techniques, organizational skills, and problem-solving approaches tailored for virtual work environments.

Practical Teaching (8 hours):

Methodology: Practical teaching sessions will involve hands-on workshops, role-playing exercises, and real-world simulations to reinforce theoretical concepts and develop practical skills. Participants will engage in interactive activities to practice and refine their communication, time management, and organizational abilities.

- Activities: Role-playing scenarios, task prioritization exercises, organizational challenges, and problem-solving simulations will be employed to enhance practical skills.
- Integration: Practical sessions will be closely integrated with theoretical content to facilitate the application of learned skills in realistic scenarios and prepare participants for the demands of virtual assistant roles.

Independent study by participants (8 hours):

Learning by doing new tool - to learn basics in: research, editing, graphics designing, copywriting, digital marketing, operating SEO tools

Learning outcomes

- By combining theoretical knowledge with practical applications, Module 2 aims to equip participants with the essential skills and competencies necessary for success as virtual assistants in diverse professional settings.
- Identify different communication styles and adapt communication strategies accordingly.
- Understand active listening skills and the ability to convey information clearly and concisely.
- Be able to use various communication channels effectively, including email, phone calls, video conferencing, and instant messaging.
- Apply time management principles to effectively allocate time for tasks and projects.
- Understand prioritization techniques to identify and focus on high-value tasks.
- Understand conducting of research using a variety of online resources and databases.
- Be able to understand the credibility and relevance of sources to ensure the accuracy of information gathered.
- Undestand how to prepare research findings into coherent reports or presentations.
- Understand how the graphic design software creates visually appealing graphics, illustrations, and multimedia content.
- Understand the fundamentals of digital marketing, including SEO, social media marketing, email marketing, and content marketing.
- Maintain records and documentation to track progress and ensure accountability.
- Recognize signs of stress and understand self-care and stress reduction.
- Practice mindfulness, relaxation techniques, and time management strategies to maintain balance and well-being.

Tools and Technologies for Virtual Assistance

This module introduces participants to the various tools, technologies, and software applications commonly used in virtual assistance roles. Participants will learn how to leverage these tools to streamline workflow, enhance productivity, and effectively manage tasks and projects remotely.

- **Duration:** 14 hours
- **Theoretical Teaching:** 8 hours
- **Practical Teaching:** 6 hours

Literature in English Language:

- "Virtual Freedom: How to Work with Virtual Staff to Buy More Time, Become More Productive, and Build Your Dream Business" by Chris Ducker
- "The Virtual Assistant Solution: Come up for Air, Offload the Work You Hate, and Focus on What You Do Best" by Michael Hyatt
- "Remote: Office Not Required" by Jason Fried and David Heinemeier Hansson
- "The Four: The Hidden DNA of Amazon, Apple, Facebook, and Google" by Scott Galloway
- "The Lean Startup: How Today's Entrepreneurs Use Continuous Innovation to Create Radically Successful Businesses" by Eric Ries

Specific Teaching Aids:

- Demonstrations of communication and collaboration platforms such as Slack, Microsoft Teams, or Zoom to showcase features and functionalities
- Practical exercises using task and project management tools like Asana, Trello, or Monday.com to familiarize participants with task organization and workflow management
- Virtual tours or walkthroughs of time tracking and productivity apps such as RescueTime, Toggl, or Focus Booster to illustrate usage and benefits
- Hands-on workshops on file sharing and document management systems like Google Drive, Dropbox, or Microsoft OneDrive for effective document collaboration and sharing
- Interactive sessions on cybersecurity and data protection measures for virtual assistants, including best practices for maintaining confidentiality and securing client information
- Case studies and real-world examples highlighting successful integration of virtual assistance tools and technologies in different industries and organizational contexts
- Guest speakers from technology companies or virtual assistance firms to share insights, tips, and practical advice on leveraging tools and technologies effectively in virtual assistant roles

These literature resources and teaching aids will enhance the delivery of Module 3, providing participants with practical knowledge and hands-on experience in utilizing virtual assistance tools and technologies to enhance productivity, collaboration, and efficiency in their roles.

Objectives:

- Identify and evaluate common tools and technologies used in virtual assistance roles.
- Demonstrate proficiency in communication and collaboration platforms, such as Slack or Microsoft Teams.
- Utilize task and project management tools, such as Asana or Trello, to organize and track tasks effectively.
- Implement time tracking and productivity apps to monitor and optimize work habits.
- Utilize file sharing and document management systems to securely share and store documents.

Topics Covered:

- iew of Virtual Assistance Tools and Software Applications
- Communication and Collaboration Platforms (e.g., Slack, Microsoft Teams)
- Task and Project Management Tools (e.g., Asana, Trello)
- Time Tracking and Productivity Apps (e.g., RescueTime, Focus Booster)
- File Sharing and Document Management Systems (e.g., Google Drive, Dropbox)

Learning Activities:

- Hands-on tutorials and demonstrations
- Software training sessions
- Group exercises to practice using tools and applications
- Case studies on tool implementation and integration

Module 3 focuses on familiarizing participants with the tools and technologies commonly used in virtual assistance roles. It comprises theoretical sessions to understand the principles behind these tools and practical sessions to gain hands-on experience in their use.

Session 1

Introduction to common tools and technologies used in virtual assistance roles

- Presentation (Introducing
- Email management platforms (e.g., Gmail, Outlook)
- Calendar and scheduling software (e.g., Google Calendar, Microsoft Outlook Calendar)
- Task management tools (e.g., Asana, Trello, Todoist)
- Communication platforms (e.g., Slack, Microsoft Teams)
- Document collaboration and file sharing tools (e.g., Google Drive, Dropbox)
- Virtual meeting and video conferencing software (e.g., Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Google Meet), Q and A

Steps

Introduce popular email management platforms such as Gmail and Outlook, Discuss key features and functionalities, including email organization, filtering, and labeling, Present commonly used calendar and scheduling software like Google Calendar and Microsoft Outlook Calendar, Highlight features such as event creation, scheduling meetings, and setting reminders, Introduce task management tools such as Asana, Trello, and Todoist, Explain how these tools can help organize tasks, assign priorities, and track progress, Discuss popular communication platforms like Slack and Microsoft Teams, Highlight features such as real-time messaging, channels, and integrations with other tools, Present document collaboration and file sharing tools like Google Drive and Dropbox, Discuss version control, file sharing permissions, and security features, Introduce virtual meeting and video conferencing software such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Google Meet, Showcase features like video calls, screen sharing, and recording capabilities, Open the floor for questions and answers, Summarize the key points

Duration

120 min theoretical

Session 2

Overview of communication platforms, task management tools, and file sharing systems

Work in groups on tools, peer review and collaboration, coaching, debrief in plenary

Steps

Divide participants into small groups, Assign each group one of the following categories: communication platforms, task management tools, or file sharing systems, Encourage groups to discuss the features, functionalities, and potential use cases of the assigned tools, Facilitate collaboration and knowledge-sharing within each group, allowing participants to learn from each other's experiences, After the group work session, gather participants for a brief peer review and collaboration session, Offer coaching and guidance to each group based on their exploration and analysis of the tools, Summarize the key takeaways from the practical session on communication platforms, task management tools, and file sharing systems

Duration

60 min practical

Session 1

In-depth exploration of communication and collaboration platforms (e.g., Slack, Microsoft Teams)

Welcome and orientation - Provide an overview of the course and logistics, including the schedule, expectations, and guidelines for learning.

Ice breaker and team building activities

Steps

Present an in-depth overview of popular communication platforms such as Slack and Microsoft Teams, Provide a detailed walkthrough of Slack's interface, including channels, direct messages, threads, and notifications, Showcase advanced features and integrations available in Slack to enhance productivity and communication, Discuss Teams' features such as chat, teams and channels, meetings, and file collaboration, Provide practical tips and best practices for using Teams to facilitate effective communication and collaboration, Encourage participants to share their experiences and insights on using Slack, Microsoft Teams, or other similar platforms, Summarize the key points covered in the presentation on communication and collaboration platforms

Duration

120 min theoretical

Session 2

Understanding features and functionalities to enhance virtual teamwork and communication

Work in groups on tools, peer review and collaboration, coaching, debrief in plenary

Steps

Divide participants into small groups, Provide each group with access to communication and collaboration tools such as Slack, Microsoft Teams, or any other platform discussed in the theoretical session, Encourage groups to experiment with different features such as channels, chat, file sharing, video conferencing, and integrations, After the group work session, gather participants for a brief peer review and collaboration session, Offer coaching and guidance to each group based on their exploration and analysis of the tools, Summarize the key takeaways from the practical session on understanding features and functionalities to enhance virtual teamwork and communication

Duration

60 min practical

Session 1

Detailed overview of task and project management tools (e.g., Asana, Trello)

Presentation in detail
Task management tools (e.g., Asana, Trello, Todoist), slides, graphos, video tutorials, Q and A

Steps

Present an in-depth overview of popular task management tools such as Asana, Trello, and Todoist, Provide a detailed walkthrough of Asana's/Trello interface, including task lists, boards, calendars, and timelines, Demonstrate how to create and organize tasks, set deadlines, assign responsibilities, and track progress, Showcase advanced features and integrations available in Asana to enhance productivity and project management, Open the floor for questions and answers, Summarize the key points

Duration

120 min theoretical

Session 2

Utilizing these tools for organizing tasks, setting priorities, and tracking progress

Work in groups on tools, peer review and collaboration, coaching, debrief in plenary

Steps

Divide participants into small groups, Provide each group with access to task and project management tools such as Asana, Trello, Instruct groups to create sample projects or tasks within the assigned tool, focusing on organizing tasks, setting priorities, and tracking progress, Encourage groups to assign responsibilities, set deadlines, and use relevant features of the tools to manage the tasks effectively, Encourage groups to share their experiences and insights with the rest of the participants, Offer coaching and guidance to each group based on their exploration and analysis of the tools, Provide additional insights or suggestions to help groups address any challenges or questions raised during the peer review session, Summarize the key takeaways

Duration

60 min practical

Session 1

Introduction to time tracking and productivity apps (e.g., RescueTime, Focus Booster)

Presentation in detail; time tracking and productivity apps (e.g., RescueTime, Focus Booster), slides, graphos, video tutorials, Q and A

Steps

Present an in-depth overview of popular time tracking apps such as RescueTime and Focus Booster, Discuss the features, functionalities, and capabilities of each app, including automatic time tracking, activity monitoring, and productivity analysis, Provide a detailed walkthrough of RescueTime's features, including time categorization, goal setting, and reports generation, Showcase advanced features and integrations available in RescueTime to enhance productivity tracking and time management, Discuss Focus Booster's features such as pomodoro technique timers, task lists, and performance insights, Provide practical tips and best practices for using Focus Booster to improve focus and productivity, Q&A, Summarize the key points

Duration

120 min theoretical

Session 2

Implementing these apps to monitor work habits, enhance focus, and optimize productivity

Work in groups on tools, peer review and collaboration, coaching, debrief in plenary

Steps

Divide participants into small groups, Provide each group with access to time tracking and productivity apps such as RescueTime, Focus Booster, Encourage groups to experiment with different features of the apps, such as setting goals, tracking time spent on different activities, and utilizing productivity insights, gather participants for a brief peer review and collaboration session, Provide additional insights or suggestions to help groups address any challenges or questions raised during the peer review session, Summarize the key takeaways

Duration

60 min practical

Session 1

Hands-on exercises to explore file sharing and document management systems (e.g., Google Drive, Dropbox)

Work in groups on tools, peer review and collaboration, coaching, debrief in plenary

Steps

Divide participants into small groups, Provide each group with access to file sharing and document management systems such as Google Drive, Dropbox, Instruct groups to explore the features and functionalities of the assigned systems and perform hands-on exercises, Assign tasks to each group, such as uploading files, creating folders, sharing documents with team members, setting permissions, and collaborating on documents in real-time, After the group work session, gather participants for a brief peer review and collaboration session, Offer coaching and guidance to each group based on their exploration and analysis of the systems, Summarize the key takeaways from the practical session

Duration

120 min practical

Session 2

Practical demonstrations on organizing files, sharing documents securely, and collaborating with team members

Presentations and debrief in plenary, peer review and collaboration, coaching, debrief in plenary

Steps

Provide tips for efficient file organization, secure document sharing, and effective collaboration. Divide participants into small groups. Give each group access to file sharing systems like Google Drive or Dropbox. Have groups perform practical demonstrations on organizing files, securely sharing documents, and collaborating. Assign tasks like creating folder structures, setting permissions, sharing documents, and real-time collaboration. Encourage groups to share their experiences and demonstrations. Offer additional insights to enhance their techniques. Facilitate a debrief where groups summarize their key findings. Encourage ongoing practice and skill refinement.

Duration

120 min practical

Module 3

Tools and Technologies for Virtual Assistance

Theoretical Teaching (8 hours):

Methodology: Theoretical teaching sessions will involve lectures, presentations, and demonstrations to introduce participants to various virtual assistance tools and technologies. Participants will learn about the features, functionalities, and best practices associated with communication platforms, task management tools, time tracking applications, and file sharing systems.

- Topics Covered: Overview of virtual assistance tools and software applications, communication and collaboration platforms, task and project management tools, time tracking and productivity apps, and file sharing and document management systems.

Practical Teaching (6 hours):

Methodology: Practical teaching sessions will consist of hands-on workshops, guided tutorials, and interactive exercises to allow participants to explore and familiarize themselves with virtual assistance tools and technologies. Participants will have the opportunity to practice using these tools in simulated environments and real-world scenarios.

- Activities: Hands-on tutorials, guided exercises, case studies, and role-playing simulations will be utilized to reinforce practical skills and enhance participants' proficiency in using virtual assistance tools.
- Integration: Practical sessions will be closely integrated with theoretical content, allowing participants to apply their knowledge of virtual assistance tools in practical situations and develop the skills necessary for efficient and effective virtual assistance.

Learning outcomes:

- By combining theoretical insights with practical applications, Module 3 aims to equip participants with the knowledge and skills required to leverage virtual assistance tools and technologies effectively in their roles.
- Identify and describe a variety of virtual assistance tools and software available in the market.
- Understand the features and functionalities of different virtual assistance tools to meet specific business needs.
- Demonstrate improvements in using virtual assistance tools for task management, communication, scheduling, and other administrative tasks.
- Utilize communication platforms such as Slack, Microsoft Teams, or Zoom to facilitate real-time communication and collaboration among team members.
- Manage communication channels effectively, including creating channels, organizing conversations, and setting notifications.
- Collaborate on documents and projects in real-time using features like shared documents and screen sharing.Utilize task management tools to organize tasks, set deadlines, and track progress.
- Implement task prioritization techniques.
- Understand importance of productivity data to identify areas for improvement and optimize time management strategies.
- Utilize file sharing platforms such as Google Drive, Dropbox, or OneDrive to store, organize, and share documents and files securely.
- Implement document management best practices, including file naming conventions, folder structures, and permissions management.

Business Development and Client Management

This module focuses on the business aspects of virtual assistance, including client acquisition, marketing strategies, and client relationship management. Participants will learn how to effectively market their services, acquire clients, and establish long-term partnerships for sustainable business growth.

- **Duration:** 16 hours
- **Theoretical Teaching:** 8 hours
- **Practical Teaching:** 8 hours

Module 4 is designed to equip participants with the essential knowledge and skills needed to succeed in business development and client management as virtual assistants. It consists of theoretical sessions to understand key concepts and practical sessions to apply these concepts in real-world scenarios.

Literature in English Language:

- "The Virtual Assistant Handbook: Insider Secrets for Starting and Running Your Own Profitable VA Business" by Nadine Hill
- "Virtual Assistant Startup Kit: What You Must Know" by Janice Byer and Diana Ennen
- "Virtual Freedom: How to Work with Virtual Staff to Buy More Time, Become More Productive, and Build Your Dream Business" by Chris Ducker
- "How to Start a Virtual Assistant Business: A Step-by-Step Guide to Building a Successful Virtual Assistant Business" by Lisa Wells
- "The Four-Hour Workweek: Escape 9-5, Live Anywhere, and Join the New Rich" by Timothy Ferriss

Specific Teaching Aids:

- Interactive workshops on business development strategies, including creating business plans, identifying target markets, and defining service offerings
- Practical exercises on marketing techniques for virtual assistants, such as developing branding strategies, creating marketing materials, and utilizing social media platforms
- Role-playing scenarios for practicing client acquisition techniques, including prospecting, networking, and pitching services to potential clients
- Case studies and discussions on proposal writing, contract negotiation, and pricing strategies for virtual assistant services
- Guest speakers from successful virtual assistant businesses or entrepreneurial ventures to share insights, experiences, and best practices in business development and client management
- Workshops on client onboarding processes, including setting expectations, establishing communication protocols, and managing client relationships effectively
- Resources and templates for creating professional contracts, service agreements, and client communication documents to ensure clarity and professionalism in client engagements

Objectives:

- Develop marketing strategies, including personal branding and content marketing, to promote virtual assistant services.
- Implement techniques for client acquisition and lead generation to build a client base.
- Draft proposals and establish pricing strategies for virtual assistant services.
- Navigate contract negotiation and client onboarding processes effectively.
- Cultivate client relationships and implement retention strategies to ensure long-term partnerships and business growth.

Topics Covered:

- Marketing Strategies for Virtual Assistants (e.g., Personal Branding, Content Marketing)
- Client Acquisition and Lead Generation Techniques
- Proposal Writing and Pricing Strategies
- Contract Negotiation and Client Onboarding Processes
- Client Relationship Management and Retention Strategies

Learning Activities:

- Guest lectures from industry experts
- Case studies on successful virtual assistant businesses
- Role-playing exercises for client interactions
- Business planning and strategy development workshops
- Peer feedback and collaboration on marketing campaigns

Session 1

Understanding the concept of business development in the context of virtual assistance

Presentaiton (an overview of the concept of business development, how business development focuses on creating long-term value for a company by identifying opportunities for growth, building relationships, and expanding market reach), guest speakers with interactive presentaitons (to share their experiences and insights on the role of virtual assistants in business growth), Q and A

Steps

Present an in-depth overview of the concept of business development, Discuss the key principles and strategies involved in business development, such as market analysis, customer relationship management, strategic partnerships, and sales tactics, Invite guest speakers who are experts in business development or have experience working as virtual assistants in business growth roles, Open the floor for questions and answers, Summarize the key points

Duration

120 min theoretical

Session 2

Exploring the importance of business development for virtual assistants

Work in grops on case studies (market analysis, customer segmentation, lead generation, sales strategies, and relationship management) and debrief in plenary, peer review and collaboration, coaching, debrief in plenary

Steps

Divide participants into small groups, Provide each group with case studies focusing on various aspects of business development, including market analysis, customer segmentation, lead generation, sales strategies, and relationship management, Instruct groups to analyze the provided case studies, identify key challenges and opportunities, and develop strategic plans or recommendations for business development initiatives, After the group work session, gather all participants for a plenary debrief, Encourage participants to provide constructive feedback and suggestions to each other based on the presentations, Summarize the key takeaways

Duration

120 min practical

Session 1

Developing effective marketing strategies to promote virtual assistant services

Presentaiton (providing an introduction to marketing concepts and their relevance to virtual assistant services, the importance of marketing in attracting clients, establishing brand awareness, and generating leads for virtual assistant businesses), guest speakers with interactive presentaitons (to share their experiences and insights on the role of virtual assistants in business growth), guest speakers from marketing, Q and A

Steps

Present an overview of key marketing concepts relevant to virtual assistants, such as target market identification, branding, value proposition, positioning, and marketing channels, Discuss how these concepts can be applied to effectively market virtual assistant services and differentiate oneself in the competitive market, Invite guest speakers who are experts in marketing or have experience in promoting virtual assistant services, Open the floor for questions and answers, Summarize the key points

Duration

120 min theoretical

Session 2

Exploring methods for personal branding, content marketing, and social media marketing

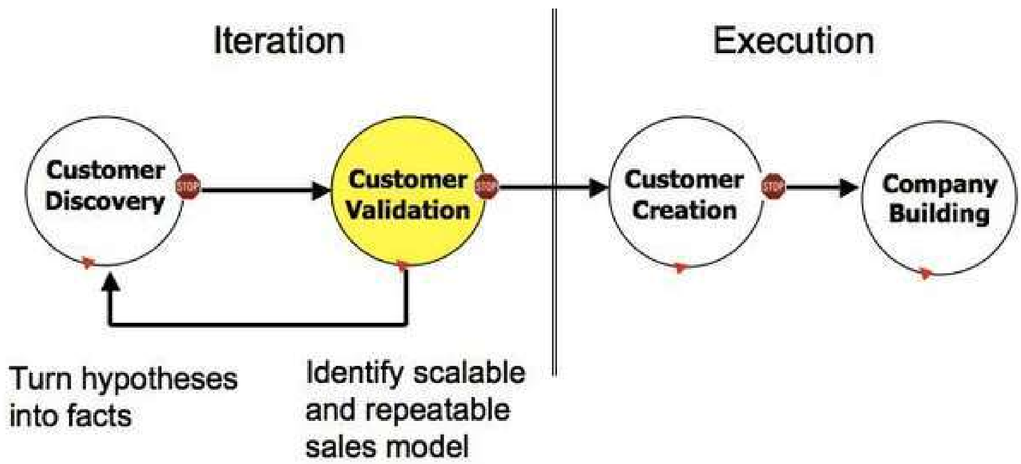
Work in groups (group brainstorming and idea generation, developing their marketing strategies and campaigns, e.g. creating marketing plans, designing promotional materials, drafting social media content, and planning advertising campaigns) and debrief in plenary, peer review and collaboration, coaching, debrief in plenary

Steps

ivide participants into small groups, Provide each group with a specific focus area, such as personal branding, content marketing, or social media marketing, Instruct groups to engage in group brainstorming and idea generation to develop their marketing strategies and campaigns, Encourage groups to create tangible outputs, such as marketing plans, promotional materials, social media content drafts, and advertising campaign concepts, Facilitate discussions within each group to ensure all members contribute their ideas and insights effectively, Gather all participants for a plenary debrief, Offer coaching and guidance to each group based on their presented strategies and peer feedback, Summarize the key takeaways

Duration

120 min practical



Resorce: https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Customer-Development-Model-Sourcehttps-steveblankcom-2009-11-02-lean-startups-are_fig1_338935988
The four components of Customer development model (CDM) consist of the following stages (Blank, 2013): A. CUSTOMER DISCOVERY Major phases: (1) State hypothesis (2) Treat & qualify hypotheses (3) Test & qualify product concept (4) Verify

Session 1

Identifying potential clients and target markets for virtual assistant services

Presentation (providing an overview of client identification and target market concepts and their importance in the context of virtual assistant services, various market research techniques and methodologies used to gather data and insights about potential clients and target markets, qualitative and quantitative research methods, including surveys, interviews, focus groups, and research), guest speakers on industry analysis and trends, Q and A

Steps

Present an overview of client identification and target market concepts, Discuss the significance of understanding clients' needs, preferences, and pain points in effectively positioning virtual assistant services, Explore various market research techniques and methodologies used to gather data and insights about potential clients and target markets, Discuss qualitative and quantitative research methods, including surveys, interviews, focus groups, and secondary research, Provide practical examples and case studies to illustrate the application of market research techniques in client identification and target market analysis, Invite guest speakers who are experts in industry analysis and market trends relevant to virtual assistant services, Open the floor for questions and answers, Summarize the key points

Duration

120 min theoretical

Session 2

Implementing strategies for lead generation, networking, and client outreach

Work in groups (market segmentation exercises where learners categorize potential clients into distinct segments based on common characteristics, needs, and preferences) and debrief in plenary, peer review and collaboration, coaching, debrief in plenary

Steps

Divide participants into small groups, Provide each group with a set of potential clients or scenarios representing different segments of the market, Instruct groups to conduct market segmentation exercises where they categorize potential clients into distinct segments based on common characteristics, needs, and preferences, Encourage groups to analyze factors such as demographics, psychographics, behavior, and pain points to create meaningful market segments, Facilitate discussions within each group to ensure all members contribute their insights and perspectives to the segmentation process, Group presentations, Facilitate a discussion among participants to compare and contrast the segmentation approaches taken by different groups and explore diverse perspectives on lead generation and client outreach strategies, Encourage participants to provide constructive feedback and suggestions to each other based on the presentations, Offer coaching and guidance to each group based on their market segmentation findings and peer feedback, Summarize the key takeaways

Duration

120 min practical

Session 1

Crafting persuasive proposals to attract clients and secure contracts

Lectures/Presentaiton (the importance of persuasive proposals in attracting clients and securing contracts, key components of a persuasive proposal, including the cover letter, executive summary, services offered, pricing, timeline, and terms and conditions), Analyze examples of successful proposals, Q and A

Steps

Discuss the essential components of a persuasive proposal, Cover letter: Introduction and personalization to establish rapport with the client, Executive summary: Concise overview of the proposal's key points and benefits, Services offered: Detailed description of the virtual assistant services and solutions offered, Pricing: Transparent and competitive pricing structure aligned with the value delivered, Timeline: Clear timeline outlining project milestones and deliverables, Terms and conditions: Agreement on project scope, payment terms, and other relevant details, Provide tips and best practices for each component to enhance clarity, professionalism, and persuasiveness, Analyze examples of successful proposals from various industries and sectors, Q&A, Summarize the key points

Duration

120 min theoretical

Session 2

Determining pricing strategies and structuring service packages for virtual assistant offerings

Work in groups (role-plays and simulations where learners can practice presenting their proposals to potential clients - learners to role-play as both virtual assistants and clients to gain perspective and refine their communication and negotiation skills) and debrief in plenary, peer review and collaboration, coaching, debrief in plenary

Steps

Divide participants into small groups, Assign roles to participants within each group, alternating between virtual assistants and clients for different scenarios, Provide each group with simulated scenarios representing client interactions, such as initial consultations, proposal presentations, and negotiation sessions, Instruct participants to engage in role-plays and simulations, where they practice presenting their proposals to potential clients and negotiate pricing and service packages, After the role-play session, gather all participants for a plenary debrief, Allow each group to share their key learnings, insights, and observations from the role-plays and simulations, Encourage participants to provide constructive feedback and suggestions, Provide additional insights or suggestions to help groups refine their pricing strategies, service packages, and negotiation tactics, Summarize the key takeaways

Duration

120 min practical

Session 1

Practicing negotiation techniques for contract agreements and terms

Work in groups (debate - Discuss the role of technology in negotiation, including the use of communication tools, collaborative platforms, and contract management software.

Explore how technology can streamline the negotiation process, enhance communication, and facilitate document sharing and agreement tracking.) and debrief in plenary, peer review and collaboration, coaching, debrief in plenary

Steps

Divide participants into small groups, Assign roles to participants within each group, such as moderators, proponents, and opponents, Provide each group with a specific topic related to the role of technology in negotiation, such as the use of communication tools, collaborative platforms, or contract management software, Instruct groups to engage in a debate, discussing the role of technology in negotiation and its impact on the negotiation process, communication effectiveness, and document management, After the role-play session, gather all participants for a plenary debrief, Encourage participants to provide constructive feedback and suggestions, Offer coaching and guidance to each group based on their role-play performances and peer feedback, Summarize the key takeaways

Duration

120 min practical

Session 2

Developing effective client onboarding processes to ensure smooth transitions and successful partnerships

Lectures/Presentaiton (key topics such as BATNA (Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement), ZOPA (Zone of Possible Agreement), negotiation styles, and ethical considerations. expert insights on negotiation techniques, common pitfalls to avoid, and best practices for achieving win-win outcomes), Q and A

Steps

Discuss key topics in negotiation relevant to client onboarding processes, BATNA (Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement): Understanding alternatives and fallback options in negotiations, ZOPA (Zone of Possible Agreement): Identifying potential areas of agreement and negotiation flexibility, Negotiation styles: Exploring different negotiation styles, such as competitive, collaborative, accommodating, and avoiding, Ethical considerations: Addressing ethical dilemmas and principles in negotiation, such as honesty, fairness, and integrity, Invite guest speakers or subject matter experts to share their insights and experiences on negotiation techniques in client onboarding, Open the floor for questions and answers, Summarize the key points covered in the lecture and presentations on developing effective client onboarding processes

Duration

120 min theoretical

Module 4

Business Development and Client Management

Theoretical Teaching (8 hours):

Methodology: Theoretical teaching sessions will involve lectures, presentations, and discussions to cover topics related to business development, marketing strategies, client acquisition, proposal writing, contract negotiation, and client relationship management.

- Topics Covered: Marketing strategies for virtual assistants, client acquisition techniques, proposal writing, pricing strategies, contract negotiation, client onboarding processes, and client relationship management.

Practical Teaching (8 hours):

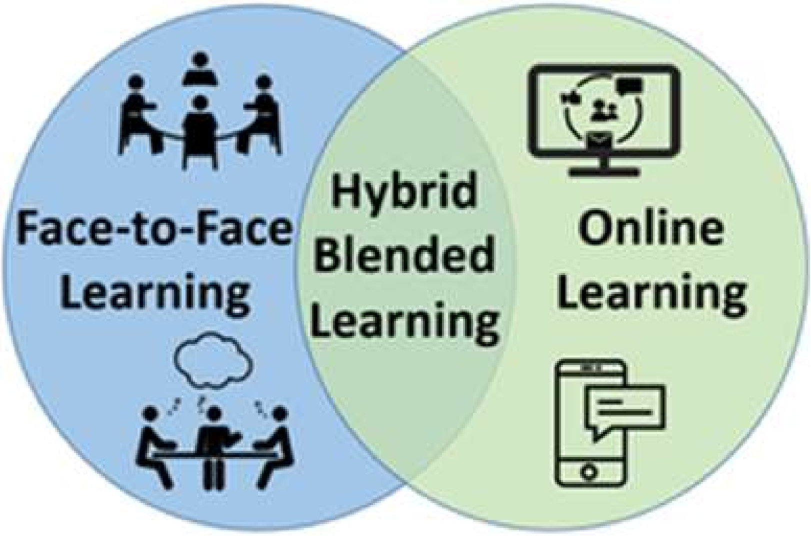
Methodology: Practical teaching sessions will include workshops, case studies, role-playing exercises, and interactive activities to allow participants to apply theoretical concepts in practical scenarios. Participants will have the opportunity to develop and refine their skills in client acquisition, proposal writing, contract negotiation, and client relationship management.

- Activities: Role-playing simulations, mock client meetings, drafting proposals, negotiating contracts, and developing client management strategies will be used to reinforce practical skills and enhance participants' ability to effectively manage clients.
- Integration: Practical sessions will be closely integrated with theoretical content, enabling participants to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world situations and develop the skills necessary for successful business development and client management as virtual assistants.

Learning outcomes:

- By combining theoretical insights with practical applications, Module 4 aims to empower participants to build successful virtual assistance businesses and effectively manage client relationships in a professional and efficient manner.
- Understand business development and its importance in the context of virtual assistant roles.
- Undestand various business development strategies and tactics applicable to virtual assistant services.
- Understand marketing concepts and principles as they apply to virtual assistant services.
- Create and implement marketing strategies to promote virtual assistant services effectively, including online and offline tactics.
- Explore different client acquisition channels and methods, including networking, referrals, social media, and online marketplaces.
- Understand client outreach strategies to attract and engage potential clients.
- Improve persuasive communication and relationship-building skills.
- Understand pricing strategies that align with the value provided and competitive market rates.
- Demonstrate improvements in contract negotiation techniques, including identifying client needs, addressing objections, and reaching mutually beneficial agreements.
- Demonstrate improvements in developing client onboarding processes to ensure a smooth transition from prospect to client.
- Understand know-how to establish clear expectations and deliverables with clients, including scope of work, timelines, and communication protocols.

METHODOLOGICAL INSTRUCTIONS



Resource: https://improvingcareand.education/2023/02/16/online-hybrid-and-blended-learning/

At the outset of the program, provide a comprehensive overview to the participants, outlining the program's objectives, methodologies, and potential assessment techniques, including a straightforward evaluation of acquired knowledge.

Creating a welcoming and comfortable environment for participants upon their entry into the program is paramount, as it sets the tone for the subsequent interactions. Participants will expect the trainer to exude qualities of respect, trust, and friendliness, regardless of the chosen educational model, whether traditional or interactive.

Your conduct as a trainer should consistently reflect professionalism and approachability, as participants will closely observe your demeanor throughout the program. It is crucial to maintain a balance between professionalism and friendliness to foster an engaging learning atmosphere.

Taking the time to acquaint yourself with the participants, irrespective of the educational model, is beneficial for fostering camaraderie among participants and enabling mutual understanding. This initial step also allows you to gauge the expectations and needs of the participants, as well as identify any knowledge gaps to address throughout the program.

For participants engaging in interactive teaching through independent learning systems, provide guidance on managing the program's duration and suggest a structured plan for effectively mastering the curriculum. This proactive approach ensures participants have a clear roadmap for their learning journey.

Example of activities to be conducted at the beginning of the training FACE2FACE learning:

- Prepare the room to encourage learning and foster interaction among group members, ensuring a conducive environment.
- Introduce yourself to the participants, establishing rapport and setting a welcoming tone for the session.
- Invite drivers to introduce themselves, sharing details about their work experience, education, and the nature of their work.
- Record the expectations of the participants regarding the training program, facilitating transparency and alignment of goals.
- Present the administrative aspects of the program, such as attendance lists and other relevant logistics, ensuring clarity on procedural matters.
- Define the objectives of the program and outline the specific competencies that participants are expected to acquire through the training activities.
- Explain the structure and organization of the training process, providing participants with a clear understanding of what to expect.
- Present the basic rules of communication, emphasizing principles such as mutual respect, active listening, and proper internet etiquette, to promote a conducive learning environment.

BLENDED LEARNING

The terms 'online, 'hybrid' and 'blended' are to be found described in slightly different ways. For the purposes of this post: online simply refers to methodologies which only take place online; hybrid denotes that some learners are physically in attendance while others are online but perhaps, now and then, use is being made of both styles; and blended indicates a combination of conventional teaching or training with members present along with online/e-learning also being employed to extend accessibility, independent contributions and flexibility.

Resource: https://improvingcareand.education/2023/02/16/online-hybrid-and-blended-learning/

ONLINE LEARNING

Full Technology integration - appropriate digital platforms can be selected (eg. Zoom, Teams, etc) and tools for delivering virtual training sessions, hosting discussions, sharing resources, and assessing learner progress. Each trainers should be familiar with the platform and tools and to be sure that the chosen technology is user-friendly, accessible, and compatible with various devices and operating systems.

Offer training and technical support to learners to facilitate smooth navigation and troubleshooting.

Monitoring and evaluation - Diverse assessment methods such as quizzes, assignments, presentations, and skill demonstrations should be designed to evaluate learners' comprehension and application of virtual assistant skills. Provide timely feedback to learners to help them identify areas for improvement and track their progress throughout the program. Encourage peer evaluation and self-assessment to foster a culture of continuous learning and development.

Should be planed fostering a sense of community among learners through virtual networking events, discussion forums, and in-pairs/in-teams projects. Access to mentoring, coaching, and career development resources should be introduced to help learners succeed in their virtual assistant roles.

EXAMPLE OF ACTIVITIES TO BE CONDUCTED AT THE BEGINNING OF THE TRAINING ON LINE LEARNING:

Virtual introduction - Utilize a video conferencing platform (e.g., Zoom, Microsoft Teams) for a virtual introduction session.

- Each participant introduces themselves, sharing their name, role, and a fun fact about themselves.
- Encourage participants to use virtual backgrounds or share photos representing their interests or hobbies.

Virtual Scavenger Hunts - Use a video conferencing platform with breakout rooms functionality or use

- Create a list of items or themes related to the training or participants' backgrounds.
- Assign participants to small breakout rooms and instruct them to find and share items related to the list within a time limit.
- Reconvene in the main session to debrief and share findings.

Icebreaker polls or quizzes - Use polling features available in video conferencing platforms or dedicated polling tools like Mentimeter or Poll Everywhere.

- Create icebreaker questions or quizzes related to the training topic or general interests.
- Participants respond to the polls or quizzes, and results are shared anonymously to spark discussions.

Virtual team bilding games - Play online team-building games such as virtual escape rooms, online trivia quizzes, or collaborative puzzle-solving activities.

- Use platforms like Kahoot!, Quizizz, or online escape room platforms.
- Participants work together in teams to solve challenges and compete against each other in a fun and engaging manner.

Digital whiteboard brainstorming - Utilize digital whiteboard tools like Miro, MURAL, or Google Jamboard.

- Pose a question or topic related to the training and invite participants to brainstorm ideas, share insights, or collaborate on solutions.
- Encourage participants to use virtual sticky notes, drawings, or annotations to contribute their thoughts.

Digital whiteboard brainstorming - Utilize digital whiteboard tools like Miro, MURAL, or Google Jamboard.

- Pose a question or topic related to the training and invite participants to brainstorm ideas, share insights, or collaborate on solutions.
- Encourage participants to use virtual sticky notes, drawings, or annotations to contribute their thoughts.

Virtual team challenges - Assign virtual team challenges that require collaboration and problem-solving.

- For example, participants can work together to create a virtual team logo using graphic design tools like Canva or Adobe Spark.
- Encourage creativity and teamwork in completing the challenge within a specified timeframe.

Vitual coffee or lunch breaks - Schedule informal virtual coffee or lunch breaks where participants can join optional video calls to chat and get to know each other in a relaxed setting.

- Provide conversation starters or discussion topics to facilitate interactions and connections among participants.

MORE DETAILED EXPLAINATION OF THE ACTIVITIES

2 truths and a lie - Each participant shares three statements about themselves, two of which are true and one is a lie.

- Other participants guess which statement is the lie.
- This activity helps participants learn interesting facts about each other in a fun way.

Virtual show and tell - Participants choose an item from their surroundings and briefly explain why it's meaningful to them.

- They can share stories, memories, or interesting facts related to the item.
- This activity fosters personal connections and encourages participants to share more about themselves.

Emoji introduction - Participants introduce themselves using only emojis.

- They select emojis that represent their name, job, hobbies, interests, etc.
- Others guess the meaning behind the emojis and ask follow-up questions.

Photo sharing scavenge hunt - Participants share a photo from their phone or computer related to a specific theme (e.g., favorite vacation spot, pet, hobby).

- They briefly describe the photo and its significance.
- This activity encourages creativity and provides insights into participants' lives outside of work.

Would you rather - Facilitator poses a series of "Would You Rather" questions related to various scenarios or preferences.

- Participants respond with their choices and briefly explain their reasoning.
- This activity sparks conversation and reveals participants' personalities and preferences.

Virtual name bingo - Create a bingo card with various characteristics or experiences (e.g., "Has traveled abroad," "Speaks more than one language," "Plays a musical instrument").

- Participants mingle in the virtual room and find others who match the characteristics on their bingo card.
- They ask each other questions to fill out their bingo card.

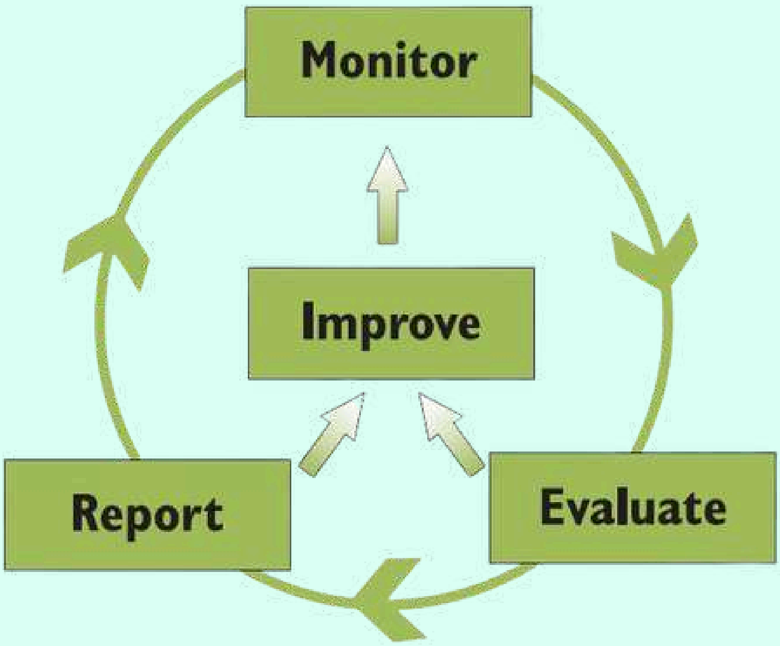
Speed networking rounds - Participants are paired up for short one-on-one video calls (e.g., 2-3 minutes each).

- They introduce themselves, share a quick overview of their background, and discuss a prompt provided by the facilitator.
- After each round, participants rotate to meet someone new.
- This activity facilitates networking and allows participants to connect on a more personal level.

Virtual collaborative playlist - Create a collaborative playlist on a streaming platform like Spotify or YouTube.

- Participants add songs to the playlist that represent their favorite genres, artists, or moods.
- They can listen to the playlist together during breaks or downtime, sparking conversations about music preferences.

These activities are designed to promote engagement, build connections, and create a welcoming atmosphere for participants in online training sessions. All activities mentiond above can be implemented in real face2face situations but here is adaption to online learning environment.



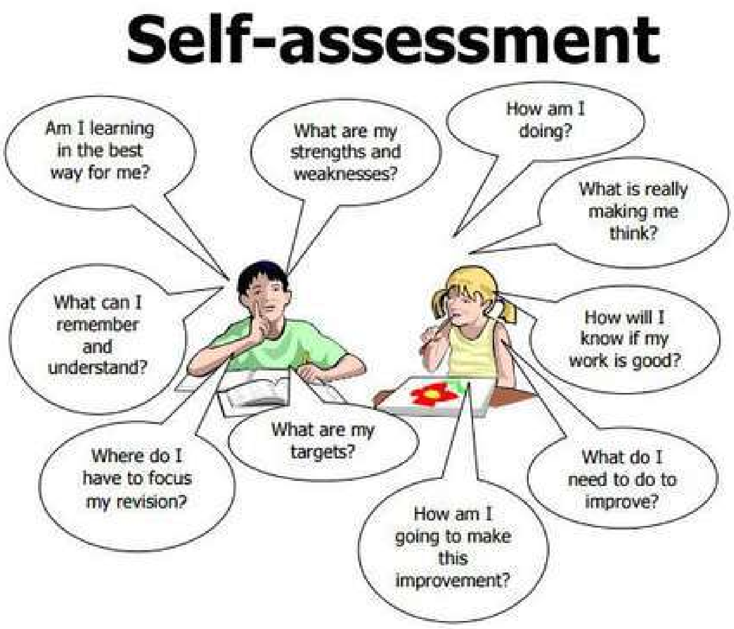
RECOMMENDED METHODS OF MONITORING THE QUALITY AND SUCCESS OF PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

In monitoring the quality and performance of the education program, the following activities are implemented:

- Conducting research and anonymous surveys among participants to evaluate various aspects, including the delivery of classes, adequacy of literature and learning resources, effectiveness of support strategies, implementation and enhancement of the learning and teaching process, participant workload, knowledge assessments, and communication with trainers.
- Undertaking research and surveys among trainers to gather feedback on similar aspects mentioned in the preceding paragraph.
- Analyzing the effectiveness, transparency, and objectivity of assessments, as well as the attainment of learning outcomes.
- Evaluating the material and personnel resources required for the execution of the learning and teaching process.
- The outcomes of these surveys furnish insights into the program's success and serve as a means to assess the quality of trainers' work.

Valuation Procedures

- Evaluation procedures are geared towards monitoring and assessing achievements in line with learning outcomes. This is accomplished through written, oral knowledge assessments and practical tests evaluating participants' proficiency in operating the different tasks in online environment, based on predetermined criteria for evaluating achievements.
- A self-assessment questionnaire for individuals who have completed a virtual assistant curriculum can help them reflect on their learning journey and identify areas for further growth.



Resource: https://images.sampletemplates.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Self-Assessment-Examples.jpg

An example:

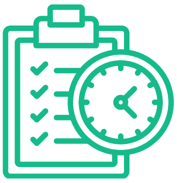
Communication skills

- **Rate your ability to effectively communicate with clients and team members through written communication (emails, messages, etc.).**

1. Excellent
2. Good
3. Fair
4. Needs Improvement

- **Rate your ability to communicate verbally during virtual meetings or phone calls.**

1. Excellent
2. Good
3. Fair
4. Needs Improvement



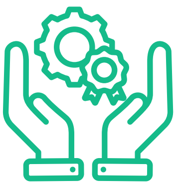
Time management

- **How well do you manage your time when handling multiple tasks or projects?**

1. Very well
2. Moderately well
3. Somewhat well
4. Not well at all

- **How often do you prioritize tasks based on deadlines and importance?**

1. Always
2. Often
3. Sometimes
4. Rarely



Technical proficiency

- **Rate your proficiency in using common software tools such as MS Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint), Google Workspace, and project management tools.**

1. Advanced
2. Intermediate
3. Beginner
4. No experience

- **How comfortable are you with learning and adapting to new software or digital tools?**

1. Very comfortable
2. Comfortable
3. Somewhat comfortable
4. Not comfortable

Problem solving

- **Describe a challenging situation you encountered during the virtual assistant training. How did you approach and resolve it?**
- **Rate your ability to independently troubleshoot technical issues or find solutions to problems.**

1. Very strong
2. Strong
3. Moderate
4. Weak

Customer service

- **Rate your ability to provide professional and courteous customer service to clients or stakeholders.**

1. Excellent
2. Good
3. Fair
4. Needs Improvement

- **Describe a scenario where you had to address a dissatisfied client or handle a difficult situation. How did you handle it?**

Self-reflection

- **What were the most valuable lessons or skills you gained from the virtual assistant curriculum?**
- **What areas do you feel you need to further develop or improve upon to excel as a virtual assistant?**

Future Goals

- **How do you plan to apply the skills and knowledge acquired from the virtual assistant training in your professional endeavors?**
- **What steps will you take to continue your professional development as a virtual assistant?**

Respondents should be encouraged to provide honest and thoughtful responses to each question to gain meaningful insights into their strengths, weaknesses, and areas for growth as virtual assistants.

Resource: https://image.freepik.com/free-vector/skill-levels-vector-knob-button-switch-education-proficiency-test-expertise-illustration_1284-42418.jpg

Example to assess participants' proficiency in operating various tasks in an online environment after completing a virtual assistant curriculum, you can design practical tests that simulate real-world scenarios. These tests should be aligned with predetermined criteria for evaluating achievements. Here's how you can structure practical tests for evaluating different tasks:

Email management

Task: Participants are provided with a simulated inbox containing emails from clients, colleagues, and stakeholders. They must prioritize, categorize, respond to, and archive emails based on predetermined criteria such as urgency, importance, and relevance.

- Evaluation Criteria:
- Time management
- Prioritization skills
- Professionalism in communication
- Accuracy in organizing and archiving emails

Calendar management

Task: Participants are given a calendar with appointments, meetings, and deadlines. They must schedule, reschedule, and manage events efficiently while considering conflicting schedules and time zones.

- Evaluation Criteria:
- Accuracy in scheduling and rescheduling events
- Ability to manage overlapping appointments
- Time zone management
- Attention to detail

Task and project management

Task: Participants are presented with a project management tool (e.g., Trello, Asana) containing tasks, deadlines, and project updates. They must organize tasks, assign responsibilities, track progress, and update project statuses.

- Evaluation Criteria:
- Ability to organize tasks effectively
- Delegation and collaboration skills
- Timely updates on task status
- Adaptability to changes in project scope or timeline

Online meeting coordination

Task: Participants are tasked with scheduling, hosting, and facilitating a virtual meeting using a platform like Zoom or Microsoft Teams. They must invite participants, manage meeting settings, share presentations, facilitate discussions, and record meeting minutes.

- Evaluation Criteria:
- Proficiency in setting up virtual meetings
- Facilitation of discussions and engagement
- Technical competence in using meeting features (e.g., screen sharing, chat)
- Accuracy in recording meeting minutes

Document management

Task: Participants are provided with a cloud storage platform (e.g., Google Drive, Dropbox) containing documents, spreadsheets, and presentations. They must organize, share, and collaborate on documents with team members while ensuring version control and document security.

- Evaluation Criteria:
- Organization of documents in a logical structure
- Secure sharing and collaboration on documents
- Version control and document tracking
- Adherence to document management best practices

Customer support

Task: Participants are given scenarios simulating customer inquiries or support tickets. They must respond to customer queries promptly, professionally, and effectively using predefined responses or knowledge base resources.

- Evaluation Criteria:
- Responsiveness to customer inquiries
- Clarity and professionalism in communication
- Problem-solving skills
- Accuracy in providing information and assistance

Technical troubleshooting

Task: Participants encounter simulated technical issues such as software glitches, connectivity problems, or device malfunctions. They must troubleshoot and resolve the issues using available resources or seeking assistance when necessary.

- Evaluation Criteria:
- Methodical approach to troubleshooting
- Resourcefulness in finding solutions
- Effective communication when seeking assistance
- Timeliness in resolving technical issues

Overall performance

Task: Participants are evaluated on their overall performance in navigating and completing tasks within a simulated online work environment. This may include multitasking, adapting to changes, and maintaining professionalism throughout.

- Evaluation Criteria:
- Efficiency in completing tasks
- Adaptability to changes and challenges
- Professionalism in communication and conduct
- Overall quality of work produced

After participants complete each task, assess their performance based on the predetermined evaluation criteria. Provide constructive feedback to help them understand their strengths and areas for improvement.

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Curriculum

A STEM-Driven Vocational Curriculum for Future Careers

Self Employment

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Introduction

This training program offers comprehensive guidance on starting and managing your freelance journey, detailing the various responsibilities and drawing comparisons to traditional employment models. It explores the different types of freelancing, elucidating the essential skills and requisite tools for success in this domain.

Whether you're wondering how to carve out a niche, secure clients, or establish a thriving practice, this course provides detailed insights and actionable steps. It also contrasts different freelancing models and outlines the prerequisites for each.

The course addresses client management and effective collaboration within small teams or networks. It underscores crucial data security measures and imparts the knowledge and techniques vital for excelling in self-management, whether embarking on a new freelance journey or enhancing existing skills. It explores the challenges commonly faced by freelancers and offers strategies for overcoming them.

For those contemplating freelancing, the course offers comprehensive guidance on effective branding, marketing, and pricing strategies. It meticulously outlines the advantages and disadvantages of freelancing and provides practical advice on acquiring and serving clients. The Covid-19 pandemic has made many people aware of the possibilities of working from home and collaborating online, driving the global need for remote work solutions and the skills to support them. This training will help VET students learn how to start and run your freelance career from professionals, equipping them with the tools and knowledge needed for success in the modern work landscape.

Educational Approach of the Curriculum

The freelancing curriculum is designed to serve a diverse group of learners, including both youth and adults, with a particular focus on NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) individuals. NEET individuals, typically aged between 18 and 29, face unique challenges such as social and economic barriers that prevent them from participating in traditional educational or employment opportunities.

By targeting this group, the curriculum aims to provide them with practical skills and knowledge that can enhance their employability and integration into the workforce. The program is structured to accommodate the varying needs of youth and adult learners, ensuring that the content is accessible, engaging, and relevant to all VET students.

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Coined by German educator Alexander Kapp in 1833 and later adopted by philosopher Johann Friedrich Herbart, the term "andragogy" experienced a resurgence in Europe post-World War I. Its prominence grew internationally, notably in France, England, Switzerland, Yugoslavia, and Canada. The United States saw its widespread adoption in the late 1960s, influenced by adult education pioneers Edward Lindeman and Malcolm Knowles. Knowles delineated six principles of adult learning, emphasizing:

1. Internal motivation and self-direction
2. Integration of life experiences into learning
3. Goal orientation
4. Relevance of learning to life
5. Practical application
6. Respect for adult learners

To ensure the effective adoption of program content by small business owner participants, the learning and teaching process should prioritize practical knowledge and skills. This approach facilitates easier comprehension and application of the curriculum.

The curriculum outlined here emphasizes interactive learning and teaching methods within the vocational education and training (VET) framework, leveraging available ICT technologies. However, it's crucial to recognize that trainers will be working with adults, including individuals of varying ages and levels of prior knowledge, particularly in ICT skills. Therefore, the curriculum is designed to offer flexibility, with options for live classes tailored to individual students' needs, as well as online learning modules accessible online.

When teaching VET students, it's important to:

- Establish clear training and pedagogical objectives.
- Tap into participants' professional expertise; for instance, inquire about their application of virtual assistance curriculum in their work.
- Acknowledge and leverage participants' existing knowledge and experience, assessing it through oral or multiple-choice questions.
- Foster participant interaction, encouraging the exchange of professional insights and inviting discussion on familiar topics.
- Emphasize practical learning experiences, tailoring examples, case studies, and simulations to real-work contexts.
- Recognize the diversity within the participant group, accommodating varying levels of skill and experience.
- Assess the participants' prior knowledge, considering factors such as age and work experience.
- Emphasize the importance of group dynamics, recognizing that education extends beyond mere information transfer. Respect the VET participants' autonomy and avoid patronizing attitudes.
- Be mindful of any limitations within the group dynamics and involve virtual assitants to be in the training process.
- Clarify assessment techniques upfront, framing them as tools to gauge learning rather than as tests.
- Acknowledge that many participants may have work-centric life paths, and tailor pedagogical methods accordingly to avoid evoking negative school-related memories.

The curriculum for small business owners is structured into four modules, comprising a blend of guided theoretical classes, hands-on work-based learning, and independent study by participants. This curriculum introduces blended learning, which Bonk & Graham (2006) describe as "part of the ongoing convergence of two archetypal learning environments" (p. 2). However, the influences of these two types of delivery are not equal, and how blending looks varies depending on whether one is starting from an in-person educational background or a distance education background.

Traditional face-to-face, in-person, classroom-based teaching and learning have been used for centuries as the ubiquitous delivery method. Distance and distributed teaching and learning opportunities are much newer, particularly in reference to technology-enabled learning. When online education became available, it was first used in distance education, with students studying fully online. The blending of classroom-based learning and online or distance education came later.

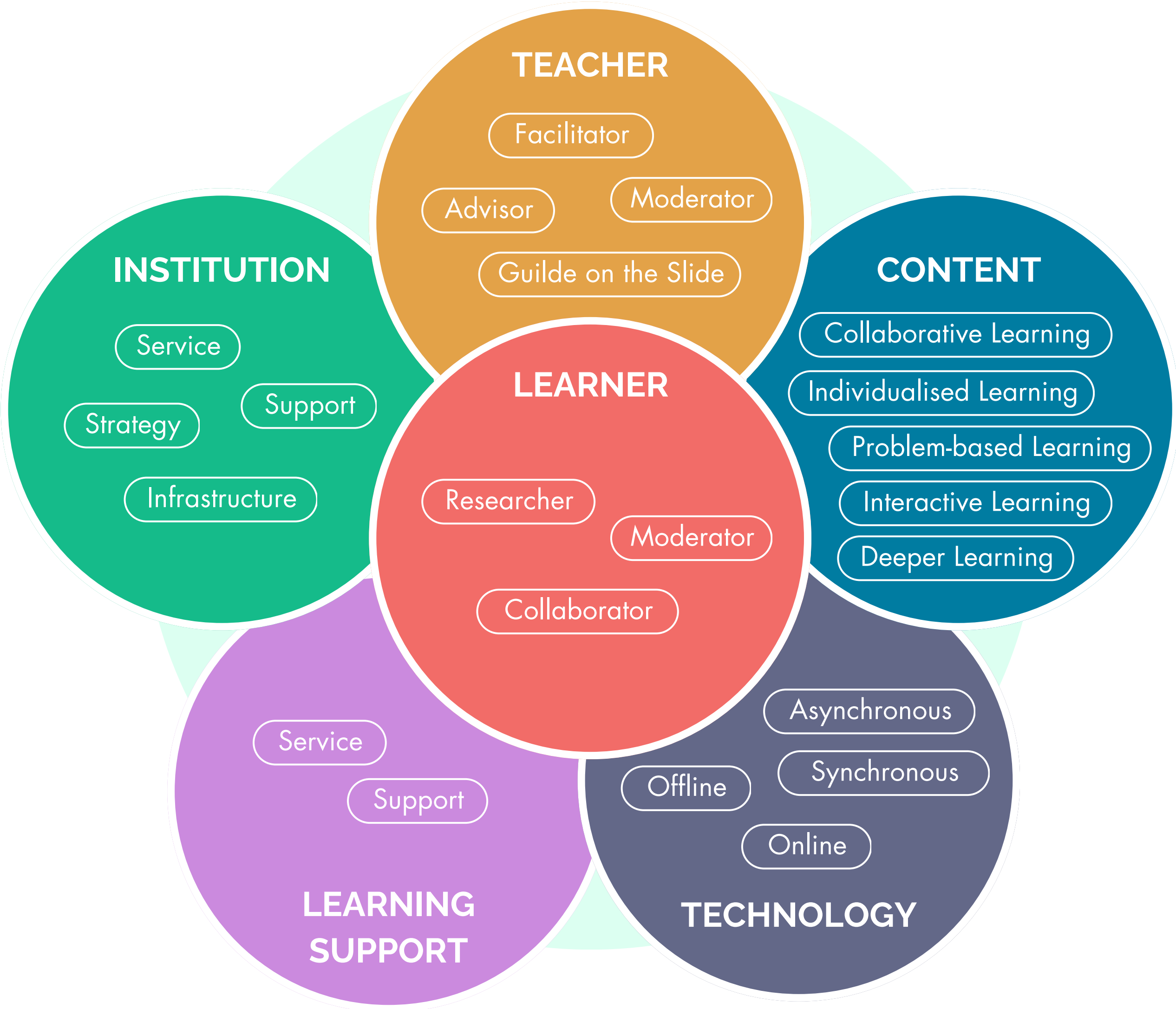


Figure 1.1. The CABLS framework

Resource - https://openbooks.col.org/blendedlearning/chapter/chapter-2-theories-supporting-blended-learning/
The CABLS framework is designed to "facilitate a deeper, more accurate understanding of the dynamic and adaptive nature of blended learning" (Wang et al., 2015, p. 390).

In keeping with the original three presences of the The Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework (social presence, cognitive presence and teaching presence), blended learning using the CoI framework creates opportunities for self-reflection, active cognitive processing, interaction and peer-teaching. In addition, expert guidance from teachers at the right time encourages engagement and shared application activities, highlighting the importance of creating communities of inquiry in the classroom — whether face-to-face, online or blended.

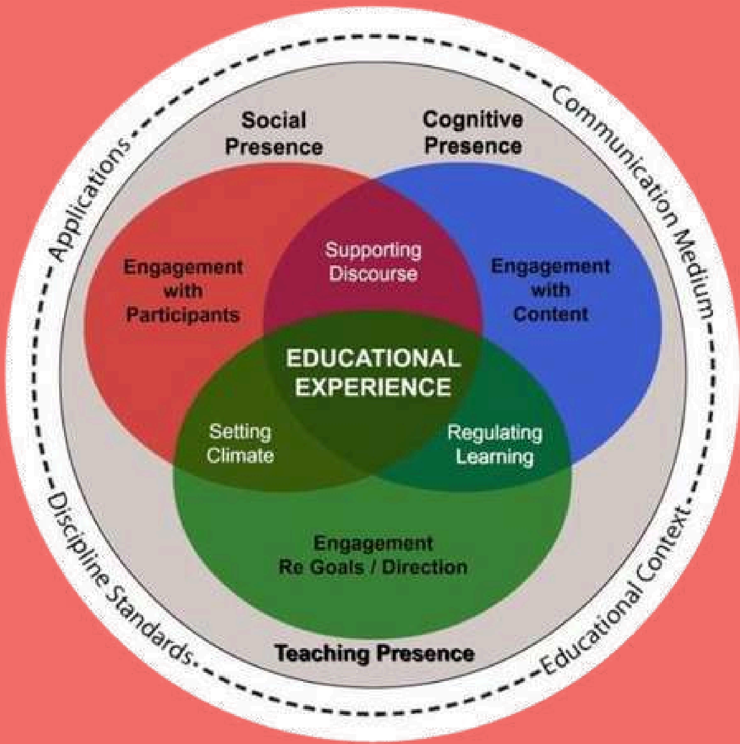


Figure 1.2. The Community of Inquiry model, the same resourse as above

Another type of blend adds technology in the classroom. Often called technology-enabled learning, adding technology to in-person teaching and learning may foster engagement and improve learning outcomes. The SAMR model, is an approach for the progressive implementation of new technology.

SAMR MODEL

Substitution
Tech acts as a tool substitute with no functional change

Augmentation
Tech acts as a tool substitute with functional improvement

Modification
Tech allows for significant task redesign

Redefinition
Tech allows for the creation of new tasks previously inconceivable

Figure 1.3 SAMR model, the same as above

The program spends a total duration of 79 hours, distributed as follows:

Requirements for enrollment in the program include:

- Previous qualification at level 1, attained upon completion of basic education (which correspondents to finished primary school).
- Minimum age of 18 years.

The self-employment role (free-lance) is ideal for you if:

- You excel in multitasking and managing various tasks efficiently.
- You possess strong organizational skills and attention to detail.
- You are proficient in communication, both written and verbal.
- You are tech-savvy and adaptable to using different digital tools and platforms.
- You enjoy providing leadership and direction to your team.
- You thrive in an entrepreneurial environment and can work independently with minimal supervision.
- You are dedicated to delivering high-quality products or services and meeting deadlines consistently.
- You are proactive and resourceful in problem-solving situations.
- You are committed to continuous learning and improving your business skills.

Guided learning and teaching sessions	Work-based learning activities	Independent study by participants
25 hours	41 hours	13 hours

Material conditions necessary for executing the program for virtual assistants include:

- **Theoretical Teaching:**

1. Projector for visual presentations
2. Teacher's computer with Internet access for accessing online resources and materials

- **Practical Teaching:**

Digital in simulation for hands-on training and practice

Legal framework

Several existing regulations and directives within the EU may indirectly apply to freelancers and the technologies they interact with. Understanding and complying with these legal requirements is crucial for the successful operation of a freelance career. Key regulations include:

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR):

- **Overview:** GDPR governs the processing of personal data and aims to protect the privacy of EU citizens. It applies to all freelancers that handle personal data, regardless of size.
- **Implications for Freelancers:** Ensure data protection measures are in place, such as obtaining consent for data collection, implementing data security practices, and allowing clients to access and delete their data.

ePrivacy Directive:

- **Overview:** This directive complements the GDPR by addressing privacy and electronic communications. It focuses on issues such as cookies, direct marketing, and confidentiality.
- **Implications for Freelancers:** Comply with rules regarding the use of cookies on websites, obtain consent for marketing communications, and protect the confidentiality of communications.

Consumer Rights Directive:

- **Overview:** This directive sets out the rights of consumers when purchasing goods and services, particularly in the context of online and distance sales.
- **Implications for Freelancers:** Provide clear information about services, ensure transparent pricing, offer a cooling-off period for service changes, and handle complaints effectively.

Electronic Commerce Directive:

- **Overview:** Regulates online services in the EU, covering aspects such as electronic contracts, liability of service providers, and commercial communications.
- **Implications for Freelancers:** Ensure compliance with rules on online advertising, clearly state terms and conditions for online transactions, and understand liability limitations for user-generated content.

Intellectual Property Rights (IPR):

- **Overview:** Various regulations and directives protect intellectual property, including trademarks, patents, and copyrights.
- **Implications for Freelancers:** Protect your innovations and brands by securing relevant IP rights and respecting the IP rights of others to avoid legal disputes.

Employment Regulations:

- **Overview:** A range of EU directives cover employment rights, including working hours, health and safety, and anti-discrimination laws.

- **Implications for Freelancers:** Ensure fair treatment in client engagements, maintain a safe working environment, and comply with regulations on working hours and contract terms if hiring subcontractors.

Taxation and VAT Directives:

- **Overview:** EU directives harmonize VAT rules and other tax regulations across member states.
- **Implications for Freelancers:** Register for VAT if applicable, understand cross-border VAT rules, and maintain accurate financial records.

By staying informed and compliant with these regulations, freelancers can operate more smoothly and avoid legal pitfalls. It is advisable for freelancers to consult legal professionals or resources specific to their industry and region to ensure full compliance with all relevant laws and regulations.

This curriculum is composed of for (4) modules:

MODULE 1:
Foundations of Freelancing

MODULE 2:
Managing Freelance Projects

MODULE 3:
Marketing and Business Development

MODULE 4:
Financial Management and Legal Aspects

Foundations of Freelancing

This module serves as an introduction to the field. By utilizing these literature resources and teaching aids, VET students in Module 1 will gain a thorough understanding of self-employment overview, equipping them with the skills and knowledge to create robust and innovative self-employment plans.

- **Duration:** 20 hours
- **Theoretical Teaching:** 6 hours
- **Practical Teaching:** 10 hours
- **Independent Learning:** 4 hours

Literature and Specific Teaching Aids for Module 1

1. "Freelance to Freedom: The Roadmap for Creating a Side Business to Achieve Financial, Time and Life Freedom" by Vincent Pugliese
    - Offers insights into the transition from traditional employment to freelancing, discussing various freelancing models and personal strengths.
2. "The Freelance Manifesto: A Field Guide for the Modern Motion Designer" by Joey Korenman
    - While focused on motion design, this book provides valuable advice on freelancing fundamentals that apply to various fields.
3. "The 4-Hour Workweek: Escape 9-5, Live Anywhere, and Join the New Rich" by Timothy Ferriss
    - Explores different models of freelancing and niche markets, emphasizing efficiency and lifestyle design.
4. "Business for Bohemians: Live Well, Make Money" by Tom Hodgkinson
    - Discusses the principles of freelancing, focusing on finding and cultivating a personal niche.

Teaching Aids:

1. PowerPoint Presentations and Infographics: Visual aids explaining different freelancing models, the benefits and challenges of freelancing, and how to identify personal strengths.
2. Interactive Workshops: Sessions where students engage in activities to discover their skills, strengths, and potential niche markets.
3. Self-Assessment Tools: Worksheets and online quizzes to help students identify their unique strengths and preferred freelancing models.
4. Guest Speakers: Successful freelancers sharing their experiences and providing insights into different freelancing models and niches.

Hands-on Work-Based Learning:

Creating a Personal Brand, Setting Up Professional Profiles on Freelancing Platforms, and Developing a Portfolio

Literature and Specific Teaching Aids for Module 1

1. "Show Your Work!: 10 Ways to Share Your Creativity and Get Discovered" by Austin Kleon
    - Guides on creating a personal brand and showcasing work effectively.
2. "Building a StoryBrand: Clarify Your Message So Customers Will Listen" by Donald Miller
    - Offers strategies for creating a compelling personal brand.
3. "Freelance Writing for Beginners: Simple Steps to Build Your Writing Skills and Your Business" by Christine John
    - Covers setting up profiles on freelancing platforms and developing a professional portfolio.
4. "The Personal MBA: Master the Art of Business" by Josh Kaufman
    - While broader in scope, it includes sections on marketing oneself and building a brand.

Teaching Aids:

1. Step-by-Step Guides: Written instructions and video tutorials on setting up profiles on major freelancing platforms like Upwork, Fiverr, and Freelancer.
2. Portfolio Workshops: Interactive sessions where VET students create or enhance their portfolios, including practical exercises and peer reviews.
3. Branding Exercises: Activities to help VET students define their personal brand, including logo creation, tagline development, and crafting a personal mission statement.
4. Template Resources: Pre-made templates for creating professional profiles, portfolios, resumes, and business cards.

Independent Study:
Researching Market Trends, Reading Case Studies of Successful Freelancers, and Completing Assignments to Reinforce Learning

Literature in English Language:

1. "The Gig Economy: The Complete Guide to Getting Better Work, Taking More Time Off, and Financing the Life You Want" by Diane Mulcahy
   - Discusses market trends and includes case studies of successful freelancers.
2. "Freelance Wars: The Five Skills You Need to Compete in the Future of Work" by Jason Adams
   - Analyzes market trends and provides actionable steps for freelancers.
3. "Real Artists Don't Starve: Timeless Strategies for Thriving in the New Creative Age" by Jeff Goins
   - Offers insights from case studies of successful freelancers across different fields.
4. "You Are a Brand!: In Person and Online, How Smart People Brand Themselves for Business Success" by Catherine Kaputa
   - Focuses on branding and includes case studies of successful personal branding efforts.

Specific Teaching Aids:

1. Online Research Assignments: Tasks where VET students research current market trends in freelancing, identify in-demand skills, and analyze industry reports.
2. Case Study Reviews: Worksheets and discussion guides for analyzing case studies of successful freelancers, focusing on their strategies and methods.
3. Assignment Templates: Pre-structured templates for assignments on market research, trend analysis, and strategy formulation.
4. Forums and Discussion Boards: Online platforms where VET students can share their findings, discuss market trends, and provide feedback on each other's work.

Objectives:

- Define the concept of freelancing and articulate its significance within modern professional landscapes, emphasizing its pivotal role in driving innovation and economic growth.
- Understand what freelancing is and its impact on today's job market and economy.
- Recognize the contributions of freelancers to various industries and the flexibility they offer to businesses.
- Trace the historical development and evolution of freelancing, exploring how it has evolved from traditional models to encompass digital entrepreneurship and virtual business platforms.
- Learn about the origins and growth of freelancing, from traditional gig work to modern online platforms.
- Explore how technology has transformed freelancing, enabling remote work and digital collaboration.
- Identify current trends and opportunities within the realm of freelancing, including the emergence of e-commerce, remote work, and innovative business models, enabling VET students to adapt and capitalize on market dynamics.
- Investigate the latest trends in freelancing, such as the rise of remote work and the gig economy.
- Discover new opportunities in e-commerce and other emerging markets for freelancers.
- Understand the diverse roles and responsibilities associated with freelancing across various professional settings, ranging from sole proprietors to collaborative teams, fostering a comprehensive understanding of freelancing endeavors.

- Examine the different types of freelancing roles, from independent contractors to team-based projects.
- Gain insights into the responsibilities and expectations of freelancers in various industries.
- Recognize the paramount importance of effective communication and collaboration skills in virtual/real work environments for freelancers, emphasizing their role in building strong relationships, facilitating teamwork, and driving business success.
- Develop essential communication skills for working with clients and collaborators online.
- Learn strategies for effective teamwork and relationship-building in a virtual freelancing context.

Topics Covered:

- Introduction to Free-lancing
- Exploring Different Freelancing Models
- Identifying Personal Strengths and Niche Markets
- Creating a Personal Brand and Online Presence
- SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)

Learning Activities:

- Lectures and presentations
- Case studies and real-world examples
- Group discussions and interactive exercises
- Guest speakers from the self-employment

Session 1

Define freelancing, its key characteristics, and its importance in the modern economy

- Definition and scope of freelancing.
- Role of freelancers in various industries.
- Benefits and challenges of freelancing.

Steps

Welcome and orientation - Provide an overview of the course and logistics, including the schedule, expectations, and guidelines for learning. Ice breaker and team building activities. Invite local freelancers, economists, or industry experts to participate in a panel discussion on the importance of freelancing in the economy. Divide VET students into small groups and provide each group with flip charts or whiteboards. Ask them to brainstorm and list the advantages and challenges associated with freelancing. Afterward, facilitate a discussion. Provide VET students with case studies of successful freelancers from various industries. Encourage them to analyze these case studies, identifying key factors contributing to their success, such as innovative approaches, effective marketing strategies, and customer-centric practices.

Duration

60 min theoretical + 60 min practical

Session 2

Understand the various freelancing models and their applications

- Types of freelancing: project-based, retainer, and gig-based work.
- Pros and cons of different models.
- Case studies of successful freelancers in different models.
- Choosing the right model for individual strengths and market demand.

Steps

- Start with short presentation
- Divide students into small groups and assign each group a specific time period Brainstorm and list the pros and cons of each freelancing model (project-based, retainer, and gig-based).
- Discuss their findings within the group.
- Provide VET students with case studies of successful freelancers from various industries. Analyze the case studies to identify key factors contributing to their success.
- Focus on the model they chose, their innovative approaches, effective marketing strategies, and customer-centric practices. Encourage VET students to reflect on their strengths and market opportunities.
- Provide worksheets for VET students to outline their ideal freelancing model based on their analysis. Facilitate a final discussion to share insights and personal plans. Conclusion: Summarize the key points discussed during the session and provide resources for further learning and exploration of freelancing models.

Duration

30 min theoretical + 30 min practical

Session 3

Learn how to assess personal skills and identify potential niches in the freelancing market

- Self-assessment tools for identifying strengths and weaknesses.
- Researching market demand and niche opportunities.
- Matching personal skills to market needs.
- Developing a unique selling proposition (USP).

Steps

- Begin with a short presentation covering:
- The importance of self-assessment in freelancing.
- How identifying strengths and weaknesses can guide career choices and niche selection.
- Introduce various self-assessment tools and techniques for identifying personal strengths and weaknesses.
- Provide worksheets or digital tools for VET students to complete a self-assessment. Facilitate a group discussion to share insights and reflections from the self-assessment activity. Divide VET students into small groups and assign each group a different industry or market segment. Instruct groups to research their assigned market, identifying demand trends and potential niche opportunities.
- Facilitate a discussion where groups present their findings and discuss potential niches they identified. Guide VET students in matching their assessed skills to the market needs identified in the previous activity.
- Provide a worksheet or template for VET students to map their skills to specific market opportunities. Facilitate a discussion to share matches and explore any overlaps or unique insights.
- Explain the concept of a Unique Selling Proposition (USP) and its importance in freelancing.
- Provide examples of successful USPs and the elements that make them effective. Provide a template for crafting a clear and compelling USP.
- Facilitate a group discussion.
- Summarize the key points discussed during the session and provide resources for further learning and refining self-assessment, market research, and USP development skills.

Duration

30 min theoretical + 90 min practical

Session 1

Introduction to Personal Brand and Online Presence

- Importance of market research for small businesses
- Types of market research methods (qualitative vs. quantitative)
- Ethical considerations in conducting market research

Steps

- Short presentation: Define personal branding and its significance in the freelancing world.
- Discuss the elements of a personal brand, including values, unique skills, and professional image.
- Explain how a strong personal brand can attract clients and opportunities.
- Guide VET students through the process of creating or enhancing their online profiles (e.g., LinkedIn, personal website).
- Provide a checklist for optimizing online profiles, including profile pictures, bios, portfolios, and contact information. Facilitate a discussion
- Provide a template for scheduling and planning content distribution across various platforms. Facilitate a discussion
- Summarize the key points discussed during the session and provide resources for further learning and implementing personal branding and online presence strategies. Encourage VET students to continuously refine their personal brand and online presence to attract and retain clients.

Duration

60 min theoretical, 60 minutes practical

Session 2

Leveraging Content and Social Media for Brand Building

Work in groups and individual

Steps

Short Introduction. Instruct VET students to develop a content plan, including ideas for blog posts, social media updates, and other forms of content that align with their personal brand.

Duration

60 min practical and 120 min independent work

Session 1

Setting up professional profiles on freelancing platforms

- Crafting a Compelling Profile Summary
- Showcasing Skills and Experience

Steps

- Short Introduction to the topic. Provide VET students with examples of strong and weak profile summaries.
- Instruct VET students to communicate profile summaries, highlighting skills, experience, and what sets those people apart from other freelancers. Explain the importance of showcasing relevant skills and experience in a freelancing profile.
- Discuss how to effectively list skills, including using keywords that clients are likely to search for.
- Provide tips for presenting work experience, including specific projects, roles, and accomplishments. Instruct VET students to list their key skills and relevant work experience in a clear and concise format.
- Provide a worksheet for VET students to identify and articulate their most marketable skills and experiences.
- Facilitate a discussion

Duration

90 min theoretical and 60 min practical

Session 2

Developing a portfolio

- Creating a Portfolio and Adding Testimonials

Steps

Explain the role of a portfolio in demonstrating expertise and attracting clients

- Introducing to Freelancing Platforms:

1. Upwork
2. Freelancer
3. Fiverr
4. Toptal
5. Guru
6. PeoplePerHour
7. 99designs
8. FlexJobs
9. SimplyHired
10. Behance (for creatives)
11. Dribbble (for creatives)

- Discuss the types of work samples to include in a portfolio and how to present them effectively. Guide VET students through the process of creating a digital portfolio, selecting and organizing their best work samples.
- Instruct VET students to draft requests for testimonials from past clients or colleagues.
- Facilitate a discussion
- Summarize the key points discussed during the session and provide resources for further learning and refining freelancing profiles. Encourage VET students to continuously update and improve their profiles to stay competitive and attract more clients.

Duration

30 min theoretical + 90 min practical + 120 min independent

Session 3

Researching market trends in free-lancing

- Identifying Emerging Niches and Industries
- Monitoring Demand for Freelance Services
- Tracking Technological and Cultural Shifts

Steps

- Begin with a short presentation covering:
1. Methods for accessing and interpreting industry reports and market analyses.
2. How to identify emerging niches and industries within freelancing.
3. Examples of industries experiencing growth in freelancing (e.g., digital marketing, software development, remote consulting).

- Homework research and presentation of Tools and techniques for tracking and predicting fluctuations in demand for freelance services

- Independent work on one of the topics to better understand shifts, each VET student receives one from the topics to research and elaborate, some will have the same to compare
1. How technological innovations (e.g., AI, blockchain) are impacting freelancing.
2. Techniques for staying informed about cultural shifts influencing freelancing trends.
3. Case studies of freelancers adapting to technological and cultural changes to maintain relevance and competitiveness.

- Facilitate a discussion.
- Summarize the key points discussed during the session and provide resources for further learning and refining freelancing profiles.

Duration

30 min theoretical + 120 min practical

Module 1

Foundations of Freelancing

Theoretical Teaching (6 hours):

Methodology: Theoretical teaching sessions will be conducted through interactive lectures, presentations, and multimedia resources. VET students will engage in discussions, case studies, and Q&A sessions to deepen their understanding of small business concepts.

- Topics Covered: Understand the various freelancing models and their applications, personal skills and potential niches in the freelancing market, Personal Brand and Online Presence, Creating a Professional Portfolio

Practical Teaching (10 hours):

Methodology: Practical teaching sessions will involve hands-on activities, role-playing exercises, and simulations to reinforce theoretical concepts learned. VET students will have the opportunity to practice essential skills and techniques under the guidance of instructors.

- Activities: Role-playing scenarios, case studies, and collaborative projects will be utilized to enhance practical skills.
- Integration: Practical sessions will be integrated with theoretical content to provide a comprehensive learning experience, allowing VET students to apply theoretical knowledge in practical scenarios.

Independent study by VET students (4 hours):

Learning by doing new tool - Tools for social media content making and research on how to improve and effectively leverage content and social media for brand building as well as reseach on market trends in free-lancing.

Learning outcomes

- Understand freelancing, its benefits, and its role in the economy.
- Recognize freelancing's importance for personal and professional growth.
- Differentiate between freelancing models (e.g., project-based, retainer, gig-based).
- Use self-assessment tools to identify personal strengths and skills for freelancing.
- Explore niche markets and opportunities based on strengths and market demand.
- Develop a personal brand reflecting values, skills, and unique selling points.
- Create a professional narrative and image to attract target clients.
- Optimize profiles on freelancing platforms to showcase skills and achievements.
- Research current and emerging freelancing trends.
- Analyze market data to anticipate opportunities and challenges.
- Apply concepts to real-world scenarios, demonstrating freelancing readiness.

Managing Freelance Projects

These resources and teaching aids are designed to provide a comprehensive and practical understanding of project and time management and client communication strategies. This module provides essential knowledge on exploring advanced project management software, reviewing project case studies, and self-assessment exercises.

- **Duration:** 16 hours
- **Theoretical Teaching:** 3 hours
- **Practical Teaching:** 10 hours
- **Independent study:** 7 hours

Literature in English Language:

- "The Freelance Manifesto: A Field Guide for the Modern Motion Designer" by Joey Korenman
- "Getting Things Done: The Art of Stress-Free Productivity" by David Allen

Specific Teaching Aids:

- Presentation slides covering project initiation, planning, execution, monitoring, and closure.
- Handouts summarizing key project management concepts, phases, and methodologies relevant to freelancers.
- Worksheets for practicing time blocking, Pomodoro Technique, and prioritization methods.
- Interactive activities to identify and prioritize tasks based on urgency and importance.
- Guidelines and tips for maintaining professional and effective communication with clients throughout project cycles.
- Simulated freelance project scenarios with varying complexities and client interactions.
- Access to project management software (e.g., Trello, Asana) with tutorial videos for hands-on practice.
- Online resources and tutorials for advanced features of project management tools (e.g., Gantt charts, resource allocation).
- Self-assessment quizzes and exercises to evaluate personal project management skills and competencies.
- Reflection prompts to identify strengths, areas for improvement, and goals for professional development.

Objectives:

- Gain a solid understanding of project management principles and methodologies relevant to freelance work and learn to apply project initiation, planning, execution, monitoring, and closure phases effectively in freelance projects.
- Acquire techniques and strategies for prioritizing tasks, managing deadlines, and optimizing time allocation in freelance projects.
- Learn effective strategies for clear, professional communication with clients throughout the project lifecycle.
- Develop skills in managing client expectations, handling feedback, and resolving conflicts to maintain positive client relationships.

Topics Covered:

- Project management fundamentals
- Time Management techniques
- Client communication strategies
- Self-assessment exercises

Learning Activities:

- Skill-building workshops and exercises
- Role-playing scenarios
- Group projects and collaborative tasks
- Guest lectures by industry professionals
- Self-assessment and reflection activities

Session 1

Introduce the basic principles of project management and how they apply to freelancing

- Defining project management and its importance.
- Key project management phases: initiation, planning, execution, monitoring, and closure.
- Tools and techniques for effective project management.
- Setting SMART goals and objectives for freelance projects.

Steps

- Short Introduction to the topic. Definition of project management and its importance in freelancing.
- How effective project management can lead to successful project outcomes and client satisfaction.
- Explain the five key phases of project management: initiation, planning, execution, monitoring, and closure.
- Provide an overview of each phase and its significance in the project lifecycle. Introduce various project management tools and techniques that are particularly useful for freelancers, such as Trello, Asana, and Gantt charts.
- Guide VET students through setting up tasks, deadlines, and milestones in the tool. Explain the concept of SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) goals and their importance in project management.
- Instruct VET students to develop SMART goals and objectives for a current or hypothetical freelance project.
- Provide a template for crafting clear and actionable SMART goals. Facilitate a group discussion. Summarize the key points discussed during the session and provide resources for further learning and mastering project management principles and tools for freelancing.

Duration

60 min theoretical and 60 min practical

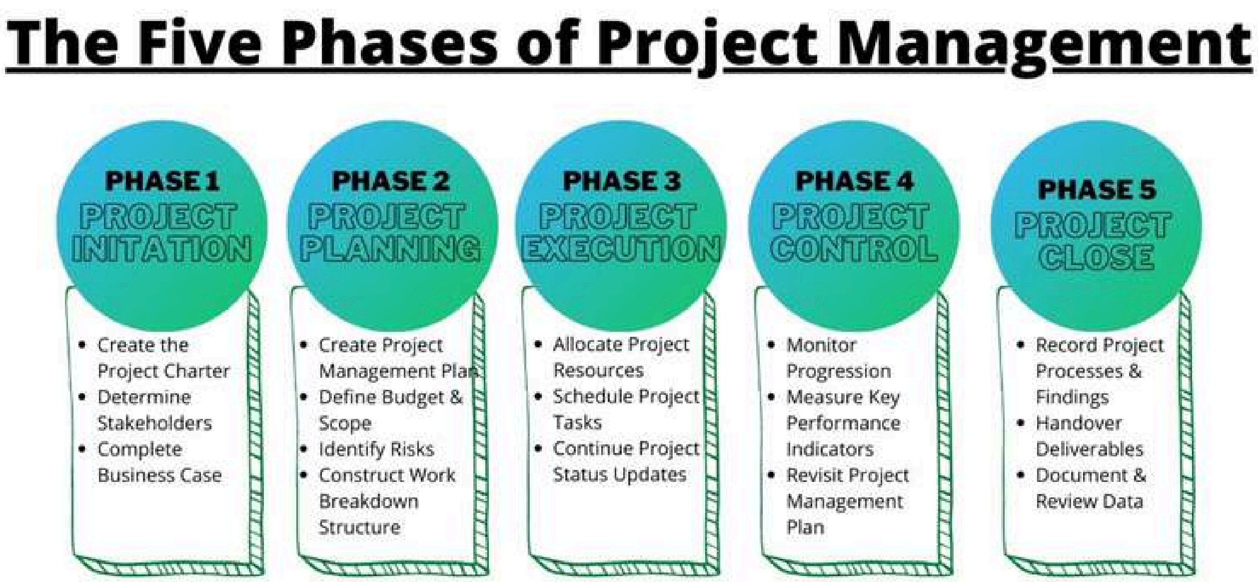
Session 2

Practical Application of Project Management Tools in Freelance Projects

- Hands-on Project Planning Using Tools
- Simulation of Freelance Project Scenarios

Steps

- Provide a hands-on exercise where VET students use a project management tool to create a simple project plan for a hypothetical freelance project. They define project scope, set milestones, allocate resources, and schedule tasks effectively. Explore how project management tools facilitate collaboration and communication in remote and freelance settings (online in groups)
- Discuss strategies for adapting project management methodologies to suit the flexibility and autonomy of freelance work



Resources: https://quickbooks.intuit.com/ca/resources/time-tracking/what-are-project-management-processes/

Duration

120 min practical, 120 min independent

Session 1

Essential time management skills to enhance productivity and efficiency.

- Importance of time management in freelancing.
- Time management methods: Pomodoro Technique, Eisenhower Matrix, and time blocking.
- Prioritizing tasks and managing deadlines.
- Tools for tracking time and organizing tasks.

Steps

- Short presentation
- The importance of time management in freelancing.
- How effective time management can improve productivity, reduce stress, and lead to successful project outcomes. Introduce various time management methods and explain how they can be applied to freelancing.
- **Pomodoro Technique:** Briefly explain the method and its benefits for maintaining focus and productivity.
- **Eisenhower Matrix:** Describe how to categorize tasks by urgency and importance to prioritize effectively.
- **Time Blocking:** Explain how to allocate specific time slots for different tasks to ensure a structured work schedule.
- Divide VET students into small groups and assign each group one of the time management methods.
- Instruct groups to create a brief presentation or demonstration on how to implement their assigned method in freelancing.
- Facilitate a discussion
- Provide strategies for setting priorities, such as the ABCDE method and the 80/20 rule (Pareto Principle).

Duration

30 min theoretical + 90 min practical + 120 min independent

Session 2

Practical Application of Time Management Tools in Freelance Projects

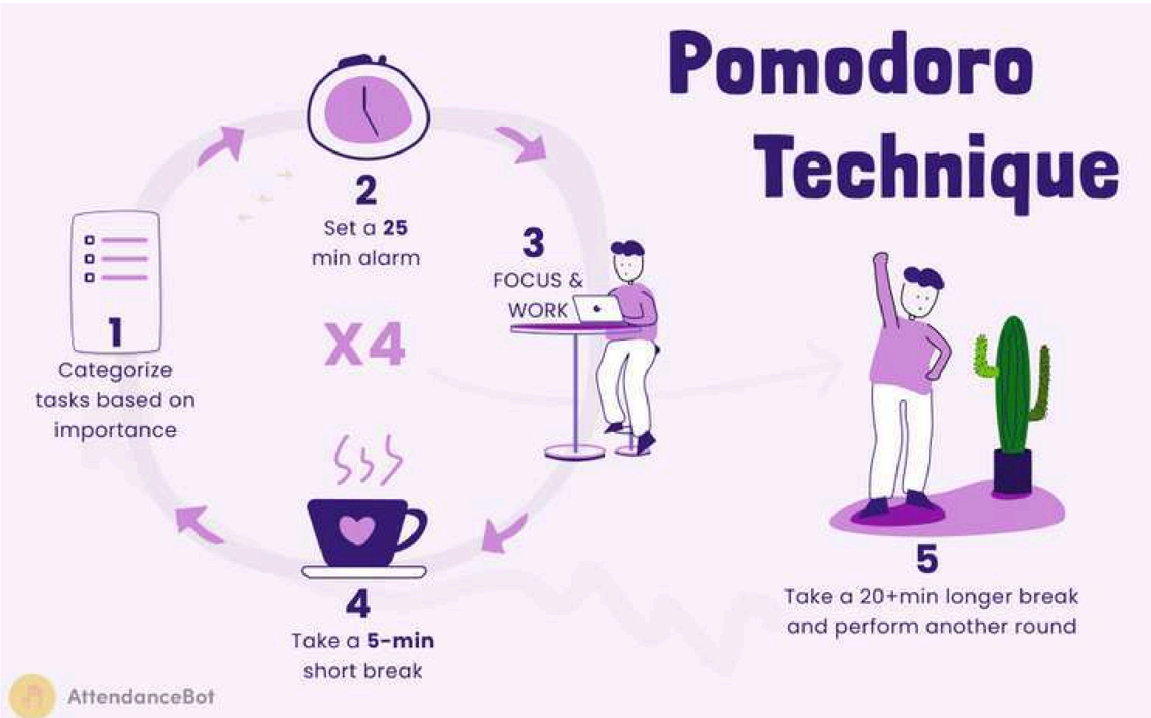
- Hands-on Time Management Planning Using Tools
- Simulation of Freelance Time Management Scenarios

Steps

- Provide VET students with a list of tasks for a hypothetical freelance project.
- Instruct them to prioritize the tasks using the strategies discussed. Introduce various tools for tracking time and organizing tasks, such as Toggl, RescueTime, and Trello. Provide a hands-on exercise where VET students choose one tool to track their time and organize tasks for a hypothetical freelance project. Summarize the key points discussed during the session and provide resources for further learning and mastering time management skills for freelancing. Encourage VET students to implement the techniques and tools in their daily work to enhance productivity and efficiency.

Duration

120 min practical,+ 120 min independent



Resource: https://www.attendancebot.com/blog/pomodoro-technique/

Session 1

Effective communication skills for interacting with clients

- Importance of clear and professional communication.
- Strategies for effective written and verbal communication.
- Managing client expectations and feedback.
- Techniques for handling difficult conversations and resolving conflicts.

Steps

- Begin with a short presentation covering:
- The importance of clear and professional communication in freelancing.
- How effective communication builds trust, improves client relationships, and leads to successful project outcomes.
- Discuss strategies for effective written communication, including clarity, conciseness, and tone.
- Provide examples of well-written emails, proposals, and project updates.
- Discuss strategies for effective verbal communication, including active listening, clear articulation, and non-verbal cues. Provide VET students with a scenario where they need to draft a professional email to a client (e.g., project update, proposal, or clarification request).
- Instruct VET students to write their emails and then pair up to role-play a client meeting, practicing verbal communication skills.
- Facilitate a discussion
- Discuss common sources of conflict in freelancing and the importance of addressing issues promptly and professionally.
- Provide techniques for handling difficult conversations, such as staying calm, empathizing, and focusing on solutions.
- Introduce conflict resolution strategies, such as finding common ground, negotiating compromises, and involving a mediator if necessary. Facilitate a discussion Summarize the key points discussed during the session and provide resources for further learning and practicing communication skills. Encourage VET students to apply the techniques and strategies in their freelance interactions to build stronger client relationships and achieve better project outcomes.

Duration

90 min theoretical + 90 min practical

Session 2

Practical Application of Client communication strategies in Freelance Projects

- Hands-on strategies in written and verbal communication
- Simulation of Freelance Conflict management Scenarios

Steps

- Provide a hands-on exercise where VET students use a communication strategies to create a well-written emails, proposals, and project updates. Provide VET students with scenarios where they need to manage a client's expectations and respond to feedback (e.g., project scope change or a client's criticism). Instruct VET students to prepare written response, focusing on maintaining professionalism and addressing the client's concerns.
- Explore client communication strategies in remote and freelance settings (online in groups): communication channels (practice each: Live, in-person, Email, Chat and messaging services (e.g., Microsoft Teams, Slack)
- Text messages, Phone calls, Video conferencing, Recorded video (e.g., Loom), Shared documents (e.g., Google Docs), Presentations (e.g., Mural, Google Slides), Visual thinking (e.g., Mural), setting clear next steps and action items, etc.
- Discuss communication strategies for adapting project management implementation to suit the clients.

Duration

120 min practical, 60 min independent

Module 2

Managing Freelance Projects

Theoretical Teaching (2,5 hours):

Methodology: Theoretical teaching sessions will be conducted through lectures, presentations, and group discussions. VET students will explore theoretical frameworks, best practices, and strategies.

- Topics Covered: Project Management, Time Management, Client conflict management, Negotiation, Communication channels

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Practical Teaching (10 hours):

Methodology: Practical teaching sessions will involve hands-on workshops, role-playing exercises, and real-world simulations to reinforce theoretical concepts and develop practical skills.

- Activities: Role-playing scenarios, task prioritization exercises, organizational challenges, and problem-solving simulations will be employed to enhance practical skills.

Independent study by VET students (7 hours):

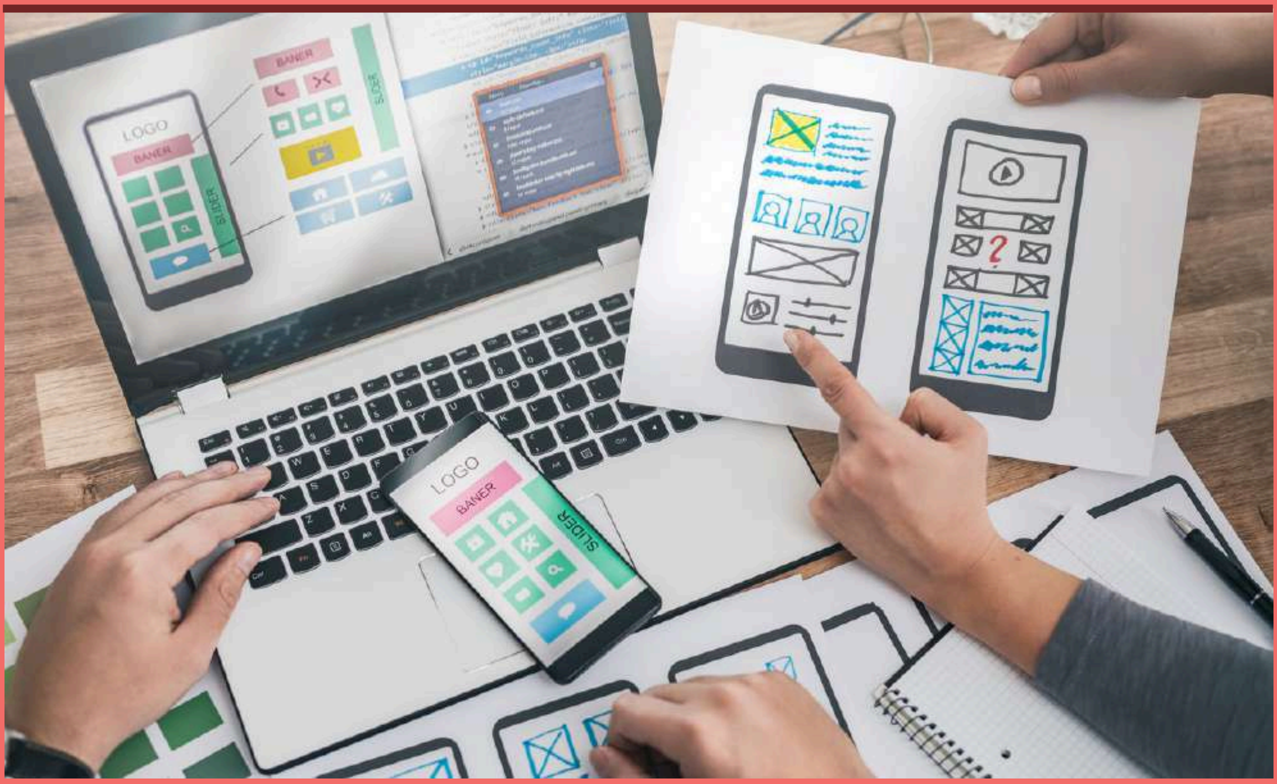
Learning by doing – Exploring client communication strategies in remote and freelance settings and communication channels.

Integration: Practical sessions will be closely integrated with theoretical content to facilitate the application of learned skills in realistic scenarios and prepare VET students for the demands of small business owner roles.

Learning Outcomes

- Understand the phases and principles of project management, including initiation, planning, execution, monitoring, and closure.
- Implement effective time management strategies such as prioritization techniques, time blocking, and the Pomodoro Technique.
- Develop clear and professional communication skills tailored to freelance client interactions.
- Manage client expectations, handle feedback, and resolve conflicts to maintain positive client relationships.
- Apply project management tools in simulated freelance project scenarios to plan, track progress, and manage deliverables.
- Participate in negotiation exercises to develop and refine skills in discussing project scope, timelines, and pricing with clients.
- Extract lessons learned and best practices to apply in real-world freelance project scenarios, enhancing project success rates.
- Set goals for professional development and continuous improvement in freelance project management practices.

Marketing and Business Development



This module covers strategies and tools for effective marketing and sales. It includes digital marketing, branding, customer relationship management, and sales techniques.

- **Duration:** 24 hours
- **Theoretical Teaching:** 9 hours
- **Practical Teaching:** 13 hours
- **Independent learning:** 2 hours

Literature in English Language:

- "Digital Marketing for Dummies" by Ryan Deiss and Russ Henneberry
- "Jab, Jab, Jab, Right Hook: How to Tell Your Story in a Noisy Social World" by Gary Vaynerchuk
- "Building a StoryBrand: Clarify Your Message So Customers Will Listen" by Donald Miller
- "Business Model Generation: A Handbook for Visionaries, Game Changers, and Challengers" by Alexander Osterwalder and Yves Pigneur
- "The Art of the Start 2.0: The Time-Tested, Battle-Hardened Guide for Anyone Starting Anything" by Guy Kawasaki

Specific Teaching Aids:

- Templates ready for use in devising digital marketing strategies, encompassing segments dedicated to SEO, content marketing, and plans for online advertising.
- Access provided to widely used social media management tools (e.g., Hootsuite, Buffer), along with resources for crafting and scheduling posts, evaluating engagement metrics, and overseeing social media initiatives.
- Engaging workshops designed to lead students through the creation and management of a brand, featuring exercises on formulating brand messaging, establishing visual identity, and developing brand strategy.
- Simulated scenarios where students can apply diverse sales tactics and strategies for closing deals within a controlled setting, benefiting from instructor feedback and coaching.
- Practical tutorials available for popular CRM software (e.g., Salesforce, HubSpot) to gain firsthand experience in customer relationship management, interaction tracking, and customer data analysis.
- Examination of successful marketing and sales campaigns across multiple sectors through case studies and examples, emphasizing effective practices and innovative methodologies.
- Tools facilitating the examination of marketing and sales data, including Google Analytics for web traffic assessment and CRM analytics for insights into customer behavior

These resources and teaching aids are designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of marketing and sales strategies, which is directly connected with business development, equipping learners with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in the competitive business environment.

Objectives:

- Gain foundational knowledge of marketing concepts and principles applicable to freelance business environments.
- Learn essential marketing strategies and techniques tailored to freelancers to attract and retain clients.
- Explore effective social media strategies for freelancers, including content creation, engagement tactics, and leveraging platforms for client acquisition.
- Understand the role of social media in building and maintaining a professional brand presence.
- Learn how to adapt business development tactics to freelance contexts to sustain growth and profitability.

- Apply marketing principles learned in theoretical classes to create actionable strategies for client acquisition and retention.
- Utilize hands-on experience with social media management tools to optimize campaign performance.
- Study and analyze case studies of successful marketing campaigns and strategies within freelance contexts.
- Practice creating persuasive proposals that highlight skills, expertise, and value propositions to win freelance contracts.

These objectives aim to equip VET students with comprehensive skills, knowledge, and practical experience necessary to thrive as freelancers in competitive markets, focusing on effective marketing, social media engagement, business development, and independent professional growth.

Topics Covered:

- Digital Marketing Strategies
- Social Media Marketing
- Business Development Tactics
- Networking with potential clients

Learning Activities:

- Hands-on tutorials and demonstrations
- Software training sessions
- Group exercises to practice using tools and applications
- Case studies on tool implementation and integration

Session 1

Introduction to digital marketing and its significance in modern business

- Definition and scope of digital marketing
- Importance of digital presence for businesses
- Overview of digital marketing channels (website, social media, email, etc.)

Steps

- To kick off the session, VET students will be divided into small groups. Each group will receive cards containing various digital marketing terms, such as SEO, PPC, and conversion rate. Their task will be to define the assigned term in simple terms suitable for beginners. After a designated period, groups will present their definitions, allowing for feedback and clarification from the facilitator.
- Next, VET students will be divided into two groups: one advocating for the importance of digital presence and the other debating against it. Several case studies showcasing successful digital marketing campaigns from diverse industries will be distributed among the groups. VET students will analyze these case studies, focusing on identifying key strategies, tactics, and elements contributing to their success.
- Following the analysis, a group discussion will be facilitated where VET students will share their observations and insights gleaned from the case studies. This interactive session aims to deepen understanding of effective digital marketing practices and foster critical thinking about digital presence in business contexts.
- To conclude, key takeaways and recommendations will be highlighted, emphasizing the importance of staying updated on digital marketing trends to remain competitive and adaptable in evolving market landscapes.

Duration

60 min theoretical + 60 min practical

Session 2

SEO and Content Marketing

- Basics of SEO: keywords, on-page optimization, off-page optimization
- Content marketing strategy development
- Tools and techniques for SEO and content marketing

Steps

- Begin by conducting a practical workshop where VET students will gain proficiency in performing keyword research using tools like Google Keyword Planner, SEMrush, or Moz Keyword Explorer. Guide them through the process of identifying relevant keywords aligned with their business or industry. Encourage brainstorming sessions to generate potential keywords based on target audience characteristics, product offerings, and current industry trends.
- Facilitate a group discussion focusing on off-page SEO strategies, such as effective link building practices, leveraging social media for engagement, and implementing influencer outreach. Share compelling case studies and examples of successful off-page SEO campaigns to illustrate diverse strategies and their impact on improving search engine rankings and online visibility.
- Introduce VET students to a range of essential tools and software for SEO and content marketing, including Google Analytics, Yoast SEO, BuzzSumo, and Hootsuite. Demonstrate how these tools can be utilized for conducting comprehensive keyword research, optimizing content for search engines, monitoring performance metrics, and managing social media campaigns effectively.
- Conclude the workshop with hands-on demonstrations or tutorials, allowing VET students to explore the functionalities of these tools firsthand. Encourage practical application and experimentation to enhance understanding and proficiency in utilizing SEO and content marketing tools for achieving business objectives.

Duration

90 min practical, + 60 min independent learning

Session 3

Online Advertising and Email Marketing

- Types of online advertising (PPC, display ads, social media ads)
- Email marketing best practices and strategies
- Tools and platforms for online advertising and email marketing

Steps

- Initiate the session by dividing VET students into small groups, each assigned a hypothetical business scenario. Task them with developing a PPC (Pay-Per-Click) advertising campaign utilizing platforms like Google Ads or Bing Ads, tailored to their respective business scenarios. Each group will be provided with a budget allocation and specific campaign objectives to guide their strategic planning.
- Guide VET students through the essential steps of campaign creation, including keyword selection, ad copywriting, bidding strategies, and campaign targeting options. Encourage groups to monitor their campaign performance in real-time and make adjustments based on the observed outcomes.
- Equip VET students with design tools and templates for crafting display ads, such as the Google Display Network ad builder or Canva. Discuss fundamental design principles and effective practices for creating visually compelling display advertisements. VET students will apply these principles by designing display ads tailored to a specific product or promotional offer relevant to their assigned business scenario.
- Introduce VET students to a variety of tools and platforms essential for online advertising and email marketing, such as Google Ads, Facebook Ads Manager, Mailchimp, and HubSpot. Demonstrate the process of setting up ad campaigns, developing ad creatives, targeting specific audience segments, and monitoring campaign performance using these platforms.
- This workshop aims to provide hands-on experience and practical knowledge in creating effective advertising campaigns, leveraging digital tools, and optimizing campaign strategies to achieve business objectives efficiently.

Duration

60 min theoretical + 90 min practical

Session 1

Understanding the role and importance of social media marketing in business promotion

- Benefits of social media marketing
- Overview of popular social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, LinkedIn)
- Developing a social media marketing strategy

Steps

- Begin by providing a comprehensive overview of popular social media platforms, highlighting their distinctive features, target demographics, and potential for marketing opportunities. Each participant or group will be assigned a different social media platform to thoroughly research and present to the class, emphasizing its usability in business contexts.
- Guide VET students through the systematic development of tailored social media marketing strategies aligned with their specific business objectives and target audience. Offer a structured template or framework for creating a cohesive social media marketing plan, encompassing clear objectives, audience segmentation, content strategy, posting schedules, and measurable performance metrics.
- Illustrate the effectiveness of social media marketing through compelling case studies of successful campaigns across diverse industries. Deconstruct each case study to analyze its strategic objectives, targeted audience demographics, content strategies, engagement techniques, and measurable outcomes.
- Conclude with an interactive Q&A session, allowing VET students to clarify doubts, discuss insights gained from the case studies, and explore practical applications of social media marketing strategies in their own business contexts.
- This session aims to empower VET students with in-depth knowledge and practical skills in leveraging social media platforms effectively for marketing purposes, fostering informed decision-making and strategic planning in digital marketing initiatives.

Duration

60 min theoretical, + 60 min practical

Session 2

Creating Engaging Social Media Content

- Content creation best practices (visual content, videos, infographics)
- Understanding social media algorithms
- Tools and resources for creating social media content

Steps

- Provide an overview of best practices for creating engaging social media content, including the use of visuals, videos, and infographics. Share examples of successful social media posts and campaigns that effectively utilize different content formats. Conduct a group brainstorming session where participants generate ideas for social media content based on their business niche or target audience.
- Explain how social media algorithms work and how they impact the visibility of content on various platforms. Discuss strategies for optimizing content to increase reach and engagement within algorithmic constraints. Analyze examples of posts that have performed well despite algorithm changes, identifying common characteristics or tactics that contributed to their success. Introduce participants to a variety of tools and resources available for creating social media content, such as graphic design software, video editing apps, and content creation platforms. Demonstrate how to use these tools effectively through tutorials or live demonstrations.
- Encourage participants to explore different tools and experiment with creating content during the session.
- Hands-on Practice in Content Creation – Independent learning

Duration

60 min theoretical and 60 min practical and independent learning 60 min

Session 3

Social Media Advertising and Community Management

- Social media advertising options and targeting strategies
- Community management and engagement tactics
- Crisis management on social media

Steps

- Start by delving into the pivotal role of community management in nurturing engagement and cultivating relationships with followers on social media. Discuss effective strategies for promptly and professionally responding to comments, messages, and mentions to enhance community interaction.
- Engage VET students through interactive role-playing exercises where they simulate customer engagement scenarios. These exercises will enable VET students to practice effective communication skills, address inquiries, and handle customer concerns in real-time.
- Highlight the significance of proactive crisis management planning for mitigating negative feedback, complaints, or PR crises on social media platforms. Showcase case studies of brands that have adeptly navigated social media crises, emphasizing key strategies and valuable lessons learned from each scenario.
- Conduct a crisis simulation exercise where VET students will role-play various crisis scenarios. This hands-on activity will allow them to apply response strategies in simulated real-time situations, reinforcing preparedness and decision-making under pressure.
- Divide VET students into groups and assign each group specific customer inquiry or feedback scenarios to role-play. Provide clear guidelines for crafting responses that prioritize professionalism, empathy, and effective problem-solving.
- Conclude with group discussions to reflect on the role-playing exercises, encouraging VET students to share their insights, experiences, and challenges encountered. This interactive workshop aims to equip VET students with practical skills in community management and crisis response, fostering confidence in handling diverse social media interactions and challenging situations effectively.

Duration

60 min theoretical and 60 min practical

Session 1

Introduction to Business development

- BD tactics overview (setting clear objectives, leveraging market research, forming strategic partnerships, and aligning efforts across all departments to drive success)
- Building rapport and trust with prospects

Steps

Provide an overview of the BD process, explaining each step in detail: setting clear objectives, leveraging market research, forming strategic partnerships, and aligning efforts across all departments to drive success. Use real-world examples and case studies to illustrate the process in action. Conduct a workshop where VET students learn about business plan. Present case studies of successful business plans from different industries. In small groups, have VET students analyze the elements that made these business successful, work in groups, presentation in plenary and debriefing

Duration

60 min theoretical, 60 min practical

Session 2

Effective Presentation and Negotiation Skills

- Structuring persuasive sales presentations
- Negotiation strategies and tactics
- Overcoming objections and closing techniques
- Role-playing negotiation scenarios
- Critique and feedback on presentations

Steps

- Commence with an informative session covering a range of negotiation strategies and tactics, including BATNA (Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement), anchoring, and concession-making. Engage VET students in a group discussion to explore the practical application of these tactics across diverse business scenarios.
- Introduce interactive role-playing exercises where VET students will pair up or work in small groups to negotiate with each other. Assign distinct roles, such as buyer and seller, along with specific objectives and constraints tailored to each scenario. Encourage VET students to rotate roles to ensure comprehensive practice in various negotiation positions.
- Following each role-play session, facilitate a debrief where VET students analyze the effectiveness of their chosen strategies, identify successful approaches, and discuss areas for improvement based on their experiences.
- Conduct a brainstorming session to foster collaborative exploration of additional negotiation tactics and their adaptability to different contexts. Utilize real-world examples to illustrate how various tactics have been effectively employed in practical business negotiations.

Duration

60 min theoretical, 60 min practical

Session 3

Sales Pipeline Management

- Sales pipeline stages and metrics
- CRM tools for sales pipeline management
- Sales forecasting and goal setting

Steps

- Begin by presenting an overview of the sequential stages comprising a sales pipeline, such as lead generation, qualification, proposal, negotiation, and closing. Discuss essential metrics associated with each stage, including conversion rates, average deal size, and the length of the sales cycle. Emphasize the importance of tracking these metrics for optimizing sales performance and forecasting revenue.
- Introduce VET students to a variety of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tools and their functionalities. Focus on how these tools can effectively streamline and manage the sales pipeline, enhancing efficiency in lead tracking, customer communication, and deal management.
- Conduct a hands-on workshop where VET students will actively practice setting up and managing a sales pipeline within a CRM system, such as Salesforce or HubSpot. Provide guided instructions for configuring pipeline stages, entering leads and opportunities, and updating progress through each stage.
- Create a simulated sales environment where VET students assume roles within a fictional company's sales team, such as sales representatives and sales managers. Assign them a list of leads and opportunities to manage throughout the pipeline stages, encouraging them to document actions taken and decisions made within the CRM system.
- Discuss insights gained, challenges encountered, and best practices observed during the simulated sales pipeline management exercise. Encourage reflection on goal-setting strategies and the application of CRM tools in real-world sales scenarios.

Resource: https://www.zendesk.com/blog/business-development/

Duration

60 min theoretical, 60 min practical

Session 1

Introduction to Networking

- Benefits of Networking
- Utilizing Online Networking Platforms
- Best Practices

Steps

- Conduct live demonstrations of Popular Platforms by guest speaker
- LinkedIn: Professional networking, job searches, and industry news
- Twitter: Engaging in industry conversations and following thought leaders
- Facebook: Joining professional groups and communities
- Industry-Specific Platforms: Niche networks for targeted connections
- Work in groups, each with different task to elaborate - Best Practices for Online Networking, Creating a strong and professional profile, Engaging with content and contributing to discussions, Connecting with industry leaders and potential clients
- Q&A

Duration

60 min theoretical, 60 min practical

Session 2

Leveraging Referrals and Recommendations

- Different tactics
- Networking Etiquette
- Building a network of advocates who promote your services

Steps

- Brainstorming, VET students will discuss an elements of the program tailored to networking.
- VET students will role-play various scenarios, such as establishing first contact, asking for referrals, engagement in different activities, etc.
- Using a provided dataset, VET students will practice personalizing business offers for different potential partners by creating compelling business proposals that clearly communicate their value proposition, scope of work, and mutual benefits.
- Presentation by guest: In-Person Networking Etiquette – Importance of first impressions: Dress code, body language, and introductions, Effective communication: Active listening and asking insightful questions, Following up: Sending thank-you notes and maintaining contact
- Simulations in groups in written form based on case studies: Online Networking Etiquette - Professional online behavior: Respectful interactions and avoiding spam, Crafting personalized connection requests, Engaging thoughtfully with posts and comments
- Group Discussion
- VET students share their experiences with networking, both positive and negative
- Discuss strategies for overcoming common networking challenges
- Q&A

Duration

60 min theoretical, 30 min practical

Module 3

Marketing and Business Development

Theoretical Teaching (9 hours):

Methodology: Theoretical teaching sessions will involve lectures, presentations, and demonstrations to introduce VET students to various small business running tools and technologies.

- Topics Covered: Digital Marketing Strategies, Social Media Marketing, Business Development, Networking

Practical Teaching (13 hours):

Methodology: Practical teaching sessions will consist of hands-on workshops, guided tutorials, and interactive exercises to allow VET students to explore and familiarize themselves with self-employment simulated environments and real-world scenarios.

- Activities: Hands-on tutorials, guided exercises, case studies, and role-playing simulations will be utilized to reinforce practical skills and enhance VET learners' proficiency in digital marketing and networking.
- Integration: Practical sessions will be closely integrated with theoretical content, allowing VET students to apply new information in practical situations and develop the skills necessary for efficient and effective free-lancing.

Independent study by VET students (2 hours):

Learning by doing new tool – using tools and resources for creating social media content and building online community

- By integrating theoretical knowledge with practical applications, Module 3 aims to equip VET students with the expertise and competencies required to excel in marketing and business development.
- VET students will grasp core marketing principles, including market research, segmentation, targeting, and positioning, and apply these concepts to freelance businesses.
- VET students will learn to create and implement effective social media strategies tailored to their target audience and business objectives.
- VET students will practice and improve their networking skills, learning to connect effectively with potential clients and industry peers to expand their professional network.
- VET students will research and utilize various business development tools and resources to support their freelance endeavors.
- VET students will learn to create compelling business proposals that clearly communicate their value proposition, scope of work, and pricing to potential clients.

Financial Management and Legal Aspects

This module focuses on equipping freelancers with a thorough understanding of financial management and the legal landscape. It covers key areas such as business law, intellectual property, contractual agreements, and regulatory compliance. The aim is to provide freelancers with the necessary knowledge to navigate their legal obligations and financial structures effectively.

- **Duration:** 15 hours
- **Theoretical Teaching:** 7 hours
- **Practical Teaching:** 8 hours

Literature in English Language:

- "Freelance Finance: Manage Your Money, Master Your Taxes, and Secure Your Future" by Laura Adams
- "The Money Book for Freelancers, Part-Timers, and the Self-Employed" by Joseph D'Agnese and Denise Kiernan
- "Freelancer's Guide to Contracts: The Complete Handbook for Writing, Negotiating, and Understanding Contracts" by Lance Patrick
- "Creative, Inc.: The Ultimate Guide to Running a Successful Freelance Business" by Meg Mateo Ilasco and Joy Deangdeelert Cho
- Industry-specific regulatory guides and publications provide insights into sector-specific compliance requirements, ensuring self-employers are aware of and adhere to relevant regulations

Specific Teaching Aids:

- Case studies and scenarios based on real legal cases help illustrate legal concepts and compliance issues in practical contexts, fostering critical thinking and decision-making skills
- Simulation exercises allow VET students to navigate intellectual property scenarios, such as trademark registrations or copyright infringement disputes, providing hands-on experience in intellectual property management
- Workshops on employment law topics to explore legal compliance challenges and solutions
- Access to a curated legal resource library containing relevant regulations, and compliance guides provides VET students with additional reference materials for further study and research

These literature and teaching aids are designed to enhance VET students' understanding of legal and regulatory compliance requirements, enabling them to navigate the legal landscape effectively and mitigate compliance risks in their businesses.

Objectives:

- VET students will understand the principles of financial planning specific to freelancing, including setting financial goals and budgeting.
- They will gain a comprehensive understanding of the key legal aspects relevant to freelancers, including contracts, intellectual property, and regulatory compliance.
- VET students will practice creating detailed and realistic budgets tailored to their freelance business needs.
- They will independently review and compare various financial management software options, identifying tools that best suit their freelance business requirements..
- Learners will engage in self-directed learning to deepen their understanding of legal resources and guides relevant to freelancing, including contract templates and intellectual property laws.

These objectives aim to equip VET students with the knowledge and skills necessary to understand and comply with financial, legal and regulatory requirements relevant to self-employment.

Topics Covered:

- Financial planning, invoicing, and understanding legal considerations for freelancers
- Creating budgets
- Reviewing financial management software
- Preparing for tax season

Learning Activities:

- Guest lectures from industry experts
- Case studies on successful small businesses
- Role-playing exercises for client interactions
- Business planning and strategy development workshops
- Peer feedback and collaboration on marketing campaigns

Session 1
Introduction to Business Law

- Overview of business law fundamentals
- Legal rights and responsibilities

Steps

- Provide case studies involving legal issues faced by businesses and discuss potential solutions based on legal principles learned.
- Assign roles to VET students representing different stakeholders in a business transaction and conduct negotiations to highlight legal considerations.
- Task VET students with researching and presenting on a specific legal topic related to business law, encouraging deeper understanding through independent study.

Duration

60 min theoretical

Session 2
Contracts and Commercial Law

- Principles of contract law and contract formation
- Types of contracts: sales contracts, service contracts, employment contracts
- Contractual obligations and enforcement mechanisms

Steps

Divide VET students into small groups and task them with drafting sample contracts for typical business transactions. Emphasize the importance of clarity and enforceability in their contracts. Provide students with pre-written sample contracts. Ask them to identify potential legal issues or ambiguities within these contracts. This exercise aims to develop their critical analysis skills and attention to detail. Organize a mock courtroom scenario where students are divided into teams to argue for or against the enforceability of specific contract clauses. This activity will help students improve their persuasive argumentation skills. Conclude with a question and answer session to address any uncertainties and reinforce the key learning points from the exercises.

Duration

60 min theoretical and 60 min practical

Session 3

Invoicing

- Essential components of an invoice (e.g., client details, service descriptions, payment terms)
- Setting payment terms and deadlines
- Ensuring compliance with tax regulations and legal requirements

Steps

- Demonstration of tools and templates for creating professional invoices (e.g., Microsoft Excel, Google Sheets, online invoicing software).
- Hands-on practice: VET students create sample invoices using provided templates or software, incorporating client details, services rendered, and payment terms.
- Discussion on different payment terms (e.g., net 30, due on receipt) and their implications.
- Practical exercise: VET students draft payment terms suitable for different types of freelance projects, considering project timelines and client agreements. Overview of tax obligations for freelancers (e.g., income tax, sales tax, VAT).
- Explanation of legal requirements related to invoicing (e.g., including tax identification numbers, adhering to local invoicing standards).
- Case study analysis: VET students review sample invoices to identify compliance issues and propose corrective actions. Open forum for VET students to ask questions and discuss challenges related to invoicing in freelance practice

Duration

60 min practical

Session 1

Understanding Income and Expenses

- Identifying sources of freelance income (e.g., client projects, royalties, affiliate marketing)
- Tracking and categorizing business expenses (e.g., equipment, software subscriptions, marketing)

Steps

- Explanation of various sources of freelance income:
- Client projects: Discuss different types of client work (e.g., one-time projects, retainer agreements).
- Royalties: Income from intellectual property rights, such as books, articles, or digital products.
- Affiliate marketing: Earnings from promoting products or services through affiliate links.
- Hands-on Exercise: Identifying Income Sources
- Group activity: VET students list and discuss their primary and secondary sources of freelance income based on their specific industry or expertise.
- Case studies: Review examples of successful freelancers and their diversified income streams.
- Practical Exercise: Expense Tracking Tools
- Demonstration of tools and methods for tracking expenses:
- Spreadsheet templates: Creating and using Excel or Google Sheets for expense tracking.
- Expense management apps: Overview of apps like Expensify, QuickBooks, or FreshBooks.
- VET students practice entering and categorizing sample expenses relevant to their freelance activities.
- Open discussion: VET students share challenges and best practices for managing income sources and tracking expenses.
- Q&A session: Addressing specific questions related to income diversification and expense management in freelancing.

Duration

60 min theoretical

Session 2

Creating a Freelance Budget

- Establishing financial goals and objectives
- Developing a budgeting framework (e.g., monthly, quarterly)
- Allocating funds for essential and discretionary expenses

Steps

- Short presentation - Defining short-term and long-term financial goals:
- Short-term goals: Immediate financial needs (e.g., covering monthly expenses, saving for taxes).
- Long-term goals: Future investments, retirement planning, business expansion.
- Work in groups - SMART criteria for goal-setting: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound.
- Practical exercise: VET students choose a framework and outline their income sources and fixed vs. variable expenses. Types of budgeting frameworks:
- Monthly budget: Allocating income and expenses on a monthly basis.
- Quarterly budget: Planning for expenses and income fluctuations over a three-month period.
- Group activity: VET students create a sample budget based on provided income scenarios and expense categories.
- Discussion: Reviewing budgeting challenges and strategies for adjusting budgets based on income fluctuations.
- Q&A and Discussion
- Open forum: VET students share their experiences with budgeting as freelancers.

Duration

60 min theoretical + 120 min practical

Session 1

Features and Capabilities Comparison: FreshBooks, Wave, Zoho Books, Free agent, etc

- Evaluate and compare key features offered by different financial management software.
- Discuss functionalities such as expense tracking, invoicing, budgeting, and reporting.
- Consider user interface, ease of use, and integration with other tools (e.g., banking platforms, tax software).

Steps

- Short presentation
- Discuss how each software tracks and categorizes expenses.
- Compare features like receipt scanning, automatic categorization, and integration with bank accounts
- Review invoicing capabilities including customization options, recurring invoices, and payment reminders.
- Compare ease of invoice creation, client management features, and integration with payment gateways.
- Discuss the overall user interface design and ease of navigation.
- Evaluate user feedback on intuitiveness, learning curve, and accessibility of features
- Group activity: VET students compare two selected financial management software options based on provided criteria.
- Each group identifies strengths, weaknesses, and suitability for different freelance scenarios.
- Q and A

Duration

60 min theoretical + 60 min practical

Session 2

Cost and Pricing Structures

- Analyze the cost structures of financial management software, including subscription fees, one-time purchases, and free vs. premium versions.
- Discuss pricing models based on the number of users, features included, and scalability options.
- Explore additional costs such as setup fees, training, and support services.

Steps

- Short presentation and discussion - Define and compare monthly or annual subscription costs for different software options.
- Discuss pricing tiers based on features and functionality (e.g., basic, standard, premium).
- Compare features and limitations of free versions versus premium (paid) versions.
- Evaluate upgrade paths and benefits of premium versions for scalability and advanced features.
- Group activity: VET students compare cost structures of two selected financial management software options based on provided scenarios.
- Analyze total cost of ownership (TCO) considering subscription fees, setup costs, and additional services.
- Facilitate a discussion on VET students' findings from the cost comparison exercise.
- Address specific questions related to budgeting considerations, cost-effectiveness, and ROI expectations.

Duration

60 min practical

Session 1

Identifying eligible tax deductions for freelancers (e.g., home office expenses, business travel, equipment)

Steps

- Introduction to Tax Deductions for Freelancers
- Importance of understanding tax deductions to lower taxable income.
- Discuss deductible expenses such as rent, utilities, internet, and home maintenance costs. deductible expenses related to business travel, including transportation (e.g., mileage, airfare), lodging, and meals. Discuss requirements for documenting travel expenses and maintaining records for IRS compliance, deductible expenses for equipment and supplies necessary for freelancing activities (e.g., computers, software, office supplies), deductions for professional services essential to freelancing (e.g., legal fees, accounting fees), deductions for marketing and advertising expenses aimed at promoting freelance services (e.g., website development, online advertising), deductions available for health insurance premiums
- Work in groups:
- Present case studies illustrating scenarios where freelancers can maximize tax deductions.
- Analyze examples of deductible expenses and calculations for potential tax savings.
- Q and A

Duration

60 min theoretical and 60 practical

Session 2

Tax credits available to freelancers, such as self-employment tax deductions and retirement savings contributions

Steps

- Short presentation Importance of understanding tax credits to minimize tax liabilities and maximize savings.
- Work in groups:
- Present case studies illustrating scenarios where freelancers can benefit from tax credits and retirement savings contributions.
- Analyze examples of tax calculations and potential savings through contributions to retirement accounts in groups.
- Q&A and Discussion
- Facilitate a discussion on specific questions or concerns regarding tax credits and retirement savings for freelancers.
- Address participant inquiries about eligibility criteria, contribution limits, and guidelines.

Duration

60 min theoretical and 60 practical

Module 4

Financial Management and Legal Aspects

Theoretical Teaching (7 hours):

Methodology: Theoretical teaching sessions will involve lectures, presentations, and discussions to cover topics related to financial management and legal aspects of self-employment.

- Topics Covered: Financial planning, invoicing, and understanding legal considerations for freelancers, Creating budgets, generating invoices, Reviewing financial management software, studying legal resources, and preparing for tax season.

Practical Teaching (8 hours):

Methodology: Practical teaching sessions will include workshops, case studies, role-playing exercises, and interactive activities to allow VET students to apply theoretical concepts in practical scenarios.

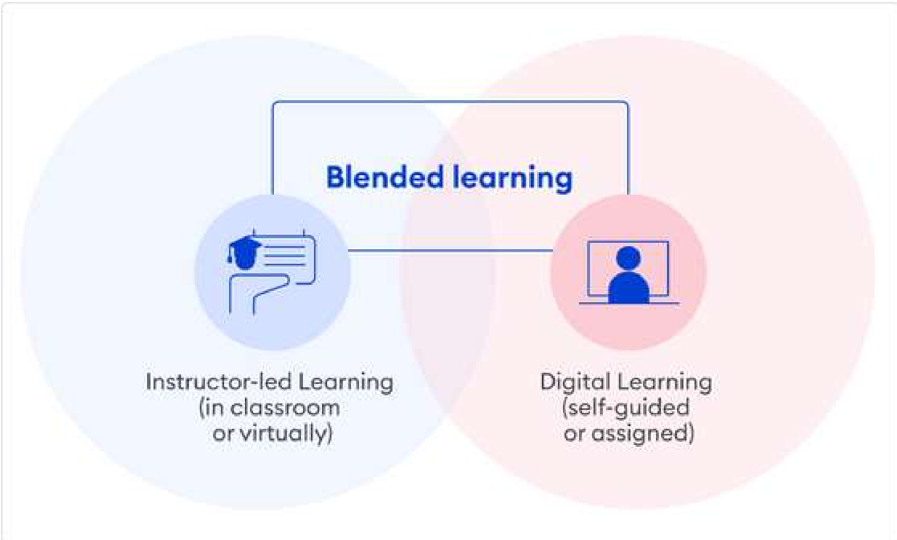
- Activities: Role-playing simulations, mock client meetings, drafting proposals, brainstorming, work in groups will be used to reinforce practical skills and enhance VET students' ability to effectively manage financial and legal aspects of self-employment person.
- Integration: Practical sessions will be closely integrated with theoretical content, enabling VET students to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world situations and develop the skills necessary for successful self-employment business.

Learning outcomes:

- By combining theoretical insights with practical applications, Module 4 aims to empower VET students to navigate financial, legal and regulatory aspects effectively in their self-employment operations.
- Understand the principles of financial planning tailored to freelance operations.
- Learn essential invoicing techniques, including structuring invoices and setting payment terms.
- Develop practical skills in creating and managing budgets specific to freelance projects.
- Evaluate and select appropriate financial management software to streamline business operations.
- Research and apply legal resources to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements and mitigate risks.
- Prepare effectively for tax season by understanding deductions, credits, and documentation necessary for accurate reporting.

These learning outcomes aim to equip self-employers with the knowledge and practical skills needed to manage their finances, invoicing processes, legal obligations, and tax responsibilities effectively in their freelance careers.

METHODOLOGICAL INSTRUCTIONS



Resource: https://www.ispringsolutions.com/blog/blended-learning-a-primer

At the beginning of the program, offer a comprehensive introduction to VET students, detailing the program's goals, methodologies, and potential assessment methods, including straightforward evaluations of acquired knowledge.

Establishing a welcoming and supportive atmosphere as VET students enter the program is crucial, as it sets the tone for subsequent interactions. Regardless of the chosen educational approach—whether traditional or interactive—VET students anticipate a trainer who embodies qualities of respect, trust, and approachability.

Consistently maintain professionalism and approachability as a trainer, as VET students closely observe your demeanor throughout the program. Balancing professionalism with a friendly demeanor is essential for cultivating an engaging learning environment.

Investing time in getting to know VET students, regardless of the educational model, is valuable for fostering camaraderie and mutual understanding among them. This initial interaction also helps you assess VET students' expectations, needs, and any gaps in knowledge to address during the program.

For VET students engaged in interactive learning through independent study systems, provide guidance on managing the program's duration and suggest a structured plan to effectively navigate the curriculum. This proactive approach ensures VET students have a clear pathway for their learning experience.

Example of activities to be conducted at the beginning of the training FACE2FACE learning:

- Prepare the room to encourage learning and foster interaction among group members, ensuring a conducive environment.
- Introduce yourself to the VET students, establishing rapport and setting a welcoming tone for the session.
- Invite drivers to introduce themselves, sharing details about their work experience, education, and the nature of their work.
- Record the expectations of the VET students regarding the training program, facilitating transparency and alignment of goals.
- Present the administrative aspects of the program, such as attendance lists and other relevant logistics, ensuring clarity on procedural matters.
- Define the objectives of the program and outline the specific competencies that VET students are expected to acquire through the training activities.
- Explain the structure and organization of the training process, providing VET students with a clear understanding of what to expect.
- Present the basic rules of communication, emphasizing principles such as mutual respect, active listening, and proper internet etiquette, to promote a conducive learning environment.

BLENDED LEARNING

The terms 'online, 'hybrid' and 'blended' are to be found described in slightly different ways. For the purposes of this post: online simply refers to methodologies which only take place online; hybrid denotes that some learners are physically in attendance while others are online but perhaps, now and then, use is being made of both styles; and blended indicates a combination of conventional teaching or training with members present along with online/e-learning also being employed to extend accessibility, independent contributions and flexibility.

Resource: https://improvingcareand.education/2023/02/16/online-hybrid-and-blended-learning/

ONLINE LEARNING

Full Technology integration - appropriate digital platforms can be selected (eg. Zoom, Teams, etc) and tools for delivering virtual training sessions, hosting discussions, sharing resources, and assessing learner progress. Each trainers should be familiar with the platform and tools and to be sure that the chosen technology is user-friendly, accessible, and compatible with various devices and operating systems.

Offer training and technical support to learners to facilitate smooth navigation and troubleshooting.

Monitoring and evaluation - Diverse assessment methods such as quizzes, assignments, presentations, and skill demonstrations should be designed to evaluate learners' comprehension and application of virtual assistant skills. Provide timely feedback to learners to help them identify areas for improvement and track their progress throughout the program. Encourage peer evaluation and self-assessment to foster a culture of continuous learning and development.

Should be planed fostering a sense of community among learners through virtual networking events, discussion forums, and in-pairs/in-teams projects. Access to mentoring, coaching, and career development resources should be introduced to help learners succeed in their virtual assistant roles.

EXAMPLE OF ACTIVITIES TO BE CONDUCTED AT THE BEGINNING OF THE TRAINING ON LINE LEARNING:

Virtual introduction - Utilize a video conferencing platform (e.g., Zoom, Microsoft Teams) for a virtual introduction session.

- Each participant introduces themselves, sharing their name, role, and a fun fact about themselves.
- Encourage participants to use virtual backgrounds or share photos representing their interests or hobbies.

Virtual Scavenger Hunts - Use a video conferencing platform with breakout rooms functionality or use

- Create a list of items or themes related to the training or participants' backgrounds.
- Assign participants to small breakout rooms and instruct them to find and share items related to the list within a time limit.
- Reconvene in the main session to debrief and share findings.

Icebreaker polls or quizzes - Use polling features available in video conferencing platforms or dedicated polling tools like Mentimeter or Poll Everywhere.

- Create icebreaker questions or quizzes related to the training topic or general interests.
- Participants respond to the polls or quizzes, and results are shared anonymously to spark discussions.

Virtual team bilding games - Play online team-building games such as virtual escape rooms, online trivia quizzes, or collaborative puzzle-solving activities.

- Use platforms like Kahoot!, Quizizz, or online escape room platforms.
- Participants work together in teams to solve challenges and compete against each other in a fun and engaging manner.

Digital whiteboard brainstorming - Utilize digital whiteboard tools like Miro, MURAL, or Google Jamboard.

- Pose a question or topic related to the training and invite participants to brainstorm ideas, share insights, or collaborate on solutions.
- Encourage participants to use virtual sticky notes, drawings, or annotations to contribute their thoughts.

Digital whiteboard brainstorming - Utilize digital whiteboard tools like Miro, MURAL, or Google Jamboard.

- Pose a question or topic related to the training and invite participants to brainstorm ideas, share insights, or collaborate on solutions.
- Encourage participants to use virtual sticky notes, drawings, or annotations to contribute their thoughts.

Virtual team challenges - Assign virtual team challenges that require collaboration and problem-solving.

- For example, participants can work together to create a virtual team logo using graphic design tools like Canva or Adobe Spark.
- Encourage creativity and teamwork in completing the challenge within a specified timeframe.

Vitual coffee or lunch breaks - Schedule informal virtual coffee or lunch breaks where participants can join optional video calls to chat and get to know each other in a relaxed setting.

- Provide conversation starters or discussion topics to facilitate interactions and connections among participants.

MORE DETAILED EXPLAINATION OF THE ACTIVITIES

2 truths and a lie - Each participant shares three statements about themselves, two of which are true and one is a lie.

- Other participants guess which statement is the lie.
- This activity helps participants learn interesting facts about each other in a fun way.

Virtual show and tell - Participants choose an item from their surroundings and briefly explain why it's meaningful to them.

- They can share stories, memories, or interesting facts related to the item.
- This activity fosters personal connections and encourages participants to share more about themselves.

Emoji introduction - Participants introduce themselves using only emojis.

- They select emojis that represent their name, job, hobbies, interests, etc.
- Others guess the meaning behind the emojis and ask follow-up questions.

Photo sharing scavenge hunt - Participants share a photo from their phone or computer related to a specific theme (e.g., favorite vacation spot, pet, hobby).

- They briefly describe the photo and its significance.
- This activity encourages creativity and provides insights into participants' lives outside of work.

Would you rather - Facilitator poses a series of "Would You Rather" questions related to various scenarios or preferences.

- Participants respond with their choices and briefly explain their reasoning.
- This activity sparks conversation and reveals participants' personalities and preferences.

Virtual name bingo - Create a bingo card with various characteristics or experiences (e.g., "Has traveled abroad," "Speaks more than one language," "Plays a musical instrument").

- Participants mingle in the virtual room and find others who match the characteristics on their bingo card.
- They ask each other questions to fill out their bingo card.

Speed networking rounds - Participants are paired up for short one-on-one video calls (e.g., 2-3 minutes each).

- They introduce themselves, share a quick overview of their background, and discuss a prompt provided by the facilitator.
- After each round, participants rotate to meet someone new.
- This activity facilitates networking and allows participants to connect on a more personal level.

Virtual collaborative playlist - Create a collaborative playlist on a streaming platform like Spotify or YouTube.

- Participants add songs to the playlist that represent their favorite genres, artists, or moods.
- They can listen to the playlist together during breaks or downtime, sparking conversations about music preferences.

These activities are designed to promote engagement, build connections, and create a welcoming atmosphere for participants in online training sessions. All activities mentiond above can be implemented in real face2face situations but here is adaption to online learning environment.

Resource: https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/glowblogs/academy9/how-to-guides/practical-measures-for-creating-effective-education-programmes/

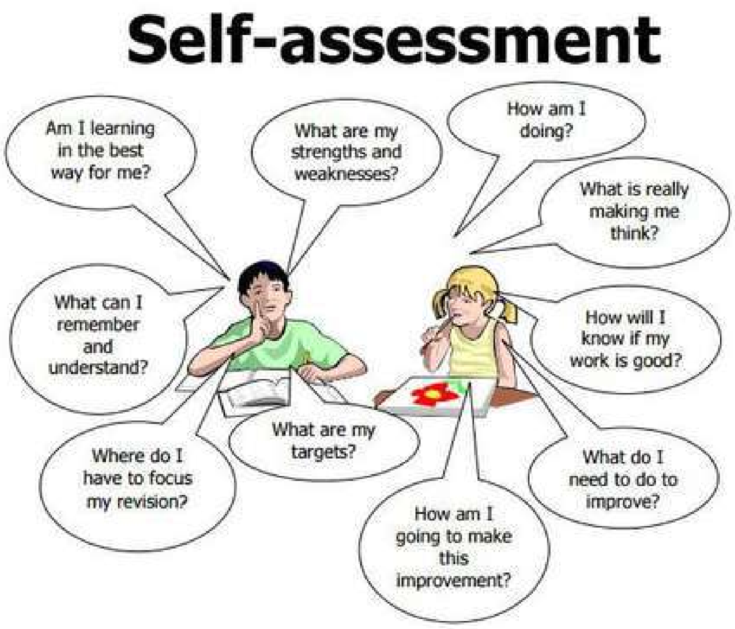
RECOMMENDED METHODS OF MONITORING THE QUALITY AND SUCCESS OF PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

In monitoring the quality and performance of the education program, the following activities are implemented:

- Conducting research and anonymous surveys among participants to evaluate various aspects, including the delivery of classes, adequacy of literature and learning resources, effectiveness of support strategies, implementation and enhancement of the learning and teaching process, participant workload, knowledge assessments, and communication with trainers.
- Undertaking research and surveys among trainers to gather feedback on similar aspects mentioned in the preceding paragraph.
- Analyzing the effectiveness, transparency, and objectivity of assessments, as well as the attainment of learning outcomes.
- Evaluating the material and personnel resources required for the execution of the learning and teaching process.
- The outcomes of these surveys furnish insights into the program's success and serve as a means to assess the quality of trainers' work.

Valuation Procedures

- Evaluation procedures are geared towards monitoring and assessing achievements in line with learning outcomes. This is accomplished through written, oral knowledge assessments and practical tests evaluating participants' proficiency in operating the different tasks in online environment, based on predetermined criteria for evaluating achievements.
- A self-assessment questionnaire for individuals who have completed a virtual assistant curriculum can help them reflect on their learning journey and identify areas for further growth.



Resource: https://images.sampletemplates.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Self-Assessment-Examples.jpg

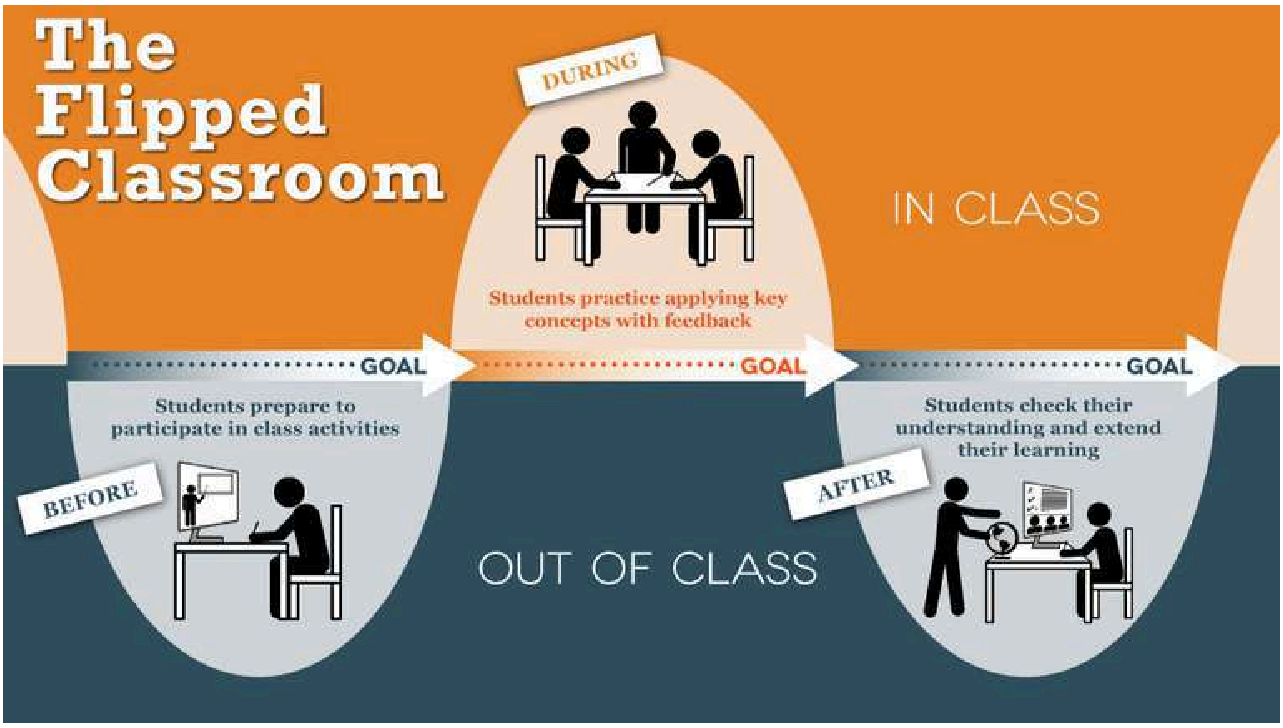
FLIPPED CLASSROOM – CAN BE INTRODUCED INTO CURRICULUM

Blended learning and flipped classrooms are two distinct approaches to teaching.

- The blended learning is more traditional, while the flipped class is more digital.

There are many advantages to flipping your classroom:

- Content is available outside traditional classroom time. Students have access to the videos to prepare for new content, to review, and not fall behind if they miss class.
- Students have the ability to rewind, pause, and rewatch. They can prepare their questions ahead of time.
- Frees up time for teachers to work one-on-one in the classroom with students.



Resource: https://ctl.utexas.edu/sites/default/files/flippedgraphic(web960px).png

A typical example of a flipped class is one in which the instructor pre-records the lectures, posts the recordings to Canvas for VET students to watch before class, and then assist the students as they work through assignments during class time.

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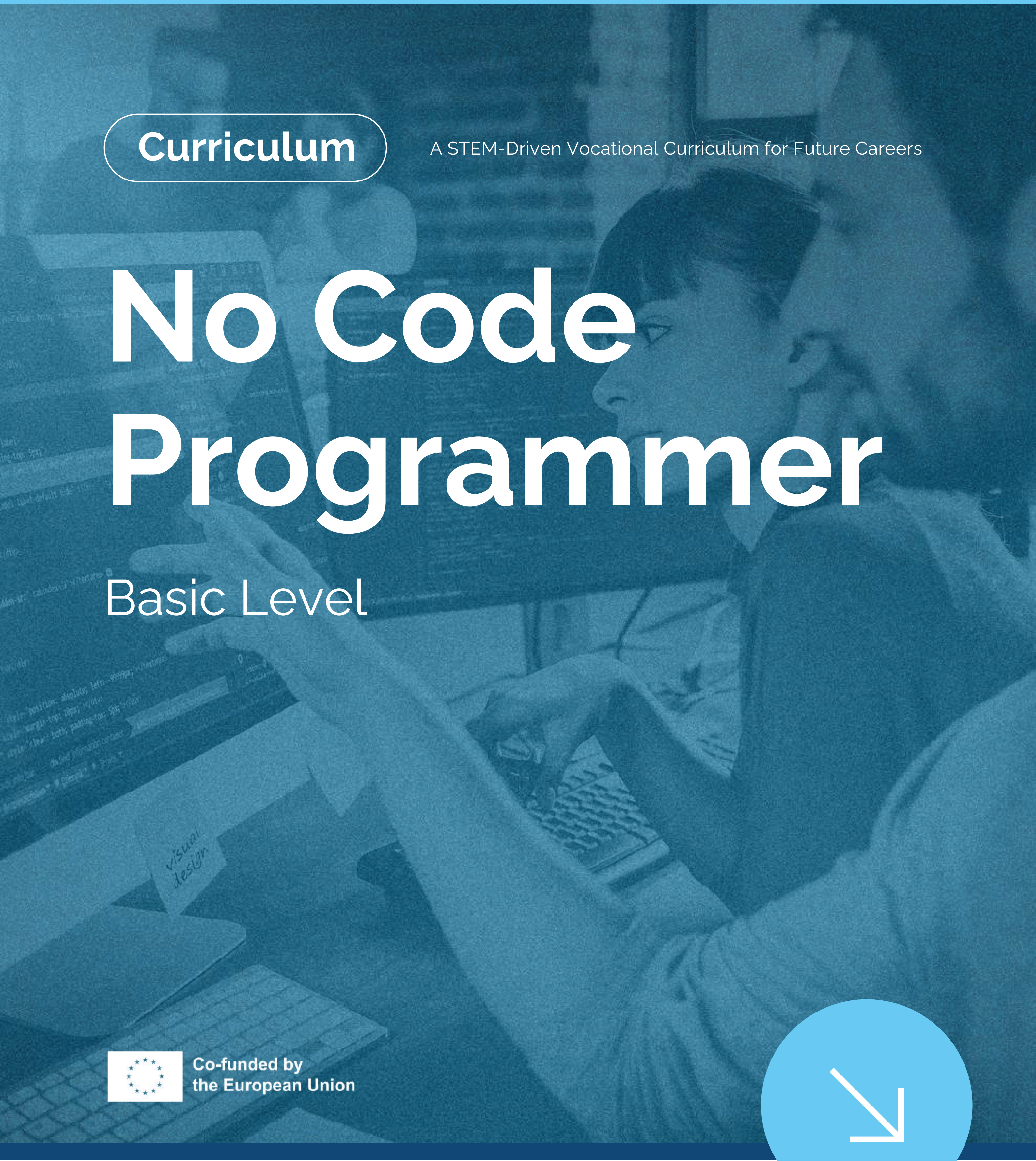
Curriculum

A STEM-Driven Vocational Curriculum for Future Careers

No Code Programmer

Basic Level



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Introduction

As businesses shift towards digitalization, the demand for professionals with no-code skills is rising. These skills allow individuals to develop and manage digital solutions without programming knowledge. This program is designed to provide you with the essential knowledge and skills needed to excel in the rapidly evolving world of no-code development. This curriculum will equip VET students with the tools to build powerful applications and automate processes without writing a single line of code. In today's digital age, the demand for custom software solutions is higher than ever. Traditional software development can be time-consuming, costly, and inaccessible to individuals without coding expertise. No-code development platforms have emerged, allowing anyone with an idea to turn it into a reality without the need for programming skills.

This curriculum is built on the fundamentals of no-code development, starting with an overview of key concepts and principles. VET students will learn how to leverage no-code tools and platforms to create web and mobile applications, automate repetitive tasks, and streamline workflows. Through hands-on projects and real-world examples, they will gain practical experience in building a variety of applications, from simple prototypes to business solutions. One of the most important benefits of no-code development is its accessibility to individuals regardless of their technical background. Unlike traditional coding, which typically demands extensive learning and practice, no-code empowers users of all skill levels to participate. This inclusive approach enables anyone to design and deploy applications with minimal training, breaking down barriers and democratizing the process of software creation. The curriculum is structured to cover a range of topics essential for building competences in no-code development, including: Introduction to No-Code Development, No-Code Tools and Platforms, Building Web Applications, Creating Mobile Apps, Automating Workflows, Data Management and Integration, User Interface Design, Testing and Deployment.

By the end of this program, VET students will have the skills and confidence to create their own custom applications, automate business processes, and unlock new opportunities in the world of no-code development. Whether they are looking to launch a startup, enhance their career prospects, the No-Code Programmer Basic Level curriculum will empower VET students to turn their ideas into reality, no coding required and offer their new competences on the labour market.

No-Code Programmer Position: VET Education and Principles of Andragogy

The No-Code Programmer curriculum is designed to serve a diverse group of learners, including both youth and adults, with a particular focus on NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) youngsters. NEET individuals are typically aged between 18 and 29 and face unique challenges, such as social and economic barriers, that prevent them from participating in traditional educational or employment opportunities.

By targeting this group, the curriculum aims to provide them with practical skills and knowledge that can enhance their employability and integration into the workforce. The program is structured to accommodate the varying needs of youth and adult learners, ensuring that the content is accessible, engaging, and relevant to all participants.

Incorporating the principles of andragogy—adult learning theory—alongside strategies effective for youth education is crucial for the success of this program. Andragogy emphasizes self-directed learning, leveraging the experiences and motivations of adult learners, and fostering a practical, problem-solving approach to education. For NEET youngsters and other youth, the curriculum also incorporates elements of pedagogy that focus on guided learning, mentorship, and motivational support.

Engaging NEET learners requires an understanding of their specific contexts and challenges, thus the curriculum includes flexible learning paths, hands-on projects, and real-world applications to maintain their interest and encourage active participation. By blending these approaches, the curriculum aims to create an inclusive learning environment that supports the development of both youth and adult learners, equipping them with the skills necessary for a successful career as a no-code programmer.

Andragogy**, derived from the Greek words "andros" (man) and "agogus" (guide), refers to the art and science of teaching VET students, contrasting with pedagogy, which targets children and young individuals. Teaching adults necessitates distinct methods due to disparities in learning styles and preferences.**

Coined by German educator Alexander Kapp in 1833 and later adopted by philosopher Johann Friedrich Herbart, the term "andragogy" experienced a resurgence in Europe post-World War I. Its prominence grew internationally, notably in France, England, Switzerland, Yugoslavia, and Canada. The United States saw its widespread adoption in the late 1960s, influenced by adult education pioneers Edward Lindeman and Malcolm Knowles. Knowles delineated six principles of VET students learning, emphasizing:

1. Internal motivation and self-direction
2. Integration of life experiences into learning
3. Goal orientation
4. Relevance of learning to life
5. Practical application
6. Respect for VET learners.

To ensure the effective adoption of program content by VET participants, the learning and teaching process should prioritize practical knowledge and skills. This approach facilitates easier comprehension and application of the curriculum.

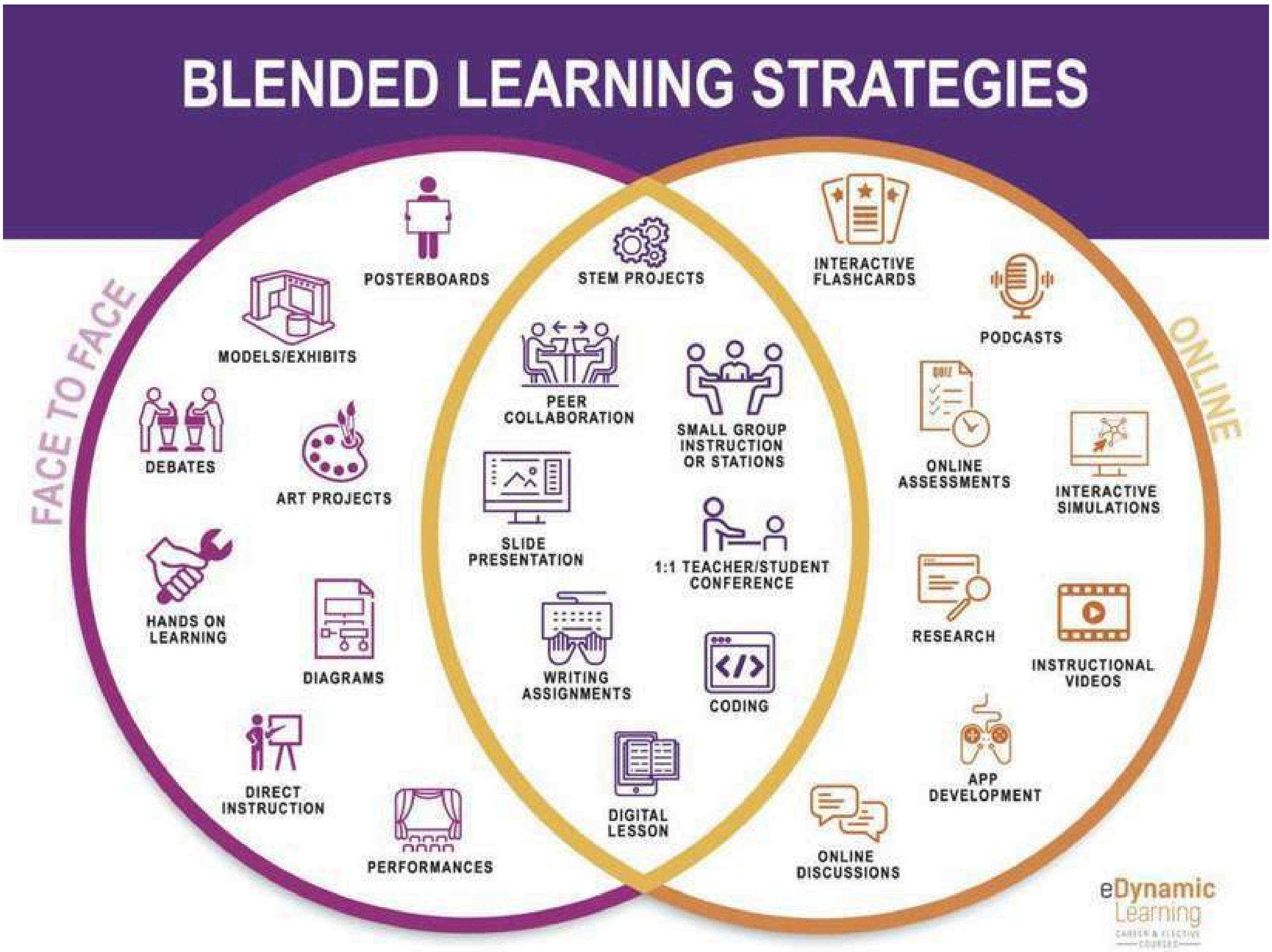
The curriculum outlined here emphasizes interactive learning and teaching methods within the VET education framework, leveraging available ICT technologies and no-code programming platforms. It is crucial to recognize that trainers will be working with VET students, including individuals of varying ages and levels of prior knowledge, particularly in ICT skills. Therefore, the curriculum is designed to offer flexibility, with options for live classes tailored to individual students' needs, as well as online learning modules accessible online.

When teaching VET students, it's important to:

- Establish clear training and pedagogical objectives.
- Tap into participants' professional expertise; for instance, inquire about their application of no code programming curriculum in their work.
- Acknowledge and leverage participants' existing knowledge and experience, assessing it through oral or multiple-choice questions.
- Foster participant interaction, encouraging the exchange of professional insights and inviting discussion on familiar topics.
- Emphasize practical learning experiences, tailoring examples, case studies, and simulations to real-work contexts.
- Recognize the diversity within the participant group, accommodating varying levels of skill and experience.
- Assess the participants' prior knowledge, considering factors such as age and work experience.
- Emphasize the importance of grow up dynamics, recognizing that education extends beyond mere information transfer. Respect the VET participants' autonomy and avoid patronizing attitudes.
- Be mindful of any limitations within the group dynamics and involve VET students to be in the training process.
- Clarify assessment techniques upfront, framing them as tools to gauge learning rather than as tests.
- Acknowledge that many participants may have work-centric life paths, and tailor pedagogical methods accordingly to avoid evoking negative school-related memories.

The curriculum is structured into *four (4) modules*, comprising a blend of guided theoretical classes, hands-on work-based learning, and independent study by participants.
This curriculum introduces Blended learning “which is part of the on-going convergence of two archetypal learning environments” (Bonk & Graham, 2006, p. 2). However, the influences of the two types of delivery are not equal, and how to blend looks different if you are starting from an in-person school to how it looks if you are coming from a distance education background.

Traditional face-to-face, in-person, classroom-based teaching and learning has been used for centuries as the ubiquitous delivery method. Distance and distributed teaching and learning opportunities are much newer, particularly in reference to technology-enabled learning. When online education became available, it was used first in distance education, with students studying fully online. Notions of blending classroom-based learning and online or distance education came later.



https://www.edynamiclearning.com/5-effective-blended-learning-strategies/

In keeping with the original three presences of the The Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework (social presence, cognitive presence and teaching presence), blended learning using the CoI framework creates opportunities for self-reflection, active cognitive processing, interaction and peer-teaching. In addition, expert guidance from teachers at the right time encourages engagement and shared application activities, highlighting the importance of creating communities of inquiry in the classroom — whether face-to-face, online or blended.

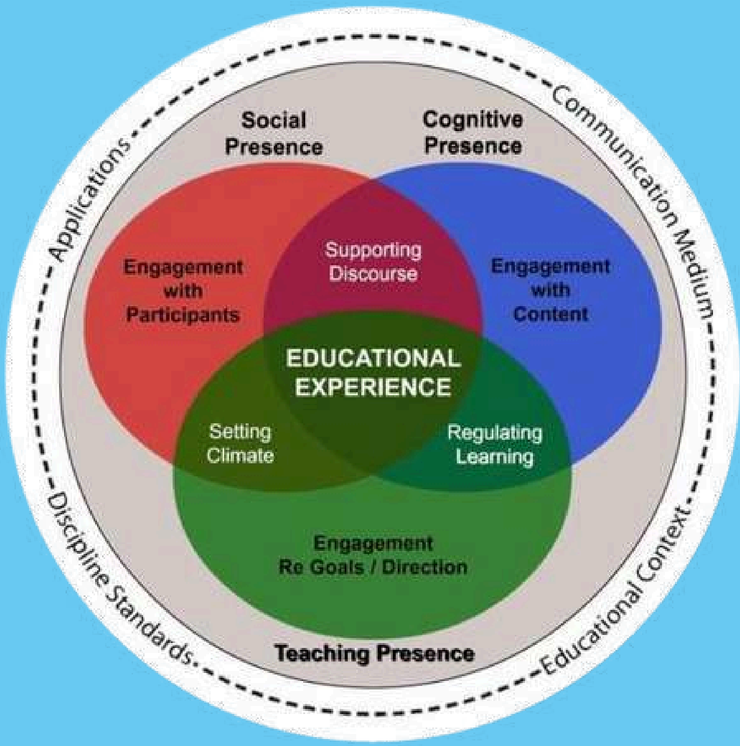


Figure 1.2. The Community of Inquiry model, the same resourse as above

Another type of blend adds technology in the classroom. Often called technology-enabled learning, adding technology to in-person teaching and learning may foster engagement and improve learning outcomes. The SAMR model, is an approach for the progressive implementation of new technology.

SAMR MODEL

Substitution
Tech acts as a tool substitute with no functional change

Augmentation
Tech acts as a tool substitute with functional improvement

Modification
Tech allows for significant task redesign

Redefinition
Tech allows for the creation of new tasks previously inconceivable

Figure 1.3 SAMR model, the same as above

The program spends a total duration of 69 hours, distributed as follows:

Requirements for enrollment in the program include:

- Previous qualification at level 1, attained upon completion of basic education (which correspondents to finished primary school).
- Minimum age of 18 years.

The no-code programming job is ideal for VET student if:

- S/he/they have never coded before and find traditional programming languages intimidating, the no-code approach provides a gentle introduction to the world of software development.
- S/he/they want to build applications quickly. No-code platforms offer drag-and-drop interfaces and pre-built components that allow you to create applications rapidly without writing code. If VET students have an idea for an app and want to bring it to life as quickly as possible, no-code programming is the way to go.
- No-code programming empowers VET students to build MVPs (Minimum Viable Products) and prototypes independently, validate their ideas, and iterate based on feedback without relying on developers.
- VET students want to automate tasks. No-code programming is not just about building applications; it's also about automating repetitive tasks and streamlining workflows.
- VET students are interested in innovation. No-code programming encourages creativity and experimentation by removing the barriers to entry that traditional coding often presents. If VET students are passionate about innovation and want to explore new ways of solving problems, diving into the world of no-code programming can open up a world of possibilities.

Guided learning and teaching sessions	Work-based learning activities	Independent study by participants
24 hours	31 hours	14 hours

Material conditions necessary for executing the program for virtual assistants include:

- **Theoretical Teaching:**

1. Projector for visual presentations
2. Teacher's computer with Internet access for accessing online resources and materials

- **Practical Teaching:**

VET students' computers in simulation for hands-on training and practice

Legal framework

Several existing regulations and directives within the EU may indirectly apply to No-Code Programmer and the technologies they interact with.

- **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)** No-code programmers often deal with data, whether it's collecting, storing, or processing information within their applications. The GDPR sets out rules for the protection of personal data of individuals within the EU, including requirements for obtaining consent, ensuring data security, and providing individuals with rights over their data.

- **e-Commerce Directive** No-code programmers involved in online commerce or providing online services need to be aware of the e-Commerce Directive. This directive establishes rules for online service providers, including provisions on liability of intermediaries, commercial communications, and electronic contracts.

- **Consumer Rights Directive** If no-code programmers offer digital services to consumers within the EU, they must comply with the Consumer Rights Directive. This directive harmonizes certain aspects of consumer rights in distance and off-premises contracts, including requirements for providing clear and transparent information to consumers, the right of withdrawal, and rules on unfair commercial practices.

- **Copyright Directive** No-code programmers who create or distribute content using no-code platforms need to be mindful of copyright laws. The Copyright Directive governs the use of copyrighted works online, including provisions on copyright infringement, liability of online platforms, and exceptions and limitations to copyright.

- **Accessibility Directive** No-code programmers developing websites or applications that are accessible to the public sector need to comply with the Accessibility Directive. This directive aims to ensure that websites and mobile applications of public sector bodies are accessible to persons with disabilities, following specific accessibility requirements and standards.

- **Platform-to-Business (P2B)** Regulation No-code programmers who operate online platforms that interact with businesses should be aware of the P2B Regulation. This regulation addresses transparency and fairness in the relationships between online platforms and businesses that use them, including provisions on ranking, terms and conditions, and dispute resolution.

This curriculum is composed of for (4) modules:

- MODULE 1: *Introduction to No-Code Development and No-Code Tools and Platforms*
- MODULE 2: *Building Web Applications, Creating Mobile Apps*
- MODULE 3: *Automating Workflows, Data Management and Integration*
- MODULE 4: *Career Development in No-Code Programming*

Introduction to No-Code Development and No-Code Tools and Platforms

This module serves as an introduction to the field of no-code programming, covering its definition, context, evolution, tools and platforms. VET students will gain a solid understanding of the principles, applications, and tools of no-code development, setting the stage for deeper exploration and hands-on practice in subsequent modules. They will be equipped with the knowledge and confidence to engage with no-code platforms effectively and begin their journey towards becoming proficient no-code developers.

- **Duration:** 10 hours
- **Theoretical Teaching:** 10 hours
- **Practical Teaching: -**

Literature in English Language:

- "No-Code Revolution: How to Build No-Code Applications with Bubble" by Vlad Larin provides a comprehensive introduction to no-code development using Bubble, one of the leading no-code platforms. It covers fundamental concepts, practical examples, and advanced techniques for building web applications without coding.
- "No-Code Handbook: A Guide to Building No-Code Web Applications" by Adalo Adalo's handbook offers a beginner-friendly introduction to no-code development, focusing on building mobile applications with their platform. It includes step-by-step tutorials, case studies, and tips for optimizing app design and functionality

Specific Teaching Aids:

- Presentation slides summarizing key concepts, definitions, and background of no-code programming
- Case studies and real-world examples showcasing successful no-code programming practices and trends
- Multimedia resources such as videos, podcasts, and online articles to supplement theoretical teachings and engage participants, e.g. YouTube channels such as "NoCodeDev" and "NoCode Wealth" offer a wealth of video tutorials, covering various aspects of no-code development, including platform walkthroughs, tips, and tutorials.
- No-code platforms offer extensive documentation and user guides in multiple languages. Encourage VET students to explore these resources to deepen their understanding of platform features and capabilities.
- Guest speakers from the no-code programming industry to share insights, experiences, and best practices
- Printed hand-outs or digital materials containing relevant information, industry statistics, and additional resources for further reading

Objectives:

- Understand the fundamental concept of no-code development, including its definition and significance in the context of software development.
- Familiarize students with popular no-code tools and platforms available in the market, such as Bubble, Adalo, Webflow, and Zapier.
- Explore emerging trends and innovations in the field of no-code development, such as AI-driven automation, low-code integration, and collaborative development environments.
- Discuss the potential impact of these trends on the future of software development and the evolving role of no-code programmers.
- Understand the role of no-code programming across different professional settings.

Topics Covered:

- Introduction to No-Code Development
- Popular No-Code Tools and Platforms
- Emerging trends in No-Code Development
- Impact of Trends on Software Development
- Role of No-Code Programming Across Professional Settings

Learning Activities:

- Lectures and presentations
- Interactive Platform Exploration and Mentoring
- Case study analysis and guest speakers for the no-code programming industry
- Future trends debate

Session 1

Introduction and getting to know each other

Steps

Begin with a warm welcome to all participants, Introduce yourself and briefly mention your background and role, Encourage participants to feel free to ask questions and interact throughout the session, Provide an overview of the course: Introduce the purpose of the course, what participants can expect to learn, and how it will benefit them, Logistics: Explain the schedule for the course, including session dates, timings, and any breaks, Expectations: Discuss what you expect from participants in terms of participation, engagement, and completing assignments, Guidelines for learning: Share any guidelines related to communication, collaboration, and behavior during the course, Ice Breaker: Start with a fun ice breaker activity to help participants feel comfortable and get to know each other, Team Building: Use team-building activities to foster collaboration and create a sense of unity among participants

Duration

40 min

Session 2

Overview of no-code programming

Steps

An engaging and informative presentation that introduces the concept of no-code programming, Cover topics such as what no-code programming is, its benefits, how it differs from traditional coding, and its applications in real-world scenarios, summarize the main points discussed during the lectureAsk probing questions to prompt critical thinking and engagement with the topic, Share real-life case study or example of how no-code programming has been successfully implemented. This will help participants contextualize the concept and see its practical applications

Duration

20 min

Session 3

Development and evolution

Steps

Present a chronological framework outlining the development and evolution of the concept or technology you are discussing. Cover key milestones, advancements, and significant changes over time, Provide a historical context to help participants understand how the concept has evolved to its current state, summarize the main stages of development and evolution, Use case studies to illustrate how the concept or technology has evolved in real-world scenarios. Highlight specific examples that demonstrate notable changes or breakthroughs, Q&A

Duration

20 min

Session 4

Importance in modern workplaces

Steps

Discuss the growing role of no-code programming in modern workplaces, Highlight how no-code tools empower non-technical employees to create solutions, thus promoting innovation and efficiency, Present case studies from different industries showcasing the innovative use of no-code programming, Examples: Marketing automation in a retail company, HR management systems in a corporate environment, custom CRM tools in a small business, group discussion: How can no-code tools be integrated into your current workflows, What potential challenges do you foresee in adopting no-code solutions, Participants create concept maps in small groups to visualize the impact of no-code programming in various workplace scenarios, Presentation of Maps, Q&A

Duration

100 min

Session 1

Overview of Bubble

Introducing Bubble as a leading no-code platform for building web applications without coding

Steps

Explain the core features of Bubble, including its drag-and-drop interface, visual database, and workflow automation, Discuss how Bubble empowers users to build complex web applications without writing code, Visual Editor: Showcase the drag-and-drop interface for designing user interfaces, Database Management: Explain how Bubble allows for easy database creation and management, Workflow Automation: Describe the process of setting up workflows to handle logic and interactions, Plugins and Integrations: Highlight the availability of plugins to extend functionality and integrate with other services, Deployment: Overview of how to deploy and manage a Bubble application, Real-world applications showing, Main Points Recap, Discussion Prompts in small groups, Ask participants to individually reflect on how Bubble could impact their current workflows or future projects, Open the floor for questions and address any queries participants have about Bubble

Duration

60 min

Session 2

Overview of no-code programming

Exploring Adalo's features and capabilities for creating mobile applications using a visual editor.

Steps

Provide an overview of Adalo, its origin, and its mission to enable users to build mobile applications without writing code, Demonstrate the drag-and-drop interface for designing mobile app interfaces, Explain the variety of pre-built components available (e.g., forms, lists, buttons), Discuss how to create and manage a database within Adalo, Describe how to set up workflows to handle user interactions and app logic, Explain the process of testing, previewing, and publishing mobile applications to app stores, Main Points Recap, Reflection, Q&A

Duration

40 min

Session 3

Intro into Understanding Webflow

Discussing and exploring Webflow's role in enabling designers to create responsive websites without writing code.

Steps

Provide an overview of Webflow, its background, and its mission to bridge the gap between design and development, Demonstrate the visual editor, highlighting its drag-and-drop functionality, Explain Webflow’s responsive design capabilities, showing how to design for various screen sizes and devices, Describe Webflow's built-in CMS for managing dynamic content, Showcase Webflow’s powerful interactions and animations toolset, Highlight the hosting options provided by Webflow and its integrated SEO tools, Group discussion, Q&A

Duration

40 min

Session 4

Intro into Zapier

Highlighting Zapier's functionality for automating workflows and integrating various apps and services without coding.

Steps

Provide an overview of Zapier, its founding, and its role in automating workflows, Explain what a "Zap" is—a workflow automation consisting of a trigger and one or more actions, Describe how triggers (events in one app) initiate actions (tasks performed in another app), Introduce multi-step Zaps for more complex workflows involving multiple actions and conditional logic, Highlight the wide range of apps and services that Zapier integrates with (e.g., Google Apps, Slack, Trello, Mailchimp), Explain how to use conditional logic to perform actions based on specific criteria, Main points Recap, Group discussion, Reflection, Q&A

Duration

40 min

Session 1

Current trends shaping the no-code development industry

(AI-driven automation, Low-code integration)

Steps

AI is being integrated into no-code platforms to automate complex tasks, like deploying AI-powered chatbots, machine learning models, and AI-driven design tools, without coding. Low-code platforms complement no-code by offering more customization. There's a rise in industry-specific no-code platforms for sectors like healthcare, finance, and education. The lecture explored these trends and posed questions such as the impact of AI-driven automation on no-code development, how low-code features can enhance no-code platforms, the risks of increased customization, and the effects of specialized no-code tools on businesses.

Duration

60 min

Session 2

Collaborative Development Environments

Examining the emergence of collaborative tools and platforms that facilitate teamwork and co-creation in no-code development projects.

Steps

Define what collaborative development environments (CDEs) are and their importance in the no-code development landscape, Discuss the rise of remote work and the increasing need for tools that support team collaboration in real-time, Explain how CDEs allow multiple users to work on the same project simultaneously, Examples: Figma for design, Miro for brainstorming, and Webflow for web development, Discuss the importance of version control in collaborative projects and how CDEs manage changes, GitHub's version control, Slack integration, built-in chat features, and comment systems, Trello, Asana, and integrated project management tools in platforms like Monday.com, Assigning roles and permissions in platforms like Airtable and Notion, curated videos, discussion in groups, highlighting, probing questions

Duration

60 min

Session 1

Future of software development

AI-driven automation, low-code integration and collaborative environments will shape the future of software development.

Steps

Explain the significance of AI in automating repetitive tasks, enhancing decision-making processes, and improving efficiency, Describe how AI-driven automation will reduce the need for manual coding and accelerate the development process, Discuss how low-code platforms enable rapid prototyping and faster time-to-market for applications, Explain the significance of version control in managing changes and maintaining project integrity, Discuss the potential for creating more agile, efficient, and innovative development processes, Open the floor for questions and address any queries participants have about the future of software development

Duration

60 min

Session 2

Evolving Role of No-Code Programmers

Discussing above trends to expand responsibilities and capabilities of no-code programmers.

Steps

Briefly introduce the topic and explain the importance of understanding emerging trends in the no-code programming space, Video Lectures and Podcasts, Provide participants with a list of key trends discussed in the lecture and the curated content, Ask them to highlight the trends they find most relevant or intriguing, Use the Socratic method to deepen understanding and critical thinking, e.g. question: What are the potential benefits and drawbacks of integrating low-code capabilities into no-code platforms, Provide a few minutes for individual reflection, Debate Summary, Q&A

Duration

60 min

Module 1

Introduction to No-Code Development and No-Code Tools and Platforms

Theoretical Teaching (10 hours):

Methodology: Theoretical teaching sessions will be conducted through interactive lectures, presentations, and multimedia resources. Participants will engage in discussions, case studies, and Q&A sessions to deepen their understanding of the no-code programmer concept, as well as platforms and tools.

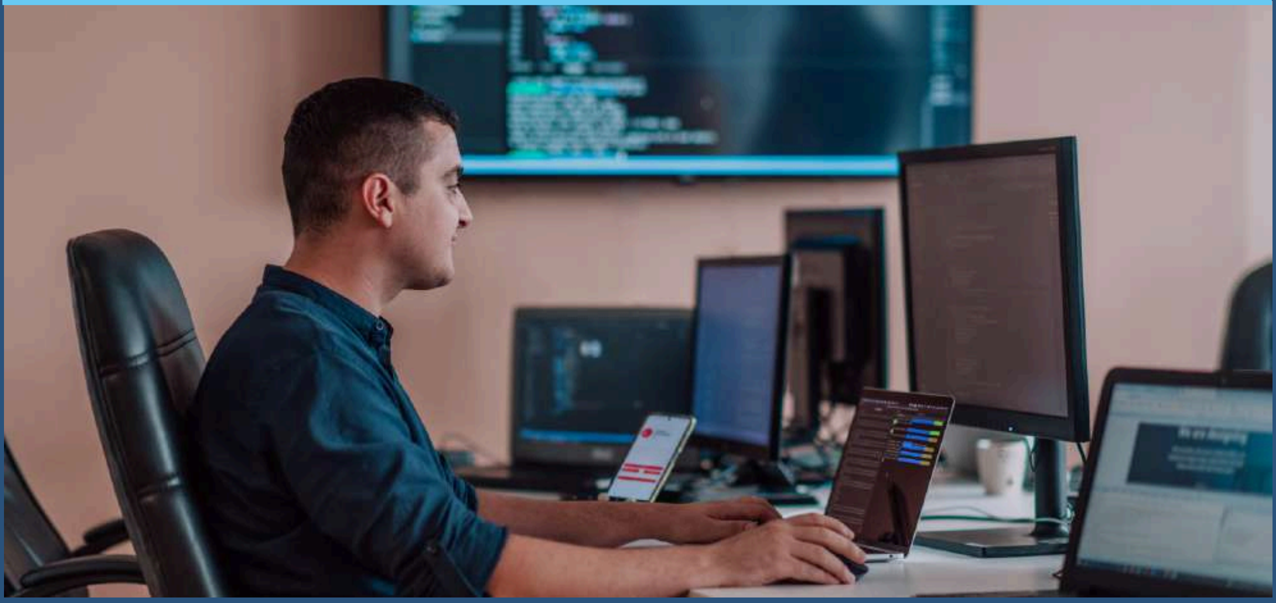
- Topics Covered: Definition and scope of no-coding programmer, development, current trends, role in modern workplaces, guiding platform tutorial for Bubble, Adalo, Webflow, Zapier, and current trends and collaborative development environments, future software development and evolving role of no-code programmers.

Learning Outcomes:

- By combining theoretical insights with practical applications and independent study by participants, Module 1 aims to equip participants with a solid foundation in no-code programming, preparing them for further modules and real-world challenges in the field.
- Define no-code programmer as a job opportunity and its position in modern business operations.
- Identify various tasks in different fields undertaken by no-code programmers.
- VET students will gain practical experience with no-code development tools, building confidence in their ability to navigate platform interfaces.
- VET students will immerse themselves in a hands-on learning experience, applying their technical skills and creativity to tackle real-world challenges under case studies. They will also develop teamwork, communication, and presentation skills while receiving valuable feedback from peers and mentors.
- Students will practice articulating their ideas, demonstrating their work, and receiving feedback in a supportive and collaborative environment. They will gain insights into different approaches and perspectives on no-code programming while honing their presentation and communication skills.

The practical teaching activities provide students with hands-on experience and opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills in real-world scenarios, fostering creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking in the process.

Building Web Applications, Creating Mobile Apps



This module is designed to cultivate the essential practical skills and competencies necessary for aspiring no-code programmers. Participants will engage in hands-on learning experiences to acquire technical and soft skills – all critical for navigating and excelling within virtual work environments. Through interactive exercises and real-world scenarios, participants will build a strong foundation of practical skills indispensable for success in the dynamic field of no-code programming.

- **Duration:** 33,5 hours
- **Theoretical Teaching:** 7,5 hours
- **Practical Teaching:** 13 hours
- **Independent study by participants:** 14hours

Literature in English Language:

No-Code Citizen Development tools can fill a void caused by the Great Resignation, resource: https://quixy.com/blog/no-code-citizen-development-fill-void-caused-by-great-resignation/

Literature and Specific Teaching Aids in Croatian and English Language:

- The same like in the 1st module

+

- Platforms such as Udemy, Coursera, and YouTube offer a wide range of courses and tutorials in Croatian/English/ language on building web applications and creating mobile apps using no-code programming. These resources provide various learning formats and are tailored to different skill levels and interests of participants.

Objectives:

- Differentiate between no-code, low-code, and traditional coding methodologies.
- Gain a comprehensive understanding of the principles and concepts underlying no-code programming, including workflow automation, visual interface design, and data management.
- Familiarize VET students with popular no-code platforms such as Bubble, Adalo, Webflow and Zapier, learning their features, capabilities, and best practices for building web applications and mobile apps.
- Acquire practical skills in designing and developing web applications without writing code, including creating user interfaces, implementing functionality, and integrating external services.
- Learn to leverage no-code platforms to design, develop, and deploy mobile applications for iOS and Android devices, covering topics such as screen design, data management, and app publishing.
- Understand the process of deploying and maintaining web applications and mobile apps built with no-code programming, including testing, debugging, and optimizing performance for end-users.

Topics Covered:

- Role of No-Code Programming Across Professional Settings
- Learning by Doing Popular No-Code Tools and Platforms
- Fundamentals of Web Application Development
- Creating Mobile Applications

Learning Activities:

- IT Skill-building exercises
- Group projects and collaborative tasks
- Self-assessment and reflection activities
- Small task-driven independent study by participants

Session 1

No-Code in Business

Exploring how no-code development can benefit businesses of all sizes by enabling rapid innovation, reducing time to market, and empowering non-technical users

Steps

Present case studies of businesses that have successfully implemented no-code solutions, Highlight the challenges they faced, the solutions implemented, and the outcomes achieved, Explore the various ways in which no-code development can benefit businesses, including/ work in groups and presentation on these topics: Rapid Prototyping: Quickly build and test new ideas without extensive coding, Agility: Adapt to changing market demands and customer needs more effectively, Cost Savings: Reduce development costs and overhead by utilizing no-code platforms, Empowerment: Enable non-technical users to take ownership of software projects and contribute to innovation, Scalability: Scale applications easily as business needs grow or change, Divide participants in small groups, Assign each group a specific business scenario or problem to solve using a no-code platform: Identify the requirements and goals of the assigned scenario or problem, Choose a suitable no-code platform and plan the development process, Design and build a prototype solution using the selected platform, Showcase and discussion, Q&A

Duration

60+60 min

Session 2

No-Code in Education

Discussing the role of no-code programming in education, where it can be used to teach fundamental programming concepts and foster creativity and problem-solving skills.

Steps

Explore the various ways in which no-code programming can benefit education, including: Simplified Learning: No-code platforms provide a user-friendly environment for students to learn programming concepts without the complexity of traditional coding, Creativity and Exploration: Students can experiment with building applications and projects without being bogged down by syntax or technical details, Problem-Solving Skills: No-code programming encourages students to think critically and creatively to solve problems and design solutions, Collaboration and Teamwork: Group projects and collaborative learning activities foster teamwork and communication skills, Accessible Learning: No-code platforms make programming education more accessible to students with diverse backgrounds and abilities, Q&A, Practical: Collaborative project exploration - In their groups, participants will work together to: Choose a no-code platform suitable for the assigned task, Design and build a project or prototype that demonstrates the assigned programming concept or addresses the given problem statement, Collaborate on the development process, sharing ideas and problem-solving strategies, Showcase and discussion, Q&A

Duration

60+60 min

Session 3

No-Code in Non-Profit

Organizations: Highlighting how no-code development can support the missions of non-profit organizations by enabling them to create custom solutions to address specific needs and challenges.

Steps

Explore the various ways in which no-code programming can benefit non-profits, including: Custom Solutions: No-code platforms empower non-profits to build tailored solutions to address their unique needs and challenges, Cost-Effectiveness: No-code development can be more affordable than traditional custom software development, allowing non-profits to allocate resources more efficiently, Rapid Deployment: No-code platforms enable non-profits to deploy solutions quickly, allowing them to respond rapidly to emerging needs or crises, Accessibility: No-code programming lowers the barrier to entry for non-technical staff and volunteers, allowing them to contribute to technology projects, Scalability: No-code solutions can scale as the organization grows or as new challenges arise, Q&A, Practical: In their groups, participants will work together to - Brainstorm ideas for addressing the assigned challenge using a no-code platform, Design and build a prototype solution or application to solve the problem, Collaborate on the development process, sharing ideas and problem-solving strategies, Showcase and discussion, Q&A

Duration

60+60 min

Session 1

Learning by doing (LbD) in Bubble

Introducing Bubble as a leading no-code platform for building web applications without coding. (setting account, navigating the user interface, basic concepts and terminologies, doing simple task)

Steps

Setting Up Bubble accounts, Navigating the user interface, Basic concepts and terminologies, Divide participants into small groups, Assign each group a simple task to complete using Bubble, Tasks may include: Creating a basic landing page, Design a contact form, Implementing a simple database query, Mentoring and support, Discussion in plenary, Independent study: Participants work on personal projects or ideas using Bubble, Reflection and documentation (to document their learnings, challenges, and successes during this time), Participants come together to share their personal projects and experiences from the independent study period, Reflect on the overall learning journey with Bubble and discuss future applications or areas for further exploration.

Duration

120 min + 120 min

Session 2

LbD in Adalo

Exploring Adalo's features and capabilities for creating mobile applications using a visual editor. (setting account, navigating the user interface, basic concepts and terminologies, doing simple task)

Steps

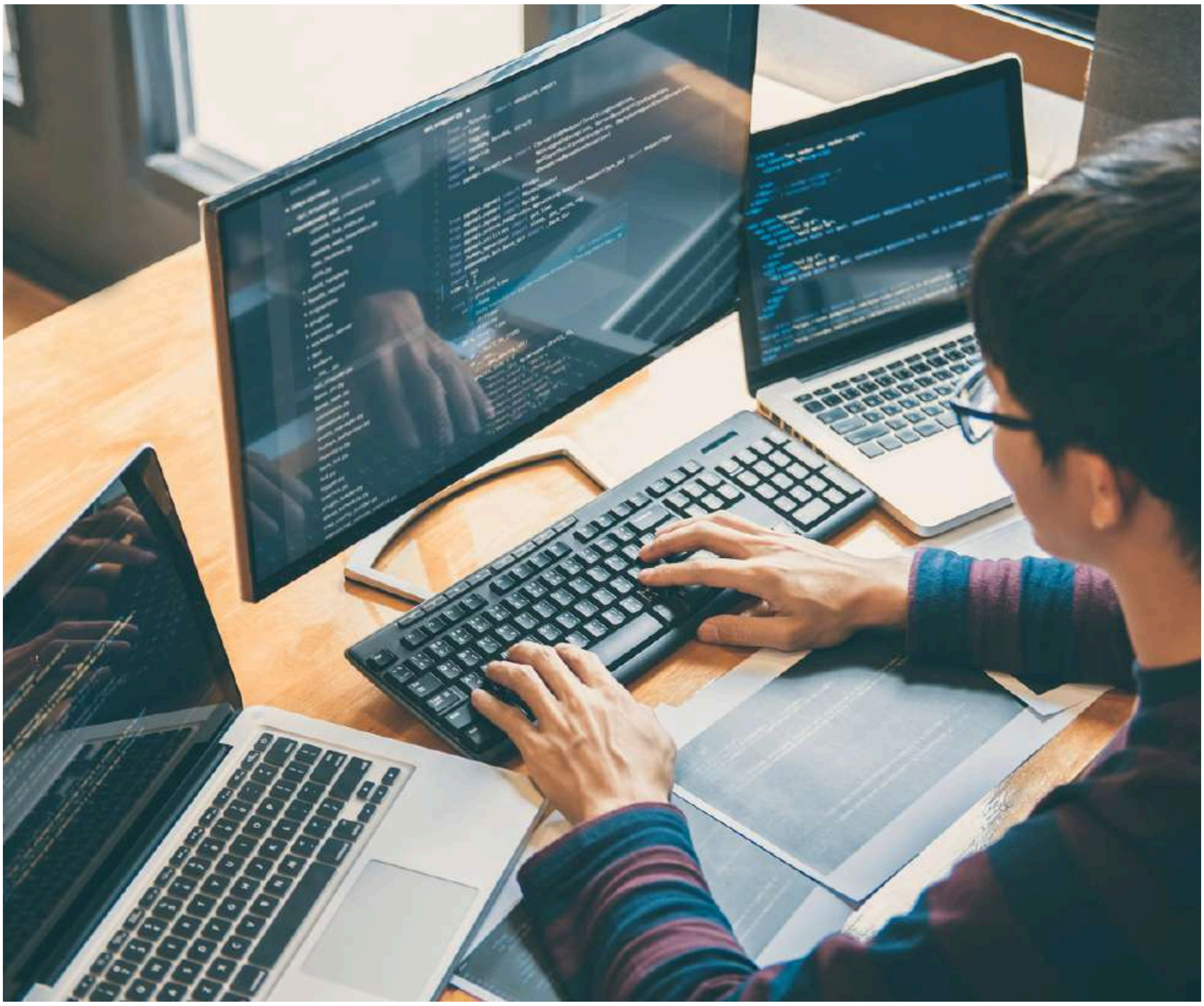
Setting Up accounts, Provide a guided tour of the Adalo user interface, Introduce fundamental concepts and terminologies used in Adalo, such as: Screens, Components, Databases, Actions, Relationships, Divide participants into small groups, Assign each group a simple task to complete using Adalo, Creating a basic mobile app prototype, Designing a sign-up/login screen, Implementing a simple database query, Monitoring and support, Discussion in Plenary, Independent study: building personal projects, Encourage creativity and experimentation with the platform, provide support and guidance, Reflection and Documentation (document their learnings, challenges, and successes during this time), Sharing and Discussion

Duration

120 min + 120 min

Session 3

LbD in Webflow



Discussing and exploring Webflow's role in enabling designers to create responsive websites without writing code. (setting account, navigating the user interface, basic concepts and terminologies, doing simple task)

Steps

Setting Up Webflow Account, Navigating the User Interface, Basic Concepts and Terminology, Mentoring and Support, Discussion in Plenary, Independent learning: Participants work on personal projects or ideas using Webflow, Encourage creativity and experimentation with the platform, Provide support and guidance as needed, Reflection and Documentation, Sharing and Discussion,

Duration

120 min + 120 min

Session 1

Planning and designing web application

Identifying the target audience, defining the purpose and functionality, creating wireframes and mock-ups.

Steps

Discuss the significance of understanding the target audience for a web application, Explore techniques for identifying and defining the demographics, preferences, and needs of the target audience, Explain the importance of clearly defining the purpose and functionality of the web application, Discuss best practices for creating wireframes and mock-ups, including using design software or online tools, Practical: Divide participants into small groups, Assign each group a hypothetical web application project, Instruct groups to model and demonstrate the planning and design process for their assigned project, Facilitate a peer review session where groups present their work to each other, Foster collaboration by allowing groups to exchange ideas and suggestions

Duration

30 min theoretical + 30 min practical

Session 2

Building the user interface (UI)

Drag-and-drop interface design, customizing themes and templates, responsive design principles.

Steps

Explore popular tools and platforms that support drag-and-drop interface design, such as Webflow, Wix, or WordPress, Explain the importance of customizing themes and templates to match the branding and visual identity of the web application, Introduce responsive design principles and their significance in ensuring optimal user experience across different devices and screen sizes, Practical: Divide participants into small groups, Assign each group a hypothetical web application project with a specific UI design challenge, Instruct groups to model and demonstrate their approach to building the UI for their assigned project, Peer review and collaboration.

Duration

30 min theoretical + 30 min practical

Session 3

Adding functionality

Forms, buttons and user inputs, data binding and dynamic content, integration with APIs and external services.

Steps

Discuss the role of forms, buttons, and user inputs in collecting and processing user data within web applications, Explore different types of form elements and input fields, along with their usage and best practices, Discuss how data binding enables dynamic content generation and real-time updates in web applications, Explain the significance of integrating with APIs and external services to extend the functionality and capabilities of web applications, Q&A, Practical: Work in groups (modelling and demonstration), Implement forms, buttons, and user inputs to capture user interactions, Bind data to user interface elements to display dynamic content, Integrate with APIs or external services to enhance functionality, Feedback and discussion.

Duration

30 min theoretical + 30 min practical

Session 4

Managing Data

Setting up databases, CRUD operations (create, read, update, delete), data security and privacy considerations.

Steps

Discuss the key elements involved in managing data, including setting up databases, CRUD operations (create, read, update, delete), and data security and privacy considerations, Setting Up Database, Introduce different types of databases, such as relational databases (e.g., MySQL, PostgreSQL) and NoSQL databases (e.g., MongoDB, Firebase), Introduce CRUD operations (Create, Read, Update, Delete) as fundamental operations for managing data in web applications, Discuss common security threats and privacy concerns, such as data breaches, unauthorized access, and compliance with regulations (e.g., GDPR, HIPAA), Practical: Divide participants into small groups, Assign each group a hypothetical web application project with specific data management requirements, Instruct groups to model and demonstrate their approach to managing data for their assigned project, Peer review and collaboration

Duration

30 min theoretical + 30 min practical

Session 1

Introduction to Mobile App Development

Differences between web and mobile apps, cross-platform development)

Steps

Introduce the concept of mobile app development and its significance in the digital landscape, Introduce the concept of cross-platform development as a solution for building apps that run on multiple platforms using a single codebase, Discuss factors such as performance, offline capabilities, user engagement, and distribution channels, Introduce popular tools and technologies for mobile app development, including native development (Swift for iOS, Kotlin/Java for Android) and cross-platform frameworks (React Native, Flutter), Q&A Discuss the pros and cons of each approach and how to choose the right technology stack for a mobile app project

Duration

60 min theoretical

Session 2

Designing Mobile App Interfaces

User experience (UX) best practices for mobile, adaptive and responsive design techniques, utilizing mobile-specific components (e.g., navigation bars, tab bars)

Steps

Discuss best practices for designing intuitive and engaging user interfaces, including simplicity, consistency, and usability, Discuss techniques for creating layouts that adapt to different screen sizes and orientations, ensuring a consistent user experience across devices, Explore mobile-specific components such as navigation bars, tab bars, and gestures, Practical: Divide participants into small groups, Assign each group a mobile app design challenge or scenario, Instruct groups to brainstorm and create wireframes or mock-ups for their assigned design challenge, incorporating the UX best practices and design techniques discussed, Independent: Participants independently explore mobile app design tools and platforms (e.g., Adobe XD, Figma, Sketch), Encourage them to apply the concepts learned in the theoretical session to create prototypes or high-fidelity designs for their own mobile app ideas or projects, Provide resources and guidance for further learning and exploration, Reflection and Documentation, Sharing and Discussion

Duration

60 min theoretical

Session 3

Integrating Mobile-Specific Features

Push notifications, geolocation services, camera and multimedia access).

Steps

Discuss the importance of integrating features such as push notifications, geolocation services, and camera and multimedia access, Explain the role of push notifications in engaging users and driving app interactions, Introduce geolocation services and their applications in mobile apps, such as location-based services, mapping, and navigation, Explore techniques for integrating camera and multimedia features into mobile app interfaces, Practical: Divide participants into small groups, Assign each group a mobile app development scenario or use case that requires the integration of one or more mobile-specific features, Instruct groups to work together to implement the assigned features in a sample mobile app project, Peer Review and Collaboration, Independent: Participants independently explore mobile-specific feature integration using development tools, documentation, and tutorials, Reflection and documentation, Sharing and discussion

Duration

30 min theoretical + 60 min practical + 120min independent

Session 4

Testing and Debugging Mobile Apps

Emulators and simulators, real device testing, common debugging techniques and tools.

Steps

Discuss the challenges and complexities of testing mobile apps across different devices, platforms, and network conditions, Discuss the advantages and limitations of using emulators and simulators for testing, including performance differences and device-specific behaviors, Discuss strategies for selecting a diverse range of devices for testing and ensuring compatibility across different screen sizes, resolutions, and operating systems, Discuss techniques such as logging, breakpoints, and remote debugging, along with popular debugging tools and frameworks, Practical: Divide participants into small groups, Assign each group a sample mobile app project with known bugs or issues, Instruct groups to work together to identify, debug, and resolve the assigned issues using common debugging techniques and tools, Independent: Participants independently explore testing and debugging techniques and tools for mobile app development, Encourage them to experiment with different debugging strategies and tools in their own mobile app projects or prototypes, Participants reflect on their exploration and experimentation with testing and debugging mobile apps, Sharing and discussion

Duration

30 min theoretical + 60 min practical + 120min independent

Module 2

Building Web Applications, Creating Mobile Apps

Theoretical Teaching (7,5 hours):

Methodology: Theoretical teaching sessions will be conducted through lectures, presentations, and group discussions. Learning involves imparting foundational knowledge and principles that underpin the practical skills, it is broken down in some key topics.

- Topics Covered: conceptual framework, technology overview, design principles, data management, integration and automation, testing and quality assurance.

Practical Teaching (13 hours):

Methodology: Practical teaching sessions will involve hands-on workshops, and simulations to reinforce theoretical concepts and develop practical skills. Participants will engage in interactive activities to practice and refine their IT skills.

- Activities: task prioritization exercises, platform challenges, and web and mobile apps development simulations will be employed to enhance practical skills.
- Integration: Practical sessions will be closely integrated with theoretical content to facilitate the application of learned skills in realistic scenarios and prepare participants for the demands of no code programming tasks.

Independent study by participants (14 hours):

Learning by doing by introducing practical tasks on platforms for web and mobile apps development.

Learning outcomes

- By combining theoretical knowledge with practical applications, Module 2 aims to equip participants with the essential IT skills and competencies necessary for success as no code programmer in diverse professional settings.
- Compare and contrast various popular no-code platforms (e.g., Webflow, Bbble, Adalo), including their features, strengths, and suitable use cases.
- Explain the principles of user interface (UI) and user experience (UX) design, emphasizing responsive and mobile-first design approaches.
- Understand basic data modelling, database design, and the differences between relational and non-relational databases.
- Plan, design, and develop functional web and mobile applications using no-code platforms.
- Create user-friendly and aesthetically pleasing interfaces using drag-and-drop tools and customization templates provided by no-code platforms.
- Set up and manage databases within no-code platforms, performing basic CRUD operations securely.
- Conduct thorough testing and debugging techniques to identify and fix issues.

Automating Workflows, Data Management and Integration

Module 3 focuses on leveraging no-code programming tools and platforms to automate workflows, manage data efficiently, and integrate systems seamlessly. Students will learn how to streamline repetitive tasks, organize and manipulate data, and connect different software systems without extensive coding knowledge.

- **Duration:** 12 hours
- **Theoretical Teaching:** 3 hours
- **Practical Teaching:** 9 hours

Literature in English Language:

- "No-Code/Low-Code Development Platforms" by Katheryn Best.

This book provides an overview of the landscape of no-code/low-code development platforms, including their features, benefits, and best practices.

- "Automate This: How Algorithms Came to Rule Our World" by Christopher Steiner.

While not specifically about no-code programming, this book delves into the world of automation and its impact on various industries, providing valuable insights into the importance of automating workflows.

- "Data Management for Researchers: Organize, Maintain and Share Your Data for Research Success" by Kristin Briney.

This book offers practical guidance on data management practices, which can be applied to no-code data management workflows

Specific Teaching Aids:

- Video tutorials - demonstrating how to use popular no-code platforms like Zapier, Integromat, or Microsoft Power Automate to automate workflows, manage data, and integrate systems.
- Interactive workshops - hands-on workshops where students can work through real-world scenarios to automate workflows and manage data using no-code tools.
- Case studies - showcasing how organizations have successfully implemented no-code solutions to automate workflows, manage data effectively, and integrate systems.
- Templates and examples - of common workflows, data management tasks, and integration scenarios that VET students can use as starting points for their projects.
- Guest speakers - who have expertise in no-code programming, workflow automation, or data management to share their experiences and insights.
- Online Forms and Communities - Encourage students to participate in online forums and communities dedicated to no-code programming, where they can ask questions, share ideas, and learn from others in the field. Platforms like Reddit, Stack Overflow, and community forums hosted by no-code platforms can be valuable resources.
- Project-Based learning - Design project-based learning activities that require students to apply their knowledge of no-code programming to solve real-world problems. Assign projects that involve automating a specific workflow, managing and analyzing data, and integrating multiple systems using no-code tools.
- Assessment Tools - Develop assessment tools such as quizzes, assignments, and project evaluations to gauge students' understanding of the concepts covered in Module 3. Assess their ability to design, implement, and optimize no-code solutions for workflow automation, data management, and integration.

By incorporating these teaching aids and resources into your curriculum, an engaging and effective learning experience will be created for students as they explore the possibilities of no-code programming in automating workflows, managing data, and integrating systems.

Objectives:

- Learn how to identify repetitive tasks and processes that can be automated to increase efficiency and productivity.
- Familiarize VET students with popular no-code platforms such as Zapier, Integromat, or Microsoft Power Automate.
- Acquire skills in organizing, storing, cleaning, and analyzing data using no-code data management tools like Airtable, Google Sheets, or Microsoft Excel.
- Understand how to connect APIs, webhooks, and other tools to facilitate seamless data exchange and communication between applications.
- Collaborate with peers to solve problems and share insights and experiences in leveraging no-code programming for automation, data management, and integration.
- Explore opportunities for innovation and creativity in designing custom workflows and solutions tailored to unique requirements.

Topics Covered:

- Workflow Automation
- Data-Management of No-Code Environments
- Integration of Software Systems
- Practical Application and Project Work

Learning Activities:

- Hands-on tutorials and demonstrations
- Simulations on workflow automation
- Performing data management tasks such as sorting, filtering, and creating visualizations
- Group exercises to practice
- Case studies analysis
- Project based assessment

Session 1

Understanding the concept of workflow automation and its benefits

Steps

Discuss how workflow automation involves the use of technology to automate repetitive tasks, processes, and workflows, Explore the various benefits of workflow automation for businesses and organizations, Highlight examples and case studies demonstrating the positive impact of workflow automation in different industries and functional areas, Q&A interactive session

Duration

30 min theoretical

Session 2

Exploring common use cases for workflow automatisation across various industries

Steps

Discuss how different sectors leverage workflow automation to streamline operations, increase efficiency, and reduce costs, Present examples and case studies showcasing real-world applications of workflow automation in different industries, Explore use cases in areas such as finance, healthcare, marketing, human resources, and customer service, Invite a guest speaker from a relevant industry to share insights and experiences with workflow automation in their organization, Q&A, Practical: Divide participants into small groups, Assign each group a specific industry or sector, Instruct groups to brainstorm potential use cases for workflow automation within their assigned industry or sector, Peer review and collaboration

Duration

30 min theoretical + 30 min practical

Session 3

Hands-on experience with no-code automation platforms like Zapier, Integromat, or Microsoft Power Automate

Steps

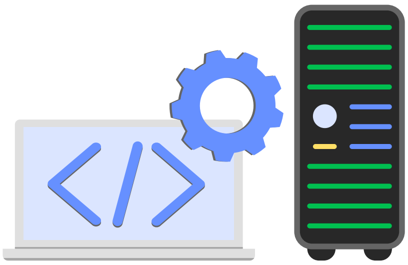
Tool familiarization, Assign each group one of the selected no-code automation platforms, Instruct groups to explore the user interface, features, and available integrations of their assigned platform, Provide a scenario or use case for automation that requires the use of the selected no-code platform, Provide coaching and support as needed to help groups overcome challenges and troubleshoot issues, Peer review and collaboration

Duration

150 min practical

Session 1

Principles of data management and its importance in business operations



Steps

Explore the key components of data management, including data collection, storage, organization, integration, analysis, and governance, Provide examples and case studies highlighting the impact of effective data management practices on business performance, Q&A

Duration

30 min theoretical

Session 2

Introduction to no-code data management tools such as Airtable, Google Sheets, or Microsoft Excel

Steps

Tool familiarization, Encourage participants to experiment with creating tables, entering data, and performing basic data manipulation tasks, Provide a practical scenario or use case that requires data management using the selected tool, Instruct groups to work collaboratively to organize, analyze, and visualize data based on the given scenario, Provide coaching and support as needed to help groups overcome challenges and achieve their objectives, Feedback and discussion, Conclude the practical session with a brief debriefing in the plenary

Duration

120 min practical

Session 1

Integrating different software systems and services using no-code programming

Steps

Discuss how no-code platforms enable users to connect disparate systems and automate workflows without writing code, Use slides, graphs, and video tutorials to demonstrate how no-code programming can be used to integrate systems such as CRM, ERP, marketing automation, and productivity tools, Share best practices for successful software systems integration using no-code programming, Q&A

Duration

60 min theoretical

Session 2

Connecting APIs, web hooks, and other tools to facilitate data exchange between applications

Steps

Tool familiarization, Assign each group a set of tools and platforms for connecting APIs, webhooks, and other tools for data exchange, Instruct groups to explore the user interfaces, functionalities, and integration capabilities of their assigned tools, Provide practical scenarios or use cases that require data exchange between applications,

Instruct groups to work collaboratively to design and implement data exchange workflows using the assigned tools and platforms, Provide coaching and support as needed, Peer review and collaboration, Summary and reflection

Duration

120 min practical

Session 1

Case studies, and project-based learning activities to apply theoretical concepts to practical scenarios

Steps

Present case studies demonstrating the application of theoretical concepts to practical scenarios, Use slides, graphs, and video tutorials to showcase real-world examples of how theoretical knowledge has been implemented in various industries and contexts, Discuss the structure and objectives of project-based learning activities, Q&A

Duration

30 min theoretical

Session 2

Collaborative projects to design and implement custom workflows, data management solutions, and system integration using no-code tools

Steps

Group Formation and Tool Exploration, Assign each group a collaborative project that requires the design and implementation of custom workflows, data management solutions, or system integration using no-code tools, Instruct groups to work collaboratively to design and implement their assigned project using the selected no-code tools, Encourage creativity, problem-solving, and effective communication within groups as they navigate the project implementation process, Facilitate a peer review session where groups present their project implementations to each other, Debrief in plenary

Duration

120 min practical

Module 3

Automating Workflows, Data Management and Integratio

Theoretical Teaching (3 hours):

Methodology: employs a structured approach to introduce participants to the core concepts of no-code programming, workflow automation, data management, and system integration. The methodology integrates interactive lectures, multimedia presentations, and demonstrations to convey theoretical principles effectively. Participants engage in discussions, ask questions, and receive clarification on key topics to deepen their understanding. The session emphasizes practical relevance, illustrating theoretical concepts with real-world examples and case studies to enhance comprehension and retention.

- Topics Covered: Understanding the concept of workflow automation and its benefits, Exploring common use cases for workflow automatization across various industries, Principles of data management and its importance in business operations, Case studies, and project-based learning activities to apply theoretical concepts to practical scenarios

Practical Teaching (9 hours):

Methodology: Participants engage in guided workshops, case studies, and project-based assignments, where they apply no-code programming tools and techniques to automate workflows, manage data, and integrate systems. The methodology fosters collaboration and peer learning, allowing participants to work individually or in teams to solve real-world problems and challenges. Feedback and guidance from instructors facilitate the iterative development of practical skills and the implementation of effective no-code solutions.

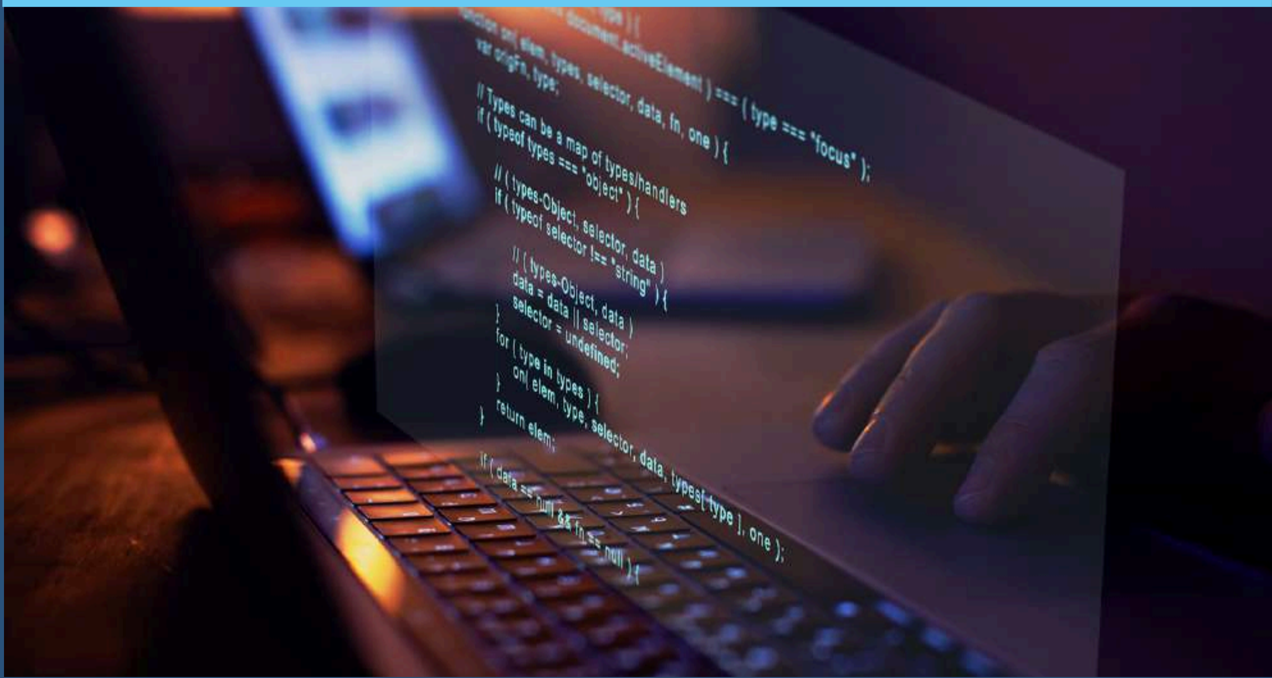
- Activities: Hands-on tutorials, guided exercises, project-based assignments, case studies will be utilized to reinforce practical skills and enhance participants' proficiency in using tools.
- Integration: Practical sessions will be closely integrated with theoretical content, allowing participants to apply their knowledge of tools in practical situations and develop the IT and soft skills necessary for efficient and effective no-code programming.

Resource: https://zvolv.com/blog/blog/2020/02/03/the-rise-of-no-code-development-platforms/

Learning outcomes:

- By combining theoretical insights with practical applications, Module 3 aims to equip participants with the confidence and competence to automate workflows, manage data efficiently, and integrate systems, enabling them to drive innovation, enhance productivity, and solve simple business challenges without the need for extensive coding knowledge.
- Improve competences for leveraging no-code programming tools to automate workflows, manage data, and integrate systems seamlessly.
- Ability to identify opportunities for workflow automation and implement efficient solutions using platforms like Zapier, Integromat, or Microsoft Power Automate.
- Competence in organizing, storing, cleaning, and analyzing data using no-code data management tools such as Airtable, Google Sheets, or Microsoft Excel.
- Understanding of system integration techniques and the capability to connect different software systems using APIs, webhooks, or other no-code methods.
- Competence in problem-solving skills through the application of theoretical knowledge to real-world scenarios, fostering innovation and creativity in no-code programming solutions.
- Collaboration and teamwork abilities demonstrated through group projects and case studies, fostering effective communication and peer learning.
- Ability to evaluate the effectiveness of implemented no-code solutions and identify areas for further exploration and development.

Career Development in No-Code Programming



This module is designed to provide learners with the knowledge, skills, and resources necessary to build and advance a career in no-code programming. It focuses on professional development, portfolio creation, networking, and understanding the broader impacts of no-code development.

- **Duration:** 12,5 hours
- **Theoretical Teaching:** 3,5 hours
- **Practical Teaching:** 9 hours

Literature in English Language:

- "The No-Code Playbook" - Author: Christian Pettit

A comprehensive guide covering various no-code tools, best practices, and strategies for building web and mobile applications.

- "No-Code: The Future of Software Development" - Author: Michael Girdley

Explores the evolution of no-code platforms, their impact on the software development industry, and practical advice for leveraging these tools in professional projects.

- "Building a Career in No-Code" - Author: Stephanie Hurlburt

A career-focused book that provides insights into the opportunities, challenges, and pathways for professionals looking to specialize in no-code development

- "Zero to App: Building with No-Code" - Author: Tara Reed

An instructional book that walks readers through the process of building fully functional applications from scratch using no-code platforms, with real-world examples and case studies

Specific Teaching Aids:

Video Tutorials and Webinars:

- Webflow University: Offers free, high-quality video tutorials on using Webflow for web development.
- Bubble Academy: Comprehensive tutorials on how to use Bubble for creating web applications.
- Adalo Tutorials: Step-by-step guides and video tutorials on building mobile apps with Adalo.

Online Courses and Platforms:

Coursera and Udemy Courses: Various courses focused on no-code development, such as "Building Web Apps with Bubble" and "No-Code Development with Adalo."

Community and Networking Platforms:

- No-Code Founders: A community for no-code developers to share ideas, get feedback, and network.
- Makerpad: A platform offering tutorials, community support, and resources for building no-code projects.
- Indie Hackers: Forums and meetups where no-code developers can discuss projects, share advice, and find collaborators.

Portfolio Development Tools:

- Carrd: A simple tool for building one-page websites to showcase personal portfolios.
- Notion: A versatile tool for creating detailed project documentation and portfolio pages.
- Airtable: For managing project data and showcasing work in a visually appealing manner.

By integrating these literature resources and teaching aids, learners will be equipped with a comprehensive understanding of career development in the no-code programming space.

They will gain the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate the professional landscape, build a strong portfolio, and advance their careers in no-code development.

Objectives:

- Understand the various career paths available within the no-code development landscape.
- Learn the importance of a professional portfolio in showcasing no-code skills and projects.
- Gain the ability to create and design an effective portfolio using tools like Carrd, Notion and Airtable.
- Identify key resources for ongoing education in co-code development.
- Stay updated with industry trends and emerging technologies.
- Follow through leaders and influencers to gain insights and stay informed about the latest developments in no-code programming.
- Understand the ethical implications of no-code development.
- Incorporate principles of accessibility and inclusivity in app design.

Topics Covered:

- Introduction to No-code Career Path
- Building a Professional Portfolio
- Networking and Professional Development to Stay Informed and Adaptable
- Ethical Implications & Entrepreneurial Opportunities in No-Code

Learning Activities:

- Hands-on tutorials and demonstrations
- Software training sessions on building Portfolio
- Group exercises to practice
- Case studies on opportunities

Session 1

Overview of career opportunities in no-code development

Steps

Introdction into topic and guuest seaker abot various career paths within no-code development, Q&A

Duration

30 min theoretical

Session 2

Roles and job titles in the no-code industry (e.g., No-code Developer, No-Code Consultant, Citizen Developer)

Steps

Roles and Job titles (No-code developer, No-code consultant, Citizen Developer, Other roles: Project Manager, Business Analyst, No-code Educator) - Role description, responsibilities, required skills, and examples of tasks), group activity - Divide participants into small groups, Each group is assigned a specific no-code role (e.g., No-code Developer, No-code Consultant, Citizen Developer), Groups are given an activity worksheet with tasks related to their assigned role, After completion, groups exchange their worksheets with another group for peer review, Debrief in Plenary, Share the presentation slides, activity worksheets, and any additional resources mentioned during the session

Duration

45 min practical

Session 3

Impact of no-code development on traditional software development careers

Steps

Provide a brief overview of no-code development and traditional software development, Debate: Divide participants into two teams: one representing the perspective that no-code development positively impacts traditional software development careers, and the other representing the perspective that it negatively impacts them, Provide clear instructions on debate format, rules, and time limits for each segment: Opening statements, Arguments, Rebuttals, Q&A, Closing statements, Topics: Impact on job roles and employment opportunities, Skill requirements and career development, Long-term implications for the software development industry, Debrief in Plenary, Feedback and Resource sharing

Duration

45 min practical

Session 1

Importance of a portfolio in showcasing skills and projects and Key components of an effective portfolio (e.g., project descriptions, screenshots, videos, user testimonials)

Steps

Presentation slide 1 - The Importance of a Portfolio in Showcasing Skills and Projects, slide 2 - Importance of portfolios in professional and academic contexts, slide 3 – Why is portfolio important - Demonstrates skills and experience, Provides tangible proof of work, Differentiates you from other candidates, Comparison of job applicants with and without portfolios, slide 4 – Components of Effective Portfolio (Project descriptions, Videos, Screenshots, User Testimonies), Visual representation of portfolio components, Slide 5 – Tools for creating portfolio - Overview of popular tools and platforms, Pros and Cons of each tool, Case studies of successful portfolios, Video - Walkthrough of a standout portfolio, Q&A

Duration

60 min theoretical

Session 2

Tool and platforms for creating and hosting a portfolio (e.g., Carrd, Notion, Airtable)

Steps

Quick introduction to the tools and platforms to be explored, Group work on tools: Assign each group one tool/platform to work with, Create a simple portfolio using the tool, Include key components: project descriptions, screenshots, videos, user testimonials, Peer review, Coaching, Debrief in Plenary

Duration

120 min practical

Session 3

Tips for presenting projects and demonstrating impact

Steps

Discuss key tips for presenting projects effectively, Present case studies that illustrate successful project presentations, Highlight the strategies used to demonstrate impact in these case studies, Provide practical tips for structuring a project presentation: Tailor your presentation to the interests and knowledge level of your audience, Start with an introduction, followed by the project overview, methodology, results, and conclusion, Use a narrative to make your presentation more engaging and memorable, Incorporate visuals like charts, graphs, and images to illustrate key points, etc., Q&A

Duration

30 min theoretical

Session 1

Strategies for networking within the no-code community

Participating in online forms, meetups, and conferences sch as No-Code Conf, Markerpad events.

Steps

Guest speaker – Slide 1 Networking and Professional Development in the No-Code Community, Slide 2 Importance of Networking, Slide 3 no-code forums like Makerpad, No Code Founders, and Indie Hackers, Slide 4 local no-code meetups through platforms like Meetup.com, Slide 5 online courses and webinars on no-code platforms, Case study 1 - Brief description of a successful networking experience, Q&A

Duration

60 min theoretical

Session 2

Leveraging social media

(e.g., LinkedIn, Twitter) for professional growth and building relationships with industry influencers and mentors, participating in hackathons and community challenges

Steps

Practical exploration of LinkedIn and Twitter, Group brainstorming sessions to generate ideas for participating in or organizing hackathons and community challenges, Coaching sessions for refining social media strategies and hackathon ideas, Groups present their social media strategies and hackathon ideas, Debrief in Plenary, Follow up

Duration

120 min practical

Session 1

Introduction to the ethical implications of no-code development, incorporating accessibility and inclusivity in app design, addressing data privacy and security concerns

Steps

Introduction to ethical implications of no-code development, Discuss incorporating accessibility and inclusivity in app design, Address data privacy and security concerns, Q&A

Duration

30 min theoretical

Session 2

Starting a no-code development agency or consultancy, building and monetizing personal projects or startups, exploring freelance opportunities, understanding market demand and identifying business opportunities

Steps

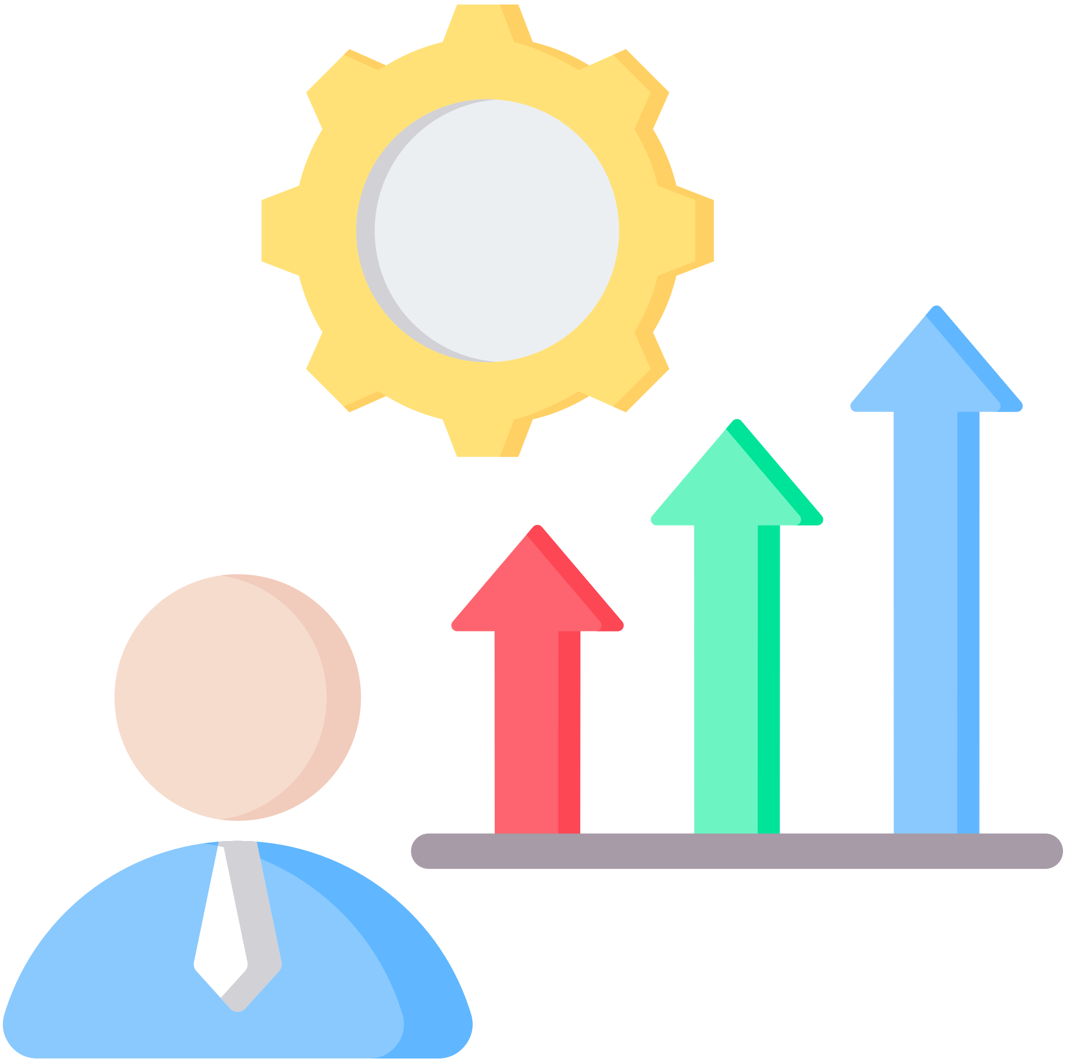
Work in groups to create business model canvases, Each group chooses a focus (no-code agency, personal project, freelance, etc.), Groups exchange canvases for peer review and feedback, Refine the business model based on feedback, provide coaching to each group, Open floor for discussion and feedback from all participants, Highlight key takeaways and best practices shared by groups, Conclusion - Recap the importance of a strong business model in no-code entrepreneurship

Duration

60 min practical

Session 3

Professional Growth and Career Advancement and The Culture Map



Creating a personal development plan, identifying opportunities for skill enhancement, navigating career transitions within the tech industry.

Steps

Introduction to activity, Participants create their personal development plans, Work in groups to create and discuss The Culture Map, Groups present their Culture Maps, Summarize key points and provide additional resources, Q&A

Duration

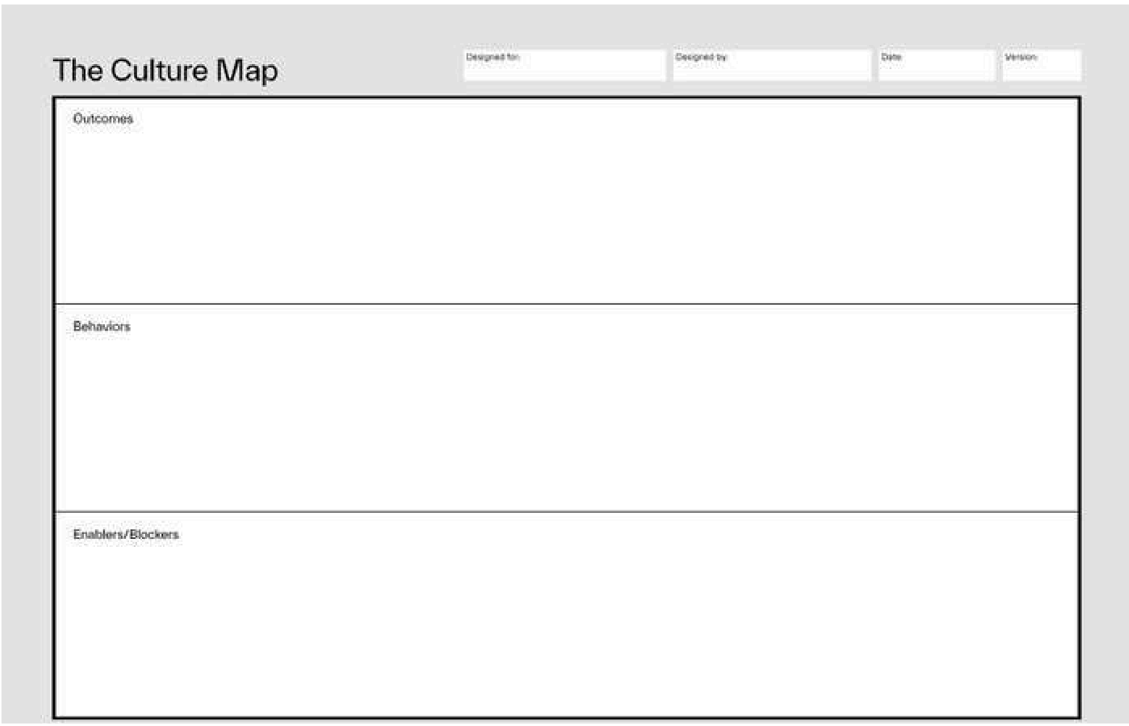
60 min practical

Business Model Canvas

The Business Model Canvas is a strategic management template used for developing new business models. The nine "building blocks" of the business model design template that came to be called the Business Model Canvas were initially proposed in 2005 by Alexander Osterwalder based on his PhD work supervised by Yves Pigneur on business model ontology.

Resource: Resource: https://www.strategyzer.com/library/the-culture-map

In the middle of the Culture Map you have the behaviours you can observe in the organization/company while in the top layer you have the outcomes generated by those behaviours and in the bottom, the enablers and blockers of those behaviours.



Resource: https://www.strategyzer.com/library/the-culture-map

Module 4

Career Development in No-Code Programming

Theoretical Teaching (2,5 hours):

Methodology: Theoretical teaching sessions will involve lectures, presentations, and demonstrations to introduce participants to the fundamental concepts, skills, and tools necessary for building a successful career in no-code programming.

- Topics Covered: Overview of career opportunities, professional portfolio tools, how to effectively use social media and online communities for networking and professional growth, as well as ethical implications.

Practical Teaching (8,5 hours):

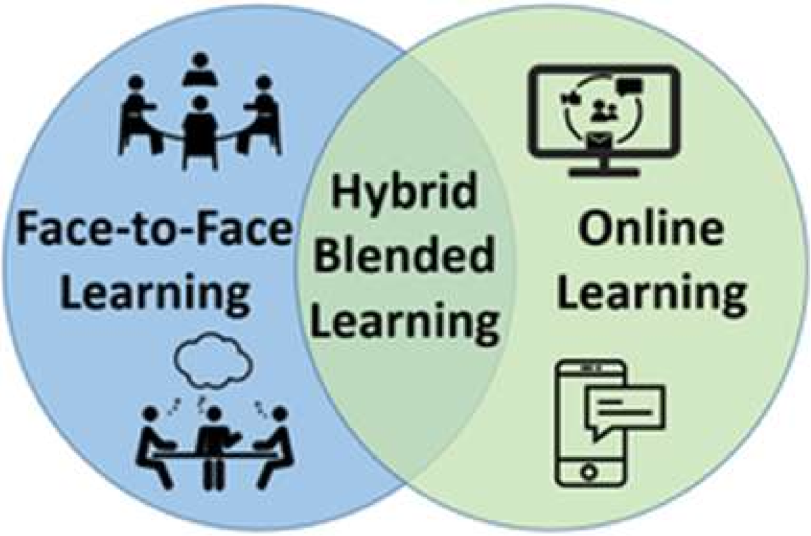
Methodology: Practical teaching sessions will consist of hands-on workshops, guided tutorials, and interactive exercises to allow participants to explore and familiarize themselves with tools for building Portfolios. VET students also practice making their career path and 2 models: business model canvas and the culture map. Participants will have the opportunity to practice using these tools in simulated environments and real-world scenarios.

- Activities: Hands-on tutorials, guided exercises, case studies will be utilized to reinforce practical skills and enhance participants' proficiency in using tools.
- Integration: Practical sessions will be closely integrated with theoretical content, allowing participants to apply their knowledge of tools in practical situations and develop the IT and soft skills necessary for efficient and effective no-code programming.

Learning outcomes:

- By combining theoretical insights with practical applications, Module 3 aims to equip participants with the knowledge and skills required to leverage building portfolio tools and making career paths and understanding different roles of no-code programming opportunities.
- Identify and understand various career opportunities within no-code programming industry.
- Differentiate between roles such as No-Code Developer, Consultant and Entrepreneur and assess their suitability based on personal interests and skills.
- Utilize appropriate tools and platforms to create visually appealing and effective portfolios that highlight their expertise.
- Understand and critically evaluate the ethical implications of no-code development, including issues related to accessibility, inclusivity and data privacy.
- Understand business model and the culture map, market dynamics and customer needs to create successful no-code startups or freelance businesses.
- Demonstrate improvements in creating actionable plans for professional growth and advancement within no-code programming industry.
- Understand the role of mentorship, guidance and support to navigate career transitions, overcome challenges and achieve long-term career success.

METHODOLOGICAL INSTRUCTIONS



Resource: https://improvingcareand.education/2023/02/16/online-hybrid-and-blended-learning/

At the outset of the program, provide a comprehensive overview to the participants, outlining the program's objectives, methodologies, and potential assessment techniques, including a straightforward evaluation of acquired knowledge.

Creating a welcoming and comfortable environment for participants upon their entry into the program is paramount, as it sets the tone for the subsequent interactions. Participants will expect the trainer to exude qualities of respect, trust, and friendliness, regardless of the chosen educational model, whether traditional or interactive.

Your conduct as a trainer should consistently reflect professionalism and approachability, as participants will closely observe your demeanor throughout the program. It is crucial to maintain a balance between professionalism and friendliness to foster an engaging learning atmosphere.

Taking the time to acquaint yourself with the participants, irrespective of the educational model, is beneficial for fostering camaraderie among participants and enabling mutual understanding. This initial step also allows you to gauge the expectations and needs of the participants, as well as identify any knowledge gaps to address throughout the program.

For participants engaging in interactive teaching through independent learning systems, provide guidance on managing the program's duration and suggest a structured plan for effectively mastering the curriculum. This proactive approach ensures participants have a clear roadmap for their learning journey.

Example of activities to be conducted at the beginning of the training FACE2FACE learning:

- Prepare the room to encourage learning and foster interaction among group members, ensuring a conducive environment.
- Introduce yourself to the participants, establishing rapport and setting a welcoming tone for the session.
- Invite drivers to introduce themselves, sharing details about their work experience, education, and the nature of their work.
- Record the expectations of the participants regarding the training program, facilitating transparency and alignment of goals.
- Present the administrative aspects of the program, such as attendance lists and other relevant logistics, ensuring clarity on procedural matters.
- Define the objectives of the program and outline the specific competencies that participants are expected to acquire through the training activities.
- Explain the structure and organization of the training process, providing participants with a clear understanding of what to expect.
- Present the basic rules of communication, emphasizing principles such as mutual respect, active listening, and proper internet etiquette, to promote a conducive learning environment.

BLENDED LEARNING

The terms 'online, 'hybrid' and 'blended' are to be found described in slightly different ways. For the purposes of this post: online simply refers to methodologies which only take place online; hybrid denotes that some learners are physically in attendance while others are online but perhaps, now and then, use is being made of both styles; and blended indicates a combination of conventional teaching or training with members present along with online/e-learning also being employed to extend accessibility, independent contributions and flexibility.

Resource: https://improvingcareand.education/2023/02/16/online-hybrid-and-blended-learning/

ONLINE LEARNING

Full Technology integration - appropriate digital platforms can be selected (eg. Zoom, Teams, etc) and tools for delivering virtual training sessions, hosting discussions, sharing resources, and assessing learner progress. Each trainers should be familiar with the platform and tools and to be sure that the chosen technology is user-friendly, accessible, and compatible with various devices and operating systems.

Offer training and technical support to learners to facilitate smooth navigation and troubleshooting.

Monitoring and evaluation strategies should include diverse assessment methods like quizzes, assignments, presentations, and skill demonstrations to gauge learners' understanding and application of no-code programmer skills. Regular feedback is crucial for identifying areas for improvement and tracking progress throughout the program. Encouraging peer evaluation and self-assessment fosters a culture of continuous learning.

Fostering a sense of community among learners is integral to the program's success. This can be achieved through virtual networking events, discussion forums, and collaborative projects. Additionally, providing access to mentoring, coaching, and career development resources supports learners in their no-code programmer roles and helps them succeed.

EXAMPLE OF ACTIVITIES TO BE CONDUCTED AT THE BEGINNING OF THE TRAINING ON LINE LEARNING:

Virtual introduction - Utilize a video conferencing platform (e.g., Zoom, Microsoft Teams) for a virtual introduction session.

- Each participant introduces themselves, sharing their name, role, and a fun fact about themselves.
- Encourage participants to use virtual backgrounds or share photos representing their interests or hobbies.

Virtual Scavenger Hunts - Use a video conferencing platform with breakout rooms functionality or use

- Create a list of items or themes related to the training or participants' backgrounds.
- Assign participants to small breakout rooms and instruct them to find and share items related to the list within a time limit.
- Reconvene in the main session to debrief and share findings.

Icebreaker polls or quizzes - Use polling features available in video conferencing platforms or dedicated polling tools like Mentimeter or Poll Everywhere.

- Create icebreaker questions or quizzes related to the training topic or general interests.
- Participants respond to the polls or quizzes, and results are shared anonymously to spark discussions.

Virtual team bilding games - Play online team-building games such as virtual escape rooms, online trivia quizzes, or collaborative puzzle-solving activities.

- Use platforms like Kahoot!, Quizizz, or online escape room platforms.
- Participants work together in teams to solve challenges and compete against each other in a fun and engaging manner.

Digital whiteboard brainstorming - Utilize digital whiteboard tools like Miro, MURAL, or Google Jamboard.

- Pose a question or topic related to the training and invite participants to brainstorm ideas, share insights, or collaborate on solutions.
- Encourage participants to use virtual sticky notes, drawings, or annotations to contribute their thoughts.

Digital whiteboard brainstorming - Utilize digital whiteboard tools like Miro, MURAL, or Google Jamboard.

- Pose a question or topic related to the training and invite participants to brainstorm ideas, share insights, or collaborate on solutions.
- Encourage participants to use virtual sticky notes, drawings, or annotations to contribute their thoughts.

Virtual team challenges - Assign virtual team challenges that require collaboration and problem-solving.

- For example, participants can work together to create a virtual team logo using graphic design tools like Canva or Adobe Spark.
- Encourage creativity and teamwork in completing the challenge within a specified timeframe.

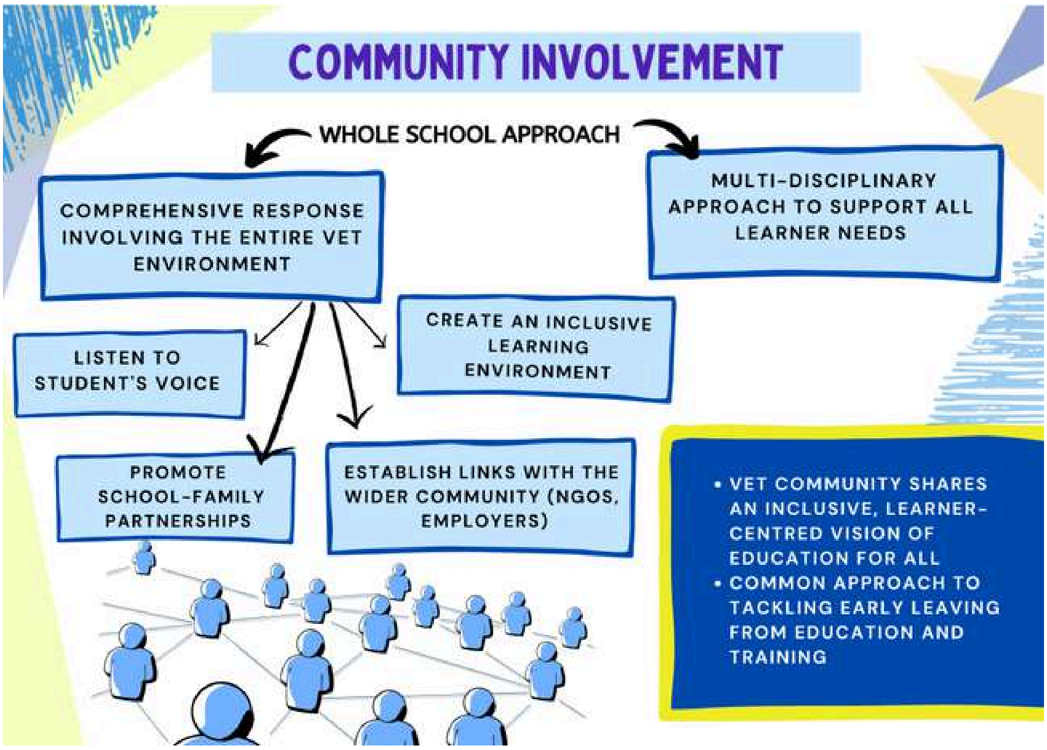
Vitual coffee or lunch breaks - Schedule informal virtual coffee or lunch breaks where participants can join optional video calls to chat and get to know each other in a relaxed setting.

- Provide conversation starters or discussion topics to facilitate interactions and connections among participants.

Here are some activities to promote engagement and build connections among participants in online training sessions:

- Icebreaker Polls: Begin the session with interactive polls where participants can vote on various topics, such as favourite movie genres, travel destinations, or hobbies. Results can spark discussions and reveal common interests among participants.
- Virtual Scavenger Hunt: Create a list of items or objects for participants to find in their own homes during the session. They can share photos or descriptions of the items they find, leading to conversations about their surroundings and personal interests.
- Collaborative Storytelling: Start a story and have participants take turns adding sentences or paragraphs to continue the narrative. This creative activity encourages teamwork and imagination while fostering connections through shared storytelling.
- Themed Discussion Groups: Divide participants into smaller breakout groups based on shared interests or experiences, such as cooking, sports, or travel. Each group can discuss related topics or share stories, allowing for more intimate conversations and connections.
- Virtual Talent Show: Invite participants to showcase their talents or hobbies through short videos or live demonstrations. Whether it's singing, dancing, playing an instrument, or showcasing artwork, this activity celebrates individual creativity and fosters a sense of community.
- Inspirational Quote Reflections: Share inspirational quotes or short passages with participants and ask them to reflect on how the message resonates with them personally or professionally. Participants can share their reflections with the group, leading to meaningful discussions and insights.
- Collaborative Mind Mapping: Use online mind mapping tools to create a visual representation of participants' goals, interests, or aspirations. Participants can contribute ideas and connections in real-time, fostering collaboration and shared vision within the group.
- Virtual Book Club: Choose a relevant book or article for participants to read before the session. During the session, facilitate a discussion about key themes, insights, and takeaways from the reading material. This activity promotes intellectual engagement and encourages participants to exchange ideas.

These activities aim to create a dynamic and interactive learning environment, fostering connections and collaboration among participants in online training sessions.



Resource: https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/vet-toolkit-tackling-early-leaving/intervention-approaches/community-involvement

When the entire VET community shares an inclusive, learner-centered vision of education for all, and a common approach to tackling early leaving from education and training, the following outcomes can be expected at different levels:

Individual level

- Social / health / psychological / economic challenges being tackled in a holistic manner involving all members of the school community – including where necessary, external stakeholders
- Improved well-being
- Promote a positive vision of oneself
- Foster a positive attitude towards learning, and education and training

Institutional level

- Increased information sharing and collaboration between VET teachers and trainers, and with parents and relevant stakeholders to ensure effective coordination of measures / interventions
- Ensuring specific measures / interventions are identified and tailored to the needs of the individual learner
- Increased focus on ensuring learner progress is monitored
- Increased focus on creating welcoming and inclusive learning environments that encourages learner engagement, motivation and sense of belonging
- VET practitioners increase their knowledge and understanding of educational disadvantage and the factors contributing to the process of disengagement and early leaving
- Parents increase their knowledge of the curriculum, education and training, and the life of their children more generally

RECOMMENDED METHODS OF MONITORING THE QUALITY AND SUCCESS OF PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Monitoring the quality and effectiveness of the education program involves several activities, including:

- Conducting research and anonymous surveys among participants to assess various aspects such as class delivery, adequacy of learning materials, effectiveness of support services, improvement of teaching methods, participant workload, knowledge assessments, and communication with trainers.
- Administering surveys and gathering feedback from trainers to evaluate similar aspects related to their teaching practices and support strategies.
- Analysing the effectiveness, transparency, and fairness of assessments, as well as the achievement of learning objectives by participants.
- Evaluating the material and human resources needed to support the learning and teaching process effectively.

- Evaluation procedures are geared towards monitoring and assessing achievements in line with learning outcomes. This is accomplished through written, oral knowledge assessments and practical tests evaluating participants' proficiency in operating the different tasks in online environment, based on predetermined criteria for evaluating achievements.
- A self-assessment questionnaire for individuals who have completed a no-code programmer curriculum can help them reflect on their learning journey and identify areas for further growth.

Resource: https://tpet.co.uk/downloads/smiley-face-self-assessment-cards/

An example

4 Modules Evaluation Questionnaire

Thank you for participating in the VET program for no-code programming. Your feedback is invaluable to us in improving our courses and ensuring the best learning experience for future participants.

Module 1: Introduction to No-Code Development and No-Code Tools and Platforms

On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate the overall quality of Module 1?

Poor Fair Average Good Excellent

What did you find most valuable about Module 1?

Were the learning objectives of Module 1 clearly communicated and achieved?

Do you have any suggestions for improving Module 1?

Module2: Building Web Applications, Creating Mobile Apps

On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate the overall quality of Module 2?

Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
1	2	3	4	5

What did you find most valuable about Module 2?
Were the learning objectives of Module 2 clearly communicated and achieved?
Do you have any suggestions for improving Module 2?

Module 3: Automating Workflows, Data Management and Integration

On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate the overall quality of Module 3?

Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
1	2	3	4	5

What did you find most valuable about Module 3?
Were the learning objectives of Module 3 clearly communicated and achieved?
Do you have any suggestions for improving Module 3?

Module 4: Career Development in No-Code Programming

On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate the overall quality of Module 4?

Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
1	2	3	4	5

What did you find most valuable about Module 4?
Were the learning objectives of Module 4 clearly communicated and achieved?
Do you have any suggestions for improving Module 4?

Overall Program Evaluation

On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate the overall quality of the VET program?

Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
1	2	3	4	5

What aspects of the program did you find most beneficial?
Do you feel that the program adequately prepared you for a career in no-code programming?
How likely are you to recommend this program to others?
Any additional comments or suggestions for improving the VET program?

Resource: https://www.freepik.com/premium-vector/skill-levels-growth-enhance-increase-your-knowledge-level-vector-illustration-presentation_20763337.htm

Example to assess participants' proficiency in operating various tasks in an online environment after completing a no-code programming curriculum, you can design practical tests that simulate real-world scenarios. These tests should be aligned with predetermined criteria for evaluating achievements. Here's how you can structure practical tests for evaluating different tasks:

To evaluate participants' proficiency in operating various tasks in an online environment post-completion of a no-code programming curriculum, practical tests simulating real-world scenarios should be designed. These tests need to align with predetermined criteria for assessing achievements. Here's a structured approach for designing practical tests encompassing five tasks. Each VET student can receive one different practical task.

- ### Task 1: Workflow Automation Challenge

Participants are given a business scenario where repetitive tasks need to be automated using no-code tools like Zapier or Integromat.

They are required to create a workflow that automates the specified tasks, demonstrating proficiency in workflow automation principles.

- ### Task 2: Data Management Exercise

Participants receive a dataset with various data management requirements, such as organizing, cleaning, and analysing data.

Using no-code data management tools like Airtable or Google Sheets; they must perform the necessary operations to meet the specified objectives.

- ### Task 3: System Integration Project

Participants are presented with two or more software systems that need to be integrated using no-code programming techniques.

They are tasked with connecting APIs, configuring web hooks, or utilizing other integration methods to facilitate seamless communication between the systems.

- **Task 4: Building a Web Application**

Participants are given a web application design brief outlining the features and functionality required.

Using no-code platforms like Wix or Bubble, they must build a prototype of the web application, demonstrating their ability to create functional and visually appealing interfaces.

- **Task 5: Career Development Plan**

Participants are asked to create a career development plan outlining their goals, skills acquired during the program, and strategies for advancing their career in no-code programming.

The plan should include steps for continuous learning, networking, and professional growth within the field.

Each task is designed to assess participants' practical skills and application of concepts learned throughout the curriculum. The criteria for evaluating achievements should be clearly defined, ensuring consistency and fairness in assessment.

Here's an example of criteria for evaluating achievements for the tasks outlined in the practical tests

Task 1: Workflow Automation Challenge

- Efficiency: Effectiveness of the automated workflow in reducing manual effort and streamlining processes.
- Accuracy: Accuracy of data processing and task execution within the automated workflow.
- Adaptability: Ability to handle variations in input data and adjust the workflow accordingly.
- Error Handling: Effectiveness of error handling mechanisms within the workflow to mitigate potential issues.
- Integration: Seamless integration with relevant software systems and services as per requirements.

Task 2: Data Management Exercise

- Organization: Effectiveness of data organization techniques to enhance accessibility and usability.
- Cleansing: Thoroughness of data cleansing processes to ensure data accuracy and consistency.
- Analysis: Quality of data analysis performed, including insights generated and conclusions drawn.
- Collaboration: Utilization of collaboration features to facilitate teamwork and knowledge sharing.
- Visualization: Use of visualization tools to present data insights in a clear and compelling manner.

Task3: System Integration Project

- Connectivity: Successful establishment of connections between different software systems using no-code integration methods.
- Functionality: Functionality of integrated systems, including data exchange, synchronization, and event triggering.
- Compatibility: Compatibility with various devices, browsers, and operating systems for seamless operation.
- Security: Implementation of security measures to protect data integrity and prevent unauthorized access.
- Scalability: Scalability of the integration solution to accommodate future growth and evolving business needs.

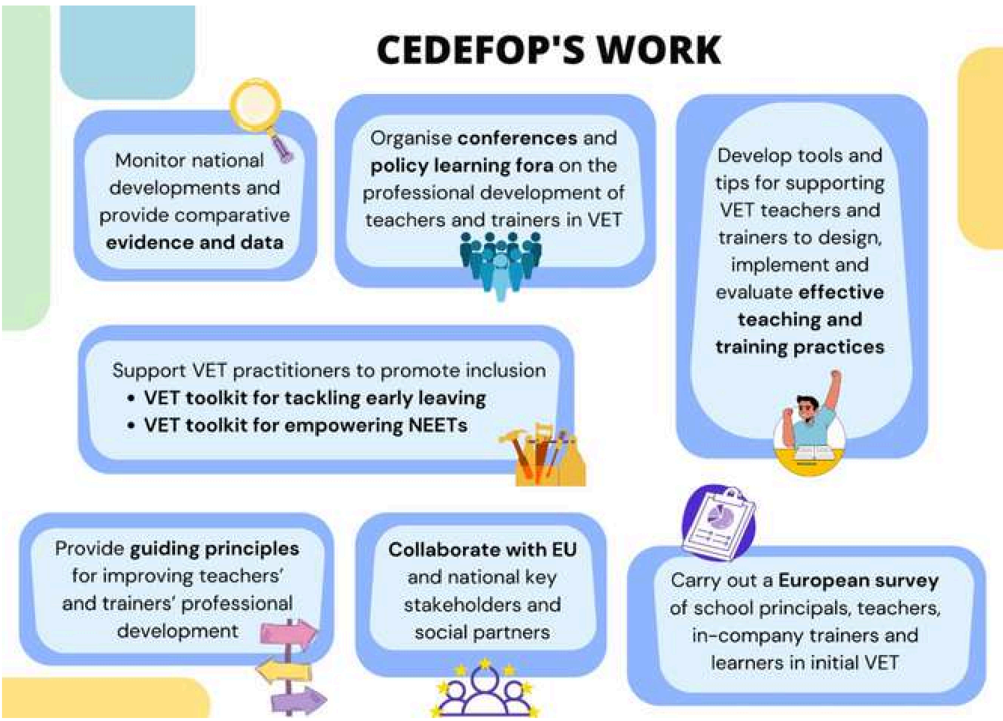
Task 4: Building Web Application

- Design: Aesthetic appeal and usability of the web application interface, including layout, colour scheme, and typography.
- Functionality: Functionality and responsiveness of interactive elements and user interface components.
- Navigation: Intuitive navigation structure that facilitates easy access to different sections and features.
- Performance: Speed and performance of the web application, including loading times and responsiveness to user interactions.
- Accessibility: Compliance with accessibility standards to ensure inclusivity and usability for all users.

Task 5: Career Development Plan and Portfolio

- Clarity: Clarity and specificity of career goals, including short-term and long-term objectives.
- Relevance: Alignment of career development plan with skills acquired during the program and industry trends in no-code programming.
- Feasibility: Realistic action steps and timelines for achieving career goals, considering personal strengths and external opportunities.
- Growth Mind-set: Demonstrated commitment to continuous learning, professional growth, and adaptability to changing circumstances.
- Measurability: Identifiable metrics or milestones to track progress and evaluate the effectiveness of the career development plan over time.
- Portfolio Content Relevance: Alignment of portfolio content with career goals and objectives outlined in the career development plan. Inclusion of projects, achievements, and experiences that demonstrate competence in no-code programming skills and contribute to career advancement.

It is essential that teachers and trainers have opportunities to develop and maintain their technical, pedagogical and transversal skills to the highest standards.



Resorce: https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/projects/teachers-and-trainers-professional-development

Co-funded by
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Curriculum

A STEM-Driven Vocational Curriculum for Future Careers

Starting and running a small business

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Introduction

A small business owner wears many hats: administrator, designer, organizer, marketer, researcher, manager, and all other roles necessary for running a successful enterprise.

The training program offers comprehensive guidance on starting and running a small business, detailing the various responsibilities and drawing comparisons to traditional business models. It explores the different types of small businesses, elucidating the essential skills and requisite tools for success in this domain. Whether you're wondering how to carve out a niche, secure funding, or establish a thriving enterprise, this course provides detailed insights and actionable steps.

It also contrasts different business models and outlines the prerequisites for each. The course addresses client management and effective collaboration within small teams. It underscores crucial data security measures and imparts the knowledge and techniques vital for excelling in business management, whether embarking on a new entrepreneurial journey or enhancing existing skills. It explores the challenges commonly faced by small business owners and offers strategies for overcoming them.

For those contemplating the establishment of their own small business, the course offers comprehensive guidance on effective branding, marketing, and pricing strategies. It meticulously outlines the advantages and disadvantages of launching a small business and provides practical advice on acquiring and serving clients.

The Covid-19 pandemic has made many people aware of the possibilities of working from home and collaborating online, driving the global need for remote business solutions and the skills to support them. This training will help you learn how to start and run a small business from experienced professionals, equipping you with the tools and knowledge needed for success in the modern business landscape.

Educational Approach of the Curriculum

The Small Business Owner curriculum is designed to serve a diverse group of learners, including both youth and adults, with a particular focus on NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) individuals. NEET individuals, typically aged between 18 and 29, face unique challenges such as social and economic barriers that prevent them from participating in traditional educational or employment opportunities.

By targeting this group, the curriculum aims to provide them with practical skills and knowledge that can enhance their employability and integration into the workforce. The program is structured to accommodate the varying needs of youth and adult learners, ensuring that the content is accessible, engaging, and relevant to all participants.

Incorporating the principles of andragogy—adult learning theory—alongside strategies effective for youth education is crucial for the success of this program. Andragogy emphasizes self-directed learning, leveraging the experiences and motivations of adult learners, and fostering a practical, problem-solving approach to education. For NEET youngsters and other youth, the curriculum also incorporates elements of pedagogy that focus on guided learning, mentorship, and motivational support. Engaging NEET learners requires an understanding of their specific contexts and challenges.

Thus, the curriculum includes flexible learning paths, hands-on projects, and real-world applications to maintain their interest and encourage active participation. By blending these approaches, the curriculum aims to create an inclusive learning environment that supports the development of both youth and adult learners, equipping them with the skills necessary for a successful career as a small business owner.

Coined by German educator Alexander Kapp in 1833 and later adopted by philosopher Johann Friedrich Herbart, the term "andragogy" experienced a resurgence in Europe post-World War I. Its prominence grew internationally, notably in France, England, Switzerland, Yugoslavia, and Canada. The United States saw its widespread adoption in the late 1960s, influenced by adult education pioneers Edward Lindeman and Malcolm Knowles. Knowles delineated six principles of adult learning, emphasizing:

1. Internal motivation and self-direction
2. Integration of life experiences into learning
3. Goal orientation
4. Relevance of learning to life
5. Practical application
6. Respect for adult learners

To ensure the effective adoption of program content by small business owner participants, the learning and teaching process should prioritize practical knowledge and skills. This approach facilitates easier comprehension and application of the curriculum.

The curriculum outlined here emphasizes interactive learning and teaching methods within the vocational education and training (VET) framework, leveraging available ICT technologies. However, it's crucial to recognize that trainers will be working with adults, including individuals of varying ages and levels of prior knowledge, particularly in ICT skills. Therefore, the curriculum is designed to offer flexibility, with options for live classes tailored to individual students' needs, as well as online learning modules accessible online.

When teaching VET students, it's important to:

- Establish clear training and pedagogical objectives.
- Tap into participants' professional expertise; for instance, inquire about their application of virtual assistance curriculum in their work.
- Acknowledge and leverage participants' existing knowledge and experience, assessing it through oral or multiple-choice questions.
- Foster participant interaction, encouraging the exchange of professional insights and inviting discussion on familiar topics.
- Emphasize practical learning experiences, tailoring examples, case studies, and simulations to real-work contexts.
- Recognize the diversity within the participant group, accommodating varying levels of skill and experience.
- Assess the participants' prior knowledge, considering factors such as age and work experience.
- Emphasize the importance of group dynamics, recognizing that education extends beyond mere information transfer. Respect the VET participants' autonomy and avoid patronizing attitudes.
- Be mindful of any limitations within the group dynamics and involve virtual assitants to be in the training process.
- Clarify assessment techniques upfront, framing them as tools to gauge learning rather than as tests.
- Acknowledge that many participants may have work-centric life paths, and tailor pedagogical methods accordingly to avoid evoking negative school-related memories.

The curriculum for small business owners is structured into four modules, comprising a blend of guided theoretical classes, hands-on work-based learning, and independent study by participants. This curriculum introduces blended learning, which Bonk & Graham (2006) describe as "part of the ongoing convergence of two archetypal learning environments" (p. 2). However, the influences of these two types of delivery are not equal, and how blending looks varies depending on whether one is starting from an in-person educational background or a distance education background.

Traditional face-to-face, in-person, classroom-based teaching and learning have been used for centuries as the ubiquitous delivery method. Distance and distributed teaching and learning opportunities are much newer, particularly in reference to technology-enabled learning. When online education became available, it was first used in distance education, with students studying fully online. The blending of classroom-based learning and online or distance education came later.

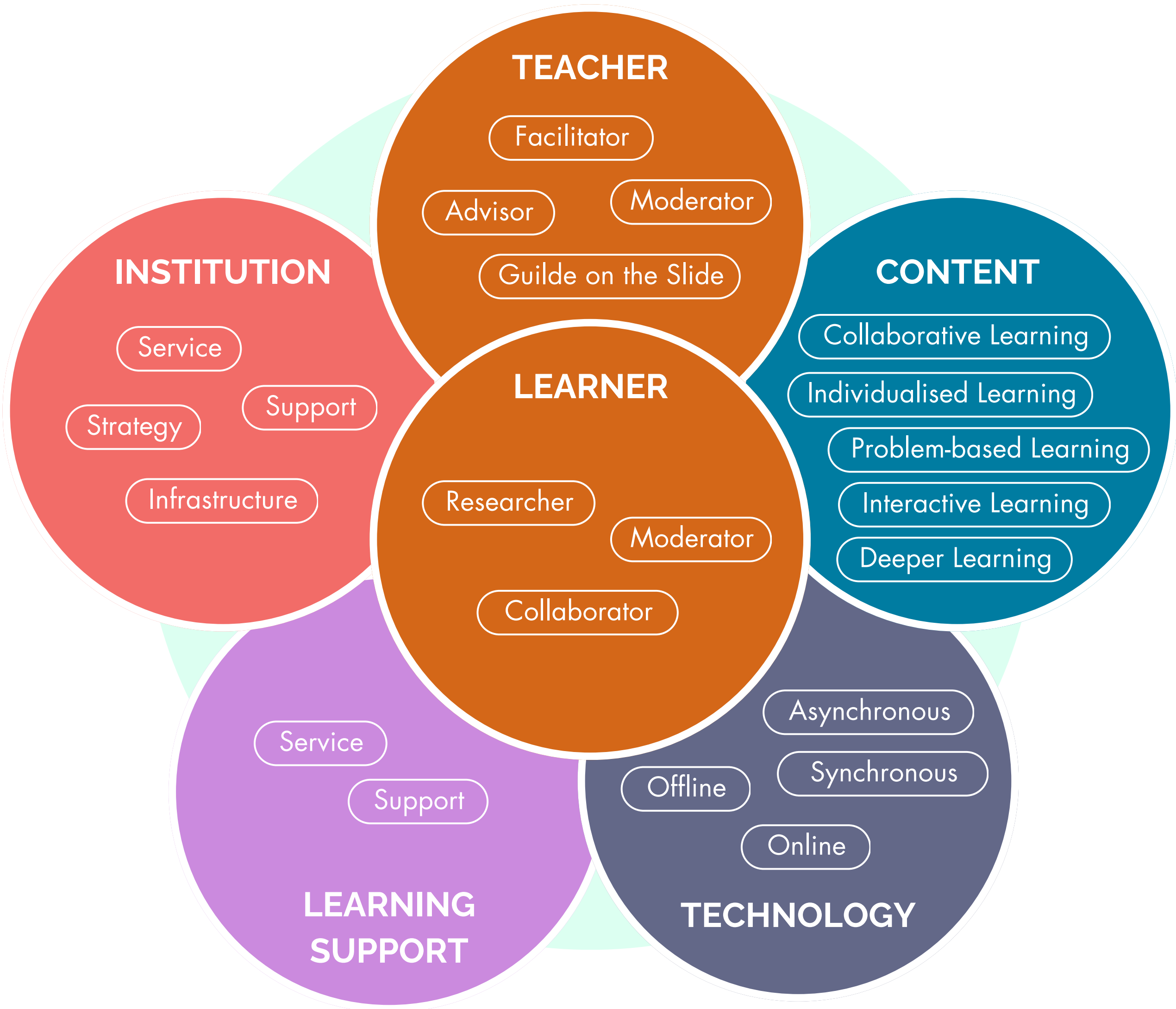


Figure 1.1. The CABLS framework

Resource - https://openbooks.col.org/blendedlearning/chapter/chapter-2-theories-supporting-blended-learning/
The CABLS framework is designed to "facilitate a deeper, more accurate understanding of the dynamic and adaptive nature of blended learning" (Wang et al., 2015, p. 390).

In keeping with the original three presences of the The Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework (social presence, cognitive presence and teaching presence), blended learning using the CoI framework creates opportunities for self-reflection, active cognitive processing, interaction and peer-teaching. In addition, expert guidance from teachers at the right time encourages engagement and shared application activities, highlighting the importance of creating communities of inquiry in the classroom — whether face-to-face, online or blended.

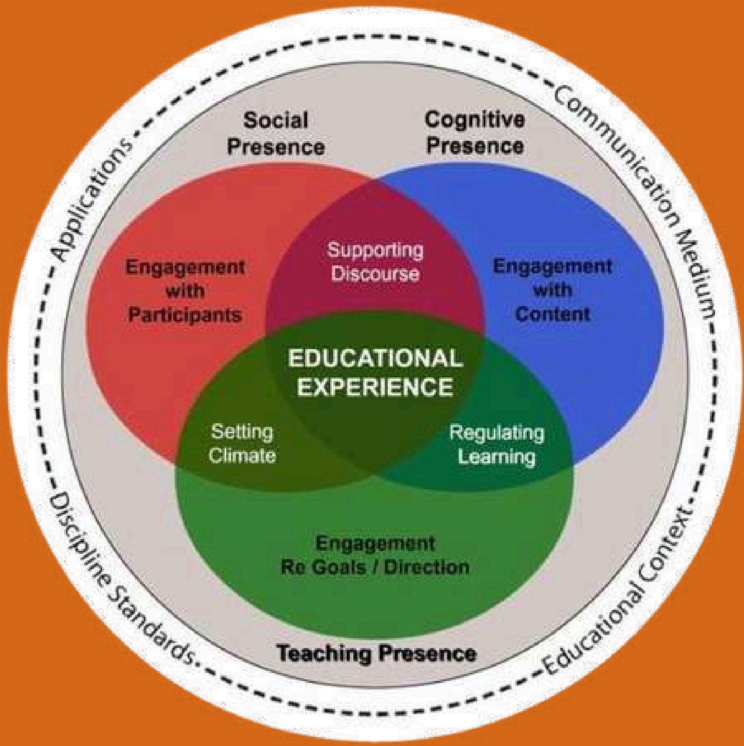


Figure 1.2. The Community of Inquiry model, the same resourse as above

Another type of blend adds technology in the classroom. Often called technology-enabled learning, adding technology to in-person teaching and learning may foster engagement and improve learning outcomes. The SAMR model, is an approach for the progressive implementation of new technology.

SAMR MODEL

Substitution
Tech acts as a tool substitute with no functional change

Augmentation
Tech acts as a tool substitute with functional improvement

Modification
Tech allows for significant task redesign

Redefinition
Tech allows for the creation of new tasks previously inconceivable

Figure 1.3 SAMR model, the same as above

The program spends a total duration of 80 hours, distributed as follows:

Requirements for enrollment in the program include:

- Previous qualification at level 1, attained upon completion of basic education (which correspondents to finished primary school).
- Minimum age of 18 years.

The small business job is ideal for you if:

- You excel in multitasking and managing various tasks efficiently.
- You possess strong organizational skills and attention to detail.
- You are proficient in communication, both written and verbal.
- You are tech-savvy and adaptable to using different digital tools and platforms.
- You enjoy providing support and assistance to individuals or organizations.
- You thrive in a remote working environment and can work independently with minimal supervision.
- You are dedicated to delivering high-quality work and meeting deadlines consistently.
- You are proactive and resourceful in problem-solving situations.
- You are committed to continuous learning and improving your skills.

Guided learning and teaching sessions	Work-based learning activities	Independent study by participants
27 hours	45 hours	8 hours

Material conditions necessary for executing the program for virtual assistants include:

- **Theoretical Teaching:**

1. Projector for visual presentations
2. Teacher's computer with Internet access for accessing online resources and materials

- **Practical Teaching:**

Digital in simulation for hands-on training and practice

Legal framework

Several existing regulations and directives within the EU may indirectly apply to small business owners and the technologies they interact with. Understanding and complying with these legal requirements is crucial for the successful operation of a small business. Key regulations include:

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR):

- Overview: GDPR governs the processing of personal data and aims to protect the privacy of EU citizens. It applies to all businesses that handle personal data, regardless of size.
- Implications for Small Businesses: Ensure data protection measures are in place, such as obtaining consent for data collection, implementing data security practices, and allowing customers to access and delete their data.

ePrivacy Directive:

- Overview: This directive complements the GDPR by addressing privacy and electronic communications. It focuses on issues such as cookies, direct marketing, and confidentiality.
- Implications for Small Businesses: Comply with rules regarding the use of cookies on websites, obtain consent for marketing communications, and protect the confidentiality of communications.

Consumer Rights Directive:

- Overview: This directive sets out the rights of consumers when purchasing goods and services, particularly in the context of online and distance sales.
- Implications for Small Businesses: Provide clear information about products and services, ensure transparent pricing, offer a cooling-off period for returns, and handle complaints effectively.

Electronic Commerce Directive:

- Overview: Regulates online services in the EU, covering aspects such as electronic contracts, liability of service providers, and commercial communications.
- Implications for Small Businesses: Ensure compliance with rules on online advertising, clearly state terms and conditions for online transactions, and understand liability limitations for user-generated content.

Intellectual Property Rights (IPR):

- Overview: Various regulations and directives protect intellectual property, including trademarks, patents, and copyrights.
- Implications for Small Businesses: Protect business innovations and brands by securing relevant IP rights and respecting the IP rights of others to avoid legal disputes.

Employment Regulations:

- Overview: A range of EU directives cover employment rights, including working hours, health and safety, and anti-discrimination laws.

- Implications for Small Businesses: Ensure fair treatment of employees, maintain a safe working environment, and comply with regulations on working hours and employment contracts.

Taxation and VAT Directives:

- Overview: EU directives harmonize VAT rules and other tax regulations across member states.
- Implications for Small Businesses: Register for VAT if applicable, understand cross-border VAT rules, and maintain accurate financial records.

By staying informed and compliant with these regulations, small business owners can operate more smoothly and avoid legal pitfalls. It is advisable for small business owners to consult legal professionals or resources specific to their industry and region to ensure full compliance with all relevant laws and regulations.

This curriculum is composed of for (4) modules:

MODULE 1:
Business Planning and Strategy

MODULE 2:
Financial Management and Accounting

MODULE 3:
Marketing and Sales

MODULE 4:
Legal and Regulatory Compliance

Business Planning and Strategy

This module serves as an introduction to the field. By utilizing these literature resources and teaching aids, participants in Module 1 will gain a thorough understanding of business planning and strategy, equipping them with the skills and knowledge to create robust and innovative business plans.

- **Duration:** 26 hours
- **Theoretical Teaching:** 8 hours
- **Practical Teaching:** 14 hours
- **Independent Learning:** 4 hours

Literature in English Language:

- "Business Model Generation" by Alexander Osterwalder & Yves Pigneur
- "The Lean Startup: How Today's Entrepreneurs Use Continuous Innovation to Create Radically Successful Businesses" by Eric Ries
- "Good Strategy Bad Strategy: The Difference and Why It Matters" by Richard Rumelt
- "Blue Ocean Strategy: How to Create Uncontested Market Space and Make the Competition Irrelevant" by W. Chan Kim & Renée Mauborgne
- "Competitive Strategy: Techniques for Analyzing Industries and Competitors" by Michael E. Porter

Specific Teaching Aids:

- Business Plan Template
- SWOT Analysis Worksheet
- Market Research Toolkit
- Business Model Canvas
- Strategic Planning Software (e.g., LivePlan, Bizplan)
- Case Study Collection
- Interactive Workshops and Simulations

Objectives:

- Define the concept of small business ownership and articulate its significance within modern professional landscapes, emphasizing its pivotal role in driving innovation and economic growth.
- Trace the historical development and evolution of small business ownership, exploring how it has evolved from traditional models to encompass digital entrepreneurship and virtual business platforms.
- Identify current trends and opportunities within the realm of small business ownership, including the emergence of e-commerce, remote work, and innovative business models, enabling participants to adapt and capitalize on market dynamics.
- Understand the diverse roles and responsibilities associated with small business ownership across various professional settings, ranging from sole proprietorships to partnerships and corporations, fostering a comprehensive understanding of entrepreneurial endeavors.
- Recognize the paramount importance of effective communication and collaboration skills in virtual work environments for small business owners, emphasizing their role in building strong relationships, facilitating teamwork, and driving business success.

Topics Covered:

- Crafting a Business Plan
- Market Research and Analysis
- Competitive Strategy
- Goal Setting and Performance Metrics
- SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)

Learning Activities:

- Lectures and presentations
- Case studies and real-world examples
- Group discussions and interactive exercises
- Guest speakers from the small business industry

Session 1

Understanding the Significance of Small Business Ownership

The importance of small businesses in the economy / Advantages and challenges of small business ownership / Case studies of successful small businesses

Steps

Welcome and orientation - Provide an overview of the course and logistics, including the schedule, expectations, and guidelines for learning. Ice breaker and team building activities. Invite local business owners, economists, or industry experts to participate in a panel discussion on the importance of small businesses in the economy. Divide participants into small groups and provide each group with flip charts or whiteboards. Ask them to brainstorm and list the advantages and challenges associated with small business ownership. Afterward, facilitate a discussion. Provide participants with case studies of successful small businesses from various industries. Encourage them to analyze these case studies, identifying key factors contributing to their success, such as innovative business models, effective marketing strategies, and customer-centric approaches.

Duration

60 min

Session 2

Historical Development of Small Business Ownership

Evolution of small businesses over time / Milestones and key developments in the history of small business ownership / Impact of historical events on small business practices

Steps

Start with short presentation. Divide students into small groups and assign each group a specific time period (e.g., pre-industrial era, industrial revolution, post-war era). Instruct them to research and create an interactive timeline showcasing the evolution of small businesses over time. Conduct a simulation exercise where students role-play as entrepreneurs during different historical periods. Assign each group a specific era and scenario.

Duration

30 min theoretical + 30 min practical

Session 3

Emerging Trends and Opportunities in Small Business Landscape

- Current trends shaping the small business landscape
- Opportunities for innovation and growth in different industries
- Case studies highlighting emerging trends and successful small business ventures

Steps

- Divide students into small groups and assign each group a specific current trend shaping the small business landscape (e.g., digital transformation, sustainability, remote work). Presentations and findings, Q&A
- Provide VET students with industry-specific scenarios or problems to solve, encouraging creative thinking and entrepreneurial mindset. Teams develop innovative solutions or business ideas and present them to a panel of judges, who evaluate the feasibility and potential impact of their proposals.
- Provide students with case studies of successful small business ventures that capitalized on emerging trends or innovative business models. Students analyze these case studies, identifying key factors contributing to their success and lessons learned.
- Conduct a trendspotting exercise where students research and identify emerging trends in different industries or market segments. They compile their findings into a trend report, highlighting opportunities for small businesses to innovate and adapt. Students present their trend reports to the class, discussing potential implications and strategies for leveraging emerging trends in the small business landscape.

Duration

30 min theoretical + 90 min practical

Session 1

Introduction to Market Research

- Importance of market research for small businesses
- Types of market research methods (qualitative vs. quantitative)
- Ethical considerations in conducting market research

Steps

- Short Introduction to the topic
- Divide students into small groups and assign each group a hypothetical small business scenario. Students conduct market research using both qualitative and quantitative methods to gather insights into their target market, customer preferences, and competitive landscape
- Organize a role-playing exercise where students take on the roles of small business owners, market researchers, and potential customers. Students design and conduct mock market research activities, such as surveys, focus groups, or interviews, to gather insights into consumer preferences and market trends
- Invite a guest speaker, such as a market research professional or small business owner with experience in market research, to share insights and best practices. Students have the opportunity to ask questions and engage in discussions to deepen their understanding of market research principles and applications.

Duration

30 min theoretical and 60 min practical

Session 2

Conducting Market Analysis

- Identifying target markets and customer segments
- Analyzing industry trends and market dynamics
- Tools and techniques for market analysis (e.g., SWOT analysis, PESTEL analysis)

Steps

- Short presentation
- Divide students into small groups and provide them with different small business scenarios. Each group identifies potential target markets and customer segments based on the characteristics and needs of the business. Students use demographic, psychographic, and behavioral factors to segment the market effectively. Groups present their findings, explaining their rationale for selecting specific target markets and customer segments
- Assign students to research and analyze industry trends and market dynamics relevant to specific small business sectors. Provide them with access to industry reports, market research databases, and online resources. Students identify key trends, such as technological advancements, changing consumer preferences, or regulatory developments, and assess their potential impact on small businesses.
- Facilitate a workshop on conducting SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis for small businesses.
- Independent learning - Assign students to conduct a comprehensive market analysis project for a chosen small business or industry. Students gather data on market size, growth trends, competitive landscape, and consumer behavior using various research methods and tools. They apply techniques such as SWOT analysis, PESTEL analysis (Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, Legal), and Porter's Five Forces analysis to assess market dynamics and competitiveness. Students present their findings and strategic recommendations in a written report or oral presentation.

Duration

30 min theoretical + 90 min practical + 120 min independent

Session 3

Understanding Customer Needs and Preferences

- Techniques for gathering customer feedback
- Analyzing customer behavior and preferences
- Using market research insights to inform product/service development

Steps

- Short presentation
- Instruct students to design a customer feedback survey aimed at gathering insights into customer needs and preferences for a specific small business or product/service. Provide guidance on formulating clear and concise survey questions, selecting appropriate survey methods (e.g., online surveys, in-person interviews), and ensuring ethical considerations in data collection. Students administer the survey to a sample of target customers and analyze the responses to identify key insights.
- Independent - Conduct a field trip or virtual observation exercise where students observe customer behavior and interactions in retail stores, restaurants, or online platforms. Students document their observations, noting customer preferences, purchasing patterns, and interactions with products/services. Back in the classroom, students analyze their observations collectively, drawing insights into customer behavior and preferences based on real-world observations
- Divide students into small groups and assign each group a fictional small business or startup. Students brainstorm and develop product/service ideas based on market research insights and customer feedback gathered in previous activities.

Duration

30 min theoretical + 90 min practical + 120 min independent

Session 1

Introduction to Strategic Planning

- The role of strategic planning in small business success
- Overview of strategic planning process
- Setting SMART goals and objectives

Steps

- Present an overview of the key steps involved in strategic planning, including environmental analysis, goal setting, strategy formulation, implementation, and evaluation. Use real-world examples and case studies to illustrate each step of the process. Engage students in interactive discussions to clarify concepts and address questions related to strategic planning.
- Conduct a hands-on workshop focusing on setting SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) goals and objectives for small businesses. Provide examples of SMART goals relevant to different business functions, such as sales, marketing, operations, and finance. Guide students through the process of translating strategic priorities into actionable goals that meet the SMART criteria. VET students work in groups, presentations in plenary

Duration

30 min theoretical, 60 minutes practical

Session 2

Applying Porter's Five Forces Framework

Resource: https://www.planiumpro.com/blog/porters-five-forces-analysis-assessing-the-competitive-environment/

- Understanding Porter's Five Forces model and its relevance to small businesses
- Analyzing industry competitiveness and attractiveness
- Strategic implications and decision-making based on Porter's Five Forces analysis

Steps

- Short Introduction
- Divide VET students into small groups and assign each group a specific industry or market segment relevant to small businesses (e.g., retail, hospitality, technology). Instruct students to apply Porter's Five Forces model to analyze the competitiveness and attractiveness of their assigned industry. Students identify and assess the five forces: threat of new entrants, bargaining power of buyers, bargaining power of suppliers, threat of substitutes, and competitive rivalry. Based on their analysis, students discuss strategic implications and decision-making for small businesses operating in their respective industries.
- Organize a debate format activity where students argue for or against the statement: "Porter's Five Forces analysis is essential for small businesses to assess industry competitiveness and make strategic decisions."

Duration

30 min theoretical and 60 min practical

Session 1

Introduction to Lean Startup Methodology

- Principles of Lean Startup and its origins
- Core concepts: Minimum Viable Product (MVP), validated learning, and pivoting
- Benefits of adopting Lean Startup approach for small businesses

Steps

- Short presentation
- Develop a simulation game where students experience the principles of Lean Startup methodology in action. Students form teams representing small startup businesses and are tasked with bringing a new product or service to market. Each team develops a Minimum Viable Product (MVP) based on a given set of resources and constraints. Throughout the simulation, students engage in iterative cycles of building, measuring, and learning, adjusting their products based on feedback from simulated customers. The game concludes with teams reflecting on their experiences and discussing the benefits and challenges of the Lean Startup approach.
- Invite a guest speaker who has experience with Lean Startup methodology and small business entrepreneurship to share insights and best practices. The guest speaker discusses the origins of Lean Startup, core concepts such as MVP development and validated learning, and real-world examples of Lean Startup success stories. Students have the opportunity to ask questions and engage in discussions to deepen their understanding of how Lean Startup principles can be applied to small businesses

Duration

60 min theoretical and 60 min practical

Session 2

Continuous Improvement and Adaptation

- Cultivating a culture of continuous improvement and innovation
- Strategies for adapting to market feedback and changing circumstances
- Incorporating Lean Startup principles into long-term business strategy

Steps

- Develop a simulation game where students experience the challenges of adapting to market feedback and changing circumstances in a dynamic business environment. VET students play the roles of small business owners or managers and navigate various scenarios that require quick decision-making and adaptation. Scenarios may include unexpected changes in consumer preferences, competitive threats, or economic downturns. Students strategize and adjust their business plans in response to simulated market feedback, learning the importance of flexibility and agility in small business management.
- Organize an innovation pitch competition where VET students present ideas for innovative products, services, or business processes that embody the principles of continuous improvement and adaptation. Students develop pitches that demonstrate how their ideas address market needs, incorporate feedback mechanisms, and leverage Lean Startup principles for iterative development. A panel of judges evaluates the pitches based on criteria such as creativity, feasibility, and potential for impact. The competition encourages students to think critically and creatively about driving innovation and adaptation in small businesses.

Duration

60 min practical

Session 1

Understanding Competitive Strategies

- Overview of competitive strategies: differentiation, cost leadership, niche focus, etc.
- Analyzing competitors and industry dynamics
- Identifying sources of competitive advantage

Steps

- Introduction – lecture
- Develop a competitive simulation game where students role-play as small business owners competing in a simulated market environment. Each student or group manages their virtual business and makes strategic decisions related to pricing, product development, marketing, and competitive positioning. Throughout the simulation, students analyze competitor behavior, respond to market changes, and identify opportunities to gain a competitive edge. The simulation game allows students to apply theoretical concepts of competitive strategy in a dynamic and interactive setting, reinforcing their understanding of competitive dynamics and strategic decision-making.

Duration

60 min theoretical + 60 min practical

Session 2

Sustaining Competitive Advantage

- Strategies for maintaining and defending competitive advantage
- Responding to competitive threats and market changes
- Continuous monitoring and adaptation of competitive strategies

Steps

- Introduction
- VET students are presented with hypothetical scenarios involving competitive threats or significant market changes. In small groups, students develop strategic responses to these threats, considering factors such as innovation, customer loyalty programs, cost management, and market repositioning. Groups present their proposed strategies and discuss the potential effectiveness and challenges of their approaches

Duration

60 min theoretical, 60 min practical

Module 1

Business Planning and Strategy

Theoretical Teaching (8 hours):

Methodology: Theoretical teaching sessions will be conducted through interactive lectures, presentations, and multimedia resources. Participants will engage in discussions, case studies, and Q&A sessions to deepen their understanding of small business concepts.

- **Topics Covered:** Crafting a Business Plan, Market Research and Analysis, Competitive Strategy, Goal Setting and Performance Metrics, SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)

Practical Teaching (14 hours):

Methodology: Practical teaching sessions will involve hands-on activities, role-playing exercises, and simulations to reinforce theoretical concepts learned. Participants will have the opportunity to practice essential skills and techniques under the guidance of instructors.

- Activities: Role-playing scenarios and collaborative projects will be utilized to enhance practical skills.

Integration: Practical sessions will be integrated with theoretical content to provide a comprehensive learning experience, allowing participants to apply theoretical knowledge in practical scenarios.

Independent study by participants (4 hours):

Learning by doing new tool - Tools and techniques for market analysis (e.g., SWOT analysis, PESTEL analysis) and using market research insights to inform product/service development

Learning outcomes

- By combining theoretical insights with practical applications, Module 1 aims to equip participants with a solid foundation in starting and running a small business, preparing them for further modules and real-world challenges in the field.
- Define the essential components of a business plan and their significance in launching a small business.
- Identify key market research techniques and their application in understanding target markets and customer needs.
- Explain the importance of competitive strategy in positioning a small business within the market.
- Describe the process of setting business goals and establishing performance metrics to track progress.
- Conduct a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) to inform strategic business planning.
- Analyze the market and competitive landscape to develop effective business strategies.
- Identify the benefits and challenges associated with starting and running a small business.
- Demonstrate understanding of effective communication skills for business operations, including written, verbal, and non-verbal communication.

Financial Management and Accounting

These resources and teaching aids are designed to provide a comprehensive and practical understanding of financial management and accounting for small businesses, equipping VET learners with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed. This module provides essential knowledge on managing business finances. It includes budgeting, financial forecasting, bookkeeping, and understanding financial statements.

- **Duration:** 16 hours
- **Theoretical Teaching:** 7 hours
- **Practical Teaching:** 9 hours

Literature in English Language:

- "Financial Management for Small Businesses: Financial Statements, Forecasting, and Budgeting" by Steven M. Bragg
- "Bookkeeping All-in-One For Dummies" by Lita Epstein, John A. Tracy, and Kenneth W. Boyd
- "Financial Accounting: Tools for Business Decision Making" by Paul D. Kimmel, Jerry J. Weygandt, and Donald E. Kieso
- "Managing Cash Flow: A Toolkit for the Small Business Owner" by Denise O'Berry
- "VAT Compliance for Small Businesses" by Julie Adams

Specific Teaching Aids:

- Templates for creating budgets and financial plans, allowing students to practice and apply what they learn
- Access to tutorials for popular bookkeeping software such as QuickBooks or Xero, to provide hands-on experience with digital record-keeping
- Practice exercises involving real-world financial statements to help students learn how to read and interpret balance sheets, income statements, and cash flow statements
- Interactive simulation tools that allow students to manage cash flow in a controlled, risk-free environment
- Case studies that illustrate common tax compliance and VAT issues faced by small businesses, with guided solutions to enhance learning

Objectives:

- Understand and apply budgeting and financial planning principles by creating detailed budgets and financial plans that align with business goals and objectives, utilizing the tools and techniques introduced in the module.
- Gain proficiency in maintaining accurate and organized financial records using both manual and digital bookkeeping methods, ensuring compliance and efficiency in financial documentation.
- Develop the ability to read, analyze, and interpret key financial statements (Balance Sheet, Income Statement, Cash Flow Statement) to make informed business decisions.
- Acquire skills to manage cash flow effectively by identifying and addressing potential cash flow issues.
- Understand and adhere to tax compliance requirements, including VAT regulations.

Topics Covered:

- Budgeting and Financial Planning
- Bookkeeping and Record Keeping
- Financial Statements (Balance Sheet, Income Statement, Cash Flow Statement)
- Managing Cash Flow
- Tax Compliance and VAT

Learning Activities:

- Skill-building workshops and exercises
- Role-playing scenarios
- Group projects and collaborative tasks
- Guest lectures by industry professionals
- Self-assessment and reflection activities

Session 1

Introduction to Budgeting

- Definition of a budget
- Types of budgets (operating budget, capital budget, cash flow budget)
- Benefits of budgeting

Steps

- Short Introduction
- VET students use budgeting software or spread sheet tools to create sample budgets. Provide them with hypothetical financial data and guide them through the steps of setting up an operating budget, a capital budget, and a cash flow budget. Facilitate discussions on how these budgets can help in planning and decision-making for a business.
- Design a quiz to test students' understanding of the different types of budgets, their definitions, and the benefits of budgeting. Include multiple-choice questions, short answer questions, and practical scenarios where students must choose the appropriate type of budget to use. This activity reinforces their knowledge and helps identify areas that may need further clarification.

Duration

30 min theoretical + 30 min practical

Session 2

Monitoring and Adjusting the Budget

- Tracking actual performance against the budget
- Identifying variances and understanding their causes
- Adjusting the budget as needed

Steps

- Introduction
- VET students use sample data to track actual financial performance against a predetermined budget. Provide them with monthly financial reports, and have them compare these reports to the budgeted figures. Students should identify any discrepancies and discuss potential reasons for these variances.
- Present a case study of a small business with significant variances between budgeted and actual figures. In small groups, students analyze the case to identify the causes of these variances. They should consider factors such as unexpected expenses, changes in revenue, and market conditions. Each group presents their findings and suggests ways to address the variances.
- Peer review

Duration

30 min theoretical + 30 min practical

Session 1

Introduction to Bookkeeping

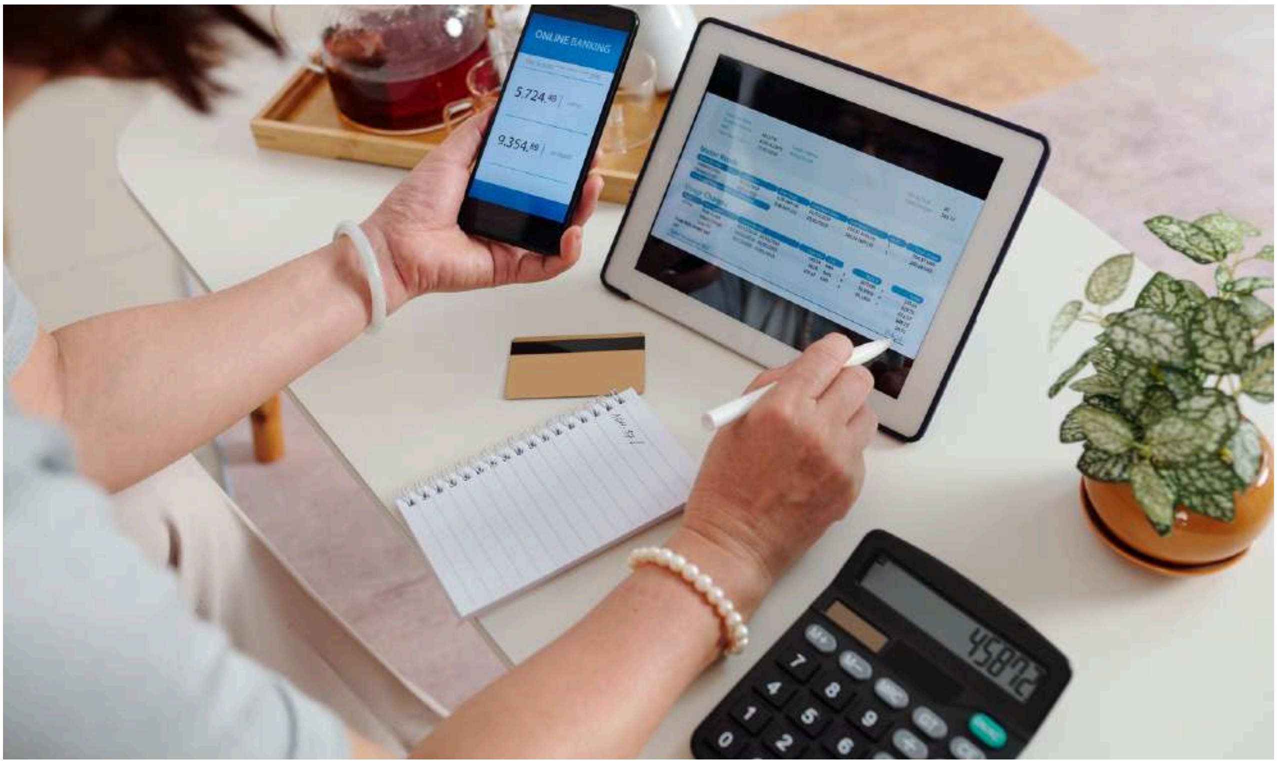
- Basic accounting principles (double-entry bookkeeping)
- The accounting cycle
- Key bookkeeping terms and concept

Steps

- Short Introduction
- VET students use budgeting software or spread sheet tools to create sample budgets. Provide them with hypothetical financial data and guide them through the steps of setting up an operating budget, a capital budget, and a cash flow budget. Facilitate discussions on how these budgets can help in planning and decision-making for a business.
- Design a quiz to test students' understanding of the different types of budgets, their definitions, and the benefits of budgeting. Include multiple-choice questions, short answer questions, and practical scenarios where students must choose the appropriate type of budget to use. This activity reinforces their knowledge and helps identify areas that may need further clarification.

Duration

60 min theoretical



Session 2

Practical skills for recording financial transactions

- Journals and ledgers
- Recording sales, purchases, and expenses
- Using bookkeeping software

Steps

- Introduction – Lecture
- Provide students with sample financial transactions and ask them to record these transactions in a journal.
- Introduce VET students to bookkeeping software such as QuickBooks or Xero through a tutorial session. Demonstrate how to navigate the software interface, record financial transactions, generate reports, and reconcile accounts. Encourage students to follow along with the tutorial using trial versions of the software or provided demo accounts. This activity familiarizes students with digital bookkeeping tools and prepares them for using software in real-world accounting roles.
- Assign practice exercises that require students to use bookkeeping software to record financial transactions. Provide a series of transactions and ask students to enter them into the software, ensuring accuracy and completeness. Students should also generate reports (e.g., trial balance, income statement) to analyze the financial impact of their transactions.

Duration

30 min theoretical / 30 min practical

Session 3

Maintaining Accurate Records

- Importance of timely and accurate record-keeping
- Organizing financial documents
- Legal requirements and compliance

Steps

- Short Introduction
- Facilitate a brainstorming session where VET students identify potential risks and challenges associated with poor record-keeping practices.
- Engage students in a hands-on activity where they create a timeline or schedule for recording different types of financial transactions. Conclude with a reflection session where students discuss strategies for maintaining consistency and accuracy in their record-keeping efforts.
- Instruct VET students in groups to categorize and organize the documents based on predefined criteria (e.g., by type, date, vendor, purpose). Encourage students to explore different organizational techniques, such as using folders, labels, or digital storage systems.
- Engage students in a discussion about the ethical and legal responsibilities of small business owners regarding financial documentation.
- Divide students into small groups and assign each group a specific compliance topic to research and present to the class.
- Conclude with a Q&A session where students can seek clarification on legal requirements and compliance issues.

Duration

30 min theoretical + 90 min practical

Session 1

Understanding Financial Statements

- Purpose and structure of the balance sheet, income statement, and cash flow statement
- Key financial statement terms and definitions

Steps

- Begin with a presentation outlining the purpose and importance of financial statements in business.
- Break down the components of each financial statement (balance sheet, income statement, cash flow statement) and explain their significance.
- Provide examples of real financial statements or templates to illustrate the layout and format. Q&A

Duration

60 min theoretical

Session 2

Preparing Financial Statements

- Data collection and organization
- Preparing a balance sheet and income statement
- Cash flow statement preparation

Steps

- Guide students through the process of organizing the financial data into appropriate categories, such as assets, liabilities, equity, revenues, and expenses.
- Encourage students to utilize spreadsheet software or accounting tools to facilitate data organization and manipulation.
- Assign every group a specific period (e.g., month, quarter, year) for which they will prepare the financial statements.
- Instruct students to populate the balance sheet and income statement templates with the relevant financial data.
- Facilitate a peer review session
- Provide students with cash flow statement templates or formats.
- Guide students through the classification of cash flows into operating, investing, and financing activities based on the collected financial data. Q&A

Duration

30 min theoretical. + 60 min practical

Session 1

Introduction to Cash Flow Management

- Definition and components of cash flow
- Cash inflows and outflows
- Cash flow vs. profit

Steps

- Introduction
- Divide students into small groups and provide each group with a simulated business scenario or case study. Instruct students to identify and list the potential sources of cash inflows and outflows for the given business scenario. Allocate imaginary funds or resources to each group, representing initial capital or investment. Encourage students to make decisions regarding revenue generation, expenses, investments, and other financial transactions over multiple simulated periods (e.g., months or quarters).
- Facilitate periodic assessments where students analyze their cash flow statements, assess liquidity, and make strategic adjustments to optimize cash flow management. Conclude the simulation with a debriefing session where students reflect on their decisions, challenges faced, and lessons learned in managing cash flow effectively.

Duration

30 min theoretical + 60 min practical

Session 2

Tools and Software for Cash Flow Management

- Overview of popular cash flow management tools
- Integrating cash flow management with other financial systems

Steps

- Provide an overview presentation highlighting various cash flow management tools and software available in the market, such as QuickBooks, Xero, or FreshBooks. Demonstrate the features and functionalities of selected tools, showcasing how they facilitate cash flow monitoring, forecasting, and analysis. Allow students to explore the software interfaces through guided hands-on practice sessions.
- Divide students into small groups and assign each group a specific business scenario or role-play scenario related to cash flow management. Encourage students to analyze the scenario, identify cash flow issues, and brainstorm potential solutions or strategies to address them. Facilitate the role-play sessions, allowing students to engage in discussions, negotiations, and decision-making processes within their groups. Conclude the activity with a debriefing session.

Duration

30 min theoretical + 60 min practical

Session 1
Introduction to Tax Compliance

- Overview of tax obligations
- Importance of tax compliance
- Common types of business taxes

Steps

Invite a guest speaker, preferably a tax consultant or accountant with expertise in small business taxation. The guest speaker delivers presentations on the overview of tax obligations, the importance of tax compliance, and common types of business taxes. Encourage interactive participation by allowing students to ask questions and engage in discussions with the guest speaker throughout the seminar. Allocate time for the guest speaker to share insights, tips, and best practices for maintaining tax compliance, as well as addressing common challenges faced by small business owners. Q&A

Duration

30 min theoretical

Session 2
Understanding VAT

- What is VAT and how it works
- Calculating VAT
- VAT registration and reporting

Steps

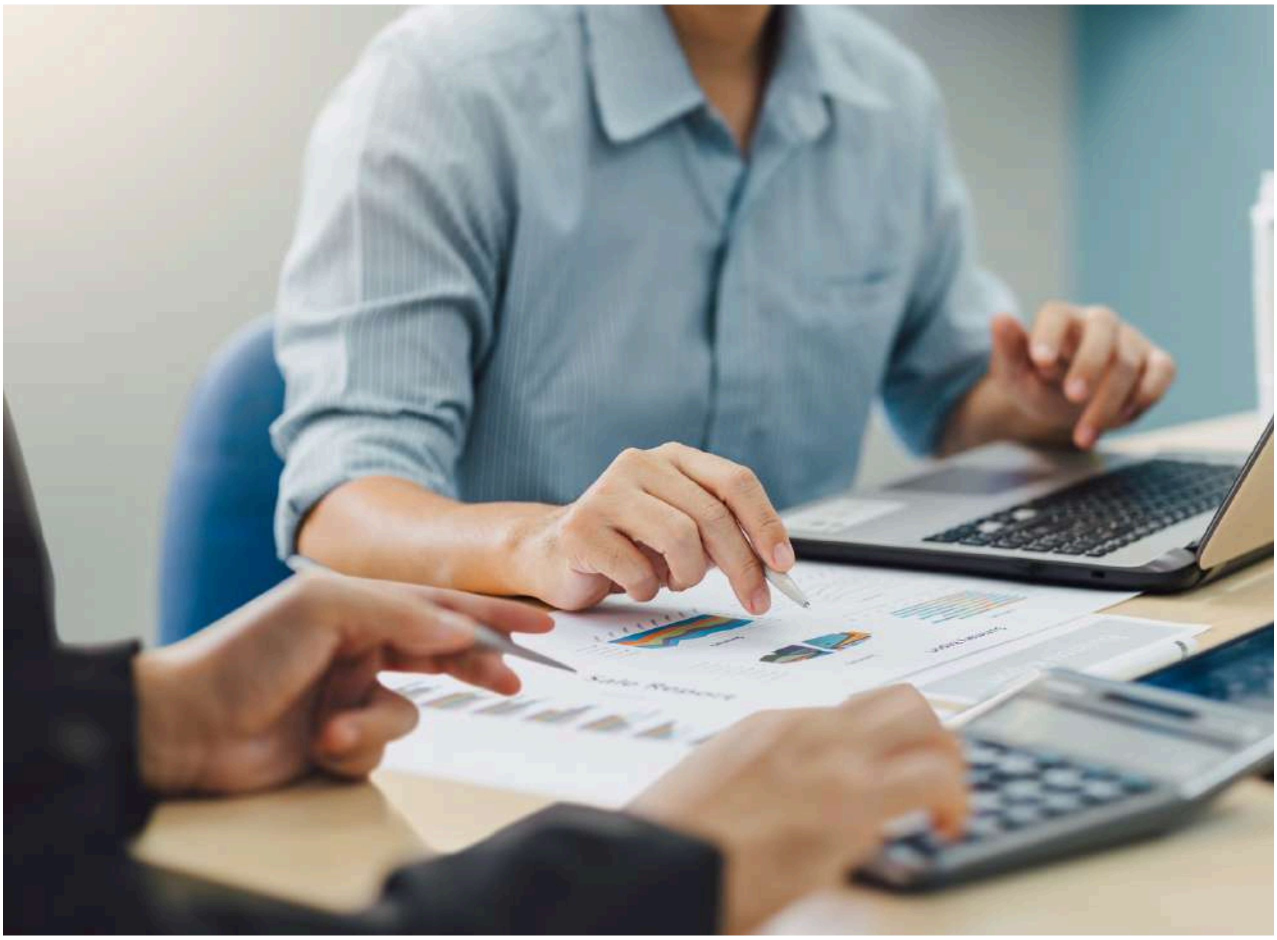
- Short Presentation
- Provide students with a set of hypothetical transactions involving the purchase and sale of goods or services subject to VAT.
- Divide students into small groups and assign each group a set of transactions to analyze. Instruct students to calculate the VAT amount for each transaction based on the applicable VAT rate and the transaction value. Encourage students to use the VAT formula (Transaction Value × VAT Rate) to calculate the VAT amount for each transaction.
- Provide assistance and guidance as needed Provide guidance on the VAT registration process, including the required documentation and registration forms. Q&A

Duration

30 min theoretical + 60 min practical

Session 3

Ensuring Ongoing Tax Compliance



- Record-keeping for tax purposes
- Filing deadlines and penalties

Steps

- Provide students with a template or guide for setting up a tax compliance calendar, including key tax deadlines and filing dates. Divide students into small groups and provide each group with a list of common tax pitfalls or scenarios related to small business taxation.
- Instruct groups to discuss each scenario and identify potential pitfalls, challenges, or mistakes that small business owners may encounter. Facilitate a comprehensive discussion where students compare and contrast different approaches to tax compliance and risk management.
- Conclude the activity by summarizing key takeaways

Duration

60 min practical

Module 2

Financial Management and Accounting

Theoretical Teaching (7 hours):

Methodology: Theoretical teaching sessions will be conducted through lectures, presentations, and group discussions. Participants will explore theoretical frameworks, best practices, and strategies.

- Topics Covered: Budgeting and Financial Planning, Bookkeeping and Record Keeping, Financial Statements (Balance Sheet, Income Statement, Cash Flow Statement), Managing Cash Flow, Tax Compliance and VAT

Practical Teaching (9 hours):

Methodology: Practical teaching sessions will involve hands-on workshops, role-playing exercises, and real-world simulations to reinforce theoretical concepts and develop practical skills.

- Activities: Role-playing scenarios, task prioritization exercises, organizational challenges, and problem-solving simulations will be employed to enhance practical skills.
- Integration: Practical sessions will be closely integrated with theoretical content to facilitate the application of learned skills in realistic scenarios and prepare participants for the demands of small business owner roles.

Learning Outcomes

- Identify different financial planning techniques and adapt financial strategies accordingly.
- Understand the principles of bookkeeping and the ability to maintain accurate and organized financial records.
- Be able to prepare and interpret key financial statements, including balance sheets, income statements, and cash flow statements.
- Apply cash flow management principles to ensure adequate liquidity for business operations and avoid financial crises.
- Understand tax compliance requirements, including VAT, and ensure adherence to relevant tax laws.
- Apply prioritization techniques to identify and focus on high-value financial tasks that drive business success.
- Conduct financial analysis using various tools and techniques to inform business decisions.
- Evaluate the credibility and relevance of financial data to ensure the accuracy of information used in decision-making.
- Prepare financial findings into coherent reports or presentations for stakeholders.
- Utilize financial management software to streamline bookkeeping, budgeting, and financial reporting processes.
- Understand the fundamentals of business taxation, including income tax, corporate tax, and VAT.
- Maintain thorough financial records and documentation to track business progress and ensure accountability.

Marketing and Sales

This module covers strategies and tools for effective marketing and sales. It includes digital marketing, branding, customer relationship management, and sales techniques.

- **Duration:** 26 hours
- **Theoretical Teaching:** 7 hours
- **Practical Teaching:** 13 hours
- **Independent learning:** 4 hours

Literature in English Language:

- "Digital Marketing for Dummies" by Ryan Deiss and Russ Henneberry
- "Jab, Jab, Jab, Right Hook: How to Tell Your Story in a Noisy Social World" by Gary Vaynerchuk
- "Building a StoryBrand: Clarify Your Message So Customers Will Listen" by Donald Miller
- "The Challenger Sale: Taking Control of the Customer Conversation" by Matthew Dixon and Brent Adamson
- "CRM at the Speed of Light: Social CRM Strategies, Tools, and Techniques for Engaging Your Customers" by Paul Greenberg

Specific Teaching Aids:

- Ready-to-use templates for creating digital marketing strategies, including sections for SEO, content marketing, and online advertising plans
- Access to popular social media management tools (e.g., Hootsuite, Buffer) and resources for creating and scheduling posts, analyzing engagement metrics, and managing social media campaigns
- Interactive workshops that guide students through the process of developing and managing a brand, including exercises on creating brand messaging, visual identity, and brand strategy
- Role-playing scenarios that allow students to practice various sales techniques and closing strategies in a controlled environment, receiving feedback and coaching from instructors
- Hands-on tutorials for popular CRM software (e.g., Salesforce, HubSpot) to provide practical experience in managing customer relationships, tracking interactions, and analyzing customer data
- Case studies and examples of successful marketing and sales campaigns from various industries, highlighting best practices and innovative approaches
- Tools for analyzing marketing and sales data, including Google Analytics for web traffic analysis, and CRM analytics for customer behavior insights

These resources and teaching aids are designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of marketing and sales strategies, equipping learners with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in the competitive business environment.

Objectives:

- VET Learners will comprehend various digital marketing strategies, encompassing SEO, content marketing, email marketing, and online advertising, to proficiently promote a small business online.
- VET Learners will acquire proficiency in leveraging social media platforms to engage with customers, bolster brand awareness, and drive sales through targeted social media campaigns.
- VET Learners will grasp the principles of brand development and management, including crafting a compelling brand narrative, designing a visual identity, and upholding brand consistency across diverse marketing channels.
- VET Learners will develop skills in diverse sales techniques, including customer approach, product or service presentation, objection handling, and successful sales closure.

- VET Learners will recognize the significance of customer relationship management and demonstrate the ability to implement CRM systems for tracking customer interactions, analyzing customer data, and fostering robust customer relationships.
- VET Learners will cultivate the capacity to analyze marketing and sales data utilizing tools like Google Analytics and CRM software, enabling them to gauge the efficacy of marketing campaigns and sales strategies and make informed, data-driven decisions.
- VET Learners will be proficient in crafting comprehensive marketing plans that amalgamate digital marketing, social media marketing, and traditional marketing techniques to realize overarching business objectives.
- VET Learners will exhibit awareness of legal and ethical considerations pertinent to marketing and sales, encompassing data privacy, advertising standards, and fair trading practices, ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements in their business endeavors.

Topics Covered:

- Digital Marketing Strategies
- Social Media Marketing
- Brand Development and Management
- Sales Techniques and Closing Strategies
- Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

Learning Activities:

- Hands-on tutorials and demonstrations
- Software training sessions
- Group exercises to practice using tools and applications
- Case studies on tool implementation and integration

Session 1

Introduction to digital marketing and its significance in modern business

- Definition and scope of digital marketing
- Importance of digital presence for businesses
- Overview of digital marketing channels (website, social media, email, etc.)

Steps

- Introduction
- Divide participants into small groups. Provide each group with cards containing different digital marketing terms (e.g., SEO, PPC, conversion rate). Ask each group to define the term on their card in simple terms suitable for beginners After a set time, groups present their definitions, and the facilitator provides feedback and clarifications.
- Divide participants into two groups: one advocating for the importance of digital presence and the other arguing against it. Select several case studies of successful digital marketing campaigns from different industries. Distribute the case studies to participants and give them time to read and analyze the campaigns. Facilitate a group discussion where participants share their observations, identifying key strategies, tactics, and elements of success.
- Conclude with key takeaways and recommendations for staying updated on digital marketing trends.

Duration

30 min theoretical + 60 min practical

Session 2

SEO and Content Marketing

- Basics of SEO: keywords, on-page optimization, off-page optimization
- Content marketing strategy development
- Tools and techniques for SEO and content marketing

Steps

- Conduct a hands-on workshop where participants learn how to perform keyword research using tools like Google Keyword Planner, SEMrush, or Moz Keyword Explorer.
- Guide participants through the process of identifying relevant keywords related to their business or industry. Encourage participants to brainstorm potential keywords based on their target audience, products or services, and industry trends. Lead a group discussion on off-page SEO techniques, such as link building, social media engagement, and influencer outreach.
- Share case studies and examples of successful off-page SEO campaigns to illustrate different strategies and their impact on search rankings.
- Introduce participants to a variety of tools and software for SEO and content marketing, such as Google Analytics, Yoast SEO, BuzzSumo, and Hootsuite.
- Demonstrate how to use these tools for keyword research, content optimization, performance tracking, and social media management.
- Provide hands-on demonstrations or tutorials where participants can explore the features and functionalities of these tools.

Duration

90 min practical + 120 min independent learning

Session 3

Online Advertising and Email Marketing

- Types of online advertising (PPC, display ads, social media ads)
- Email marketing best practices and strategies
- Tools and platforms for online advertising and email marketing

Steps

- Short Introduction
- Divide participants into small groups and assign each group a hypothetical business scenario. Instruct each group to create a PPC (Pay-Per-Click) advertising campaign using platforms like Google Ads or Bing Ads, tailored to their assigned business.
- Provide a budget and specific campaign objectives for each group to work within.
- Guide participants through keyword selection, ad copywriting, bidding strategies, and campaign targeting options. Allow groups to monitor their campaign performance in real-time and adjust their strategies based on results. Provide participants with design tools and templates for creating display ads, such as Google Display Network ad builder or Canva. Briefly discuss design principles and best practices for creating visually compelling display ads.Encourage participants to design display ads for a specific product or promotion related to their business. Introduce participants to various tools and platforms for online advertising and email marketing, such as Google Ads, Facebook Ads Manager, Mailchimp, and HubSpot. Demonstrate how to set up ad campaigns, create ad creatives, target specific audience segments, and track campaign performance using these platforms.

Duration

30 min theoretical + 90 min practical

Session 1

Understanding the role and importance of social media marketing in business promotion

- Benefits of social media marketing
- Overview of popular social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, LinkedIn)
- Developing a social media marketing strategy

Steps

Provide an overview of popular social media platforms, including their unique features, target demographics, and marketing opportunities. Assign each participant or group a different social media platform to research and present to the class. Guide participants through the process of developing a social media marketing strategy tailored to their business goals and target audience. Provide a template or framework for creating a social media marketing plan, including objectives, target audience, content strategy, posting schedule, and performance metrics. Present case studies of successful social media marketing campaigns across various industries. Break down each campaign, analyzing its objectives, target audience, content strategy, engagement tactics, and results. Q&A

Duration

60 min theoretical

Session 2

Creating Engaging Social Media Content

- Content creation best practices (visual content, videos, infographics)
- Understanding social media algorithms
- Tools and resources for creating social media content

Steps

- Provide an overview of best practices for creating engaging social media content, including the use of visuals, videos, and infographics. Share examples of successful social media posts and campaigns that effectively utilize different content formats. Conduct a group brainstorming session where participants generate ideas for social media content based on their business niche or target audience.
- Explain how social media algorithms work and how they impact the visibility of content on various platforms. Discuss strategies for optimizing content to increase reach and engagement within algorithmic constraints. Analyze examples of posts that have performed well despite algorithm changes, identifying common characteristics or tactics that contributed to their success. Introduce participants to a variety of tools and resources available for creating social media content, such as graphic design software, video editing apps, and content creation platforms. Demonstrate how to use these tools effectively through tutorials or live demonstrations.
- Encourage participants to explore different tools and experiment with creating content during the session.
- Hands-on Practice in Content Creation – Independent learning

Duration

30 min theoretical and 60 min practical and independent learning 120 min

Session 1

Defining brand identity and its role in shaping consumer perceptions

- Components of brand identity (logo, color scheme, messaging)
- Brand positioning and differentiation strategies
- Case studies of successful brand identities

Steps

- Present the key components of brand identity, including logo design, color scheme, typography, and brand messaging. Provide examples and case studies of well-known brands to illustrate how these components contribute to brand recognition and consumer perceptions Discuss the concept of brand positioning and its importance in distinguishing a brand from competitors in the marketplace. Present case studies of successful brand identities across different industries, highlighting the strategies and elements that contributed to their success.
- Lead a discussion on the factors that make these brands memorable, trustworthy, and appealing to their target audience. Guide participants through the process of creating a brand mood board, which visually represents the desired look, feel, and personality of their brand.
- Provide materials such as magazines, images, colors, and textures for participants to use in assembling their mood boards. Facilitate group critiques where participants present their mood boards, explaining the rationale behind their design choices and receiving feedback from their peers.

Duration

30 min theoretical, 60 min practical

Session 2

Strategies for building brand awareness and recognition in the market

- Content marketing for brand awareness
- Influencer marketing and brand partnerships
- Using PR and events to promote brand visibility

Steps

- Participants work in small groups to create content pieces (blogs, videos, social media posts) aimed at increasing brand awareness. Provide guidelines on best practices for content marketing and ensure each group incorporates these into their creations. Assign participants roles as either influencers or brand representatives.
- Conduct mock meetings where brand representatives pitch collaboration ideas to influencers, focusing on mutually beneficial strategies to increase brand awareness. Participants are divided into groups and tasked with creating a PR campaign for a hypothetical product launch.
- Groups develop a detailed plan including press releases, media outreach strategies, and event planning. Each group presents their PR campaign to the class, followed by a discussion on potential impact and ways to enhance visibility

Duration

60 min practical

Session 3

Brand Reputation Management

- Content marketing for brand awareness
- Influencer marketing and brand partnerships
- Using PR and events to promote brand visibility

Steps

- Participants work in small groups to create content pieces (blogs, videos, social media posts) aimed at increasing brand awareness. Provide guidelines on best practices for content marketing and ensure each group incorporates these into their creations. Assign participants roles as either influencers or brand representatives.
- Conduct mock meetings where brand representatives pitch collaboration ideas to influencers, focusing on mutually beneficial strategies to increase brand awareness. Participants are divided into groups and tasked with creating a PR campaign for a hypothetical product launch.
- Groups develop a detailed plan including press releases, media outreach strategies, and event planning. Each group presents their PR campaign to the class, followed by a discussion on potential impact and ways to enhance visibility

Duration

60 min practical

Session 1

Introduction to Sales Techniques

- Sales process overview (prospecting, qualifying, presenting, closing)
- Sales psychology and persuasion techniques
- Building rapport and trust with prospects

Steps

Provide an overview of the sales process, explaining each step in detail: prospecting, qualifying, presenting, and closing. Use real-world examples and case studies to illustrate the sales process in action. Conduct a workshop where participants learn various persuasion techniques, such as using social proof, scarcity, and reciprocity. Include exercises where participants practice these techniques in small groups. Present case studies of successful sales pitches from different industries. In small groups, have participants analyze the elements that made these pitches successful, such as the approach, messaging, and closing techniques

Duration

60 min theoretical, 30 min practical

Session 2

Effective Presentation and Negotiation Skills

- Structuring persuasive sales presentations
- Negotiation strategies and tactics
- Overcoming objections and closing techniques
- Role-playing negotiation scenarios
- Critique and feedback on sales presentations

Steps

Provide a lecture on various negotiation strategies and tactics, such as BATNA (Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement), anchoring, and concession-making. Facilitate a group discussion on how these tactics can be applied in different business scenarios. Create role-playing scenarios where participants practice negotiating with each other in pairs or small groups. Assign different roles, such as buyer and seller, and provide specific objectives and constraints for each scenario. Rotate roles to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to practice different negotiation positions. After each role-play, facilitate a debrief session where participants discuss what strategies worked, what didn't, and why. Conduct a brainstorming session where participants generate and discuss various negotiation tactics and how they can be applied in different contexts. Use real-world examples to illustrate the effectiveness of different tactics

Duration

45 min practical

Session 3

Sales Pipeline Management

- Sales pipeline stages and metrics
- CRM tools for sales pipeline management
- Sales forecasting and goal setting

Steps

- Provide an overview of the different stages of a sales pipeline (e.g., lead generation, qualification, proposal, negotiation, closing). Discuss key metrics for each stage, such as conversion rates, average deal size, and sales cycle length. Introduce various CRM tools and their features, focusing on how they can be used for managing a sales pipeline. Conduct a hands-on workshop where participants practice setting up and managing a sales pipeline in a CRM system (e.g., Salesforce, HubSpot).
- Set up a simulated sales environment where participants manage a fictional company's sales pipeline. Assign different roles (e.g., sales representative, sales manager) and provide a list of leads and opportunities.
- Participants progress through the pipeline stages, updating their CRM with actions taken and decisions made.
- Facilitate a debriefing session to understand goal setting.

Duration

60 min theoretical, 30 min practical

Session 1

Introduction to CRM

- Benefits of CRM for businesses
- CRM software options and features
- Implementing CRM systems effectively

Steps

- Conduct live demonstrations of popular CRM software options such as Salesforce, HubSpot, and Zoho CRM.
- Highlight key features of each platform, such as contact management, sales tracking, marketing automation, and customer support.
- Compare the features and pricing of different CRM solutions to help participants understand which might be best for their business needs. Q&A

Duration

60 min theoretical

Session 2

Customer Segmentation and Personalization

- Building customer loyalty programs
- Providing exceptional customer service
- Analyzing customer feedback and sentiment

Steps

In small groups, participants will design a customer loyalty program tailored to a specific business type (e.g., retail, service, e-commerce). VET students will role-play various customer service scenarios, such as handling complaints, providing product support, and managing difficult customers. Using a provided dataset, VET students will practice personalizing marketing messages and offers for different customer segments. Q&A

Duration

120 min practical

Module 3

Marketing and Sales

Theoretical Teaching (7 hours):

Methodology: Theoretical teaching sessions will involve lectures, presentations, and demonstrations to introduce participants to various small business running tools and technologies.

- Topics Covered: Digital Marketing Strategies, Social Media Marketing, Brand Development and Management, Sales Techniques and Closing Strategies, Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

Practical Teaching (13 hours):

Methodology: Practical teaching sessions will consist of hands-on workshops, guided tutorials, and interactive exercises to allow participants to explore and familiarize themselves with small business running simulated environments and real-world scenarios.

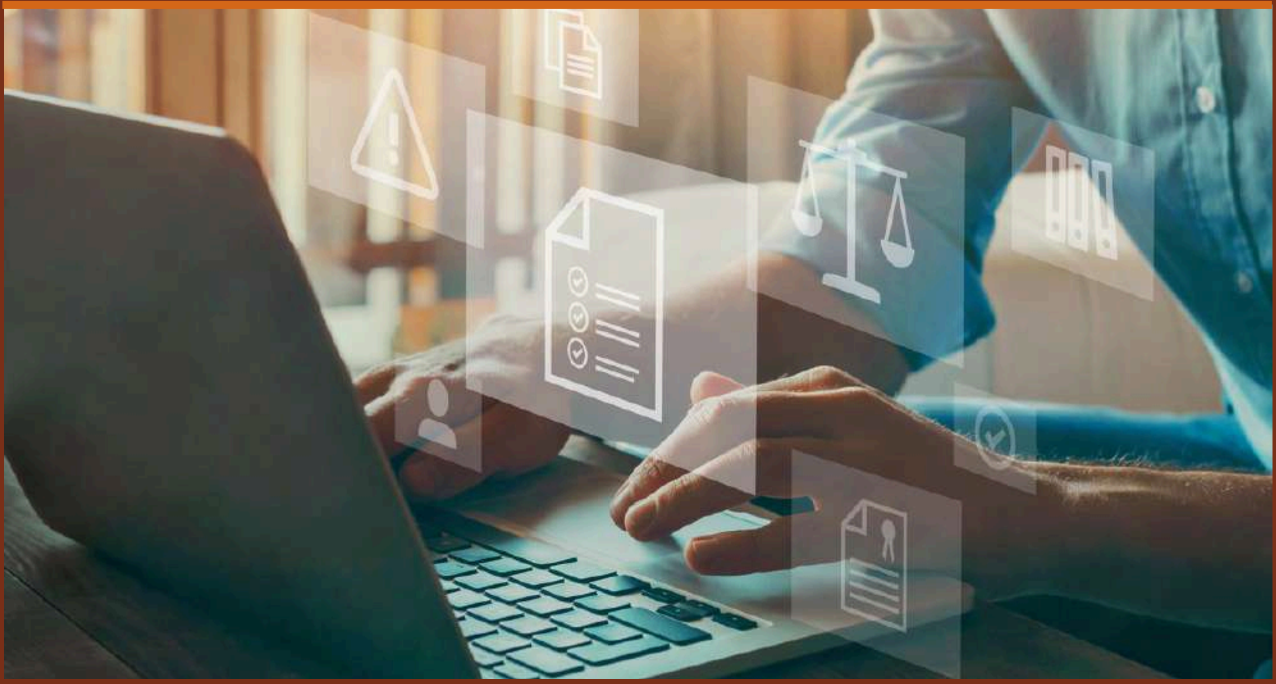
- Activities: Hands-on tutorials, guided exercises, case studies, and role-playing simulations will be utilized to reinforce practical skills and enhance VET learners' proficiency in digital marketing.
- Integration: Practical sessions will be closely integrated with theoretical content, allowing participants to apply their knowledge of small business running tools in practical situations and develop the skills necessary for efficient and effective small business owner.

Independent study by participants (4 hours):

Learning by doing new tool – using tools and resources for creating social media content

- By integrating theoretical knowledge with practical applications, Module 3 aims to equip participants with the expertise and competencies required to excel in marketing and sales roles effectively.
- Identify and evaluate a range of digital marketing strategies and techniques suitable for various business objectives and target audiences.
- Understand the principles and mechanics of social media marketing platforms, including audience targeting, content creation, and engagement metrics.
- Apply brand development and management principles to establish and cultivate a compelling brand identity that resonates with target customers.
- Utilize a variety of sales techniques and closing strategies to effectively communicate value propositions and secure sales conversions.
- Implement customer relationship management (CRM) strategies and tools to nurture customer relationships, enhance satisfaction, and drive repeat business.
- Analyze marketing and sales performance metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of campaigns and strategies and make data-driven decisions.
- Develop comprehensive marketing plans integrating digital marketing, social media marketing, and traditional marketing approaches to achieve business goals.
- Understand and adhere to legal and ethical considerations in marketing and sales practices, including data privacy, advertising regulations, and consumer protection laws.
- Utilize advanced marketing and sales analytics tools and techniques to gain insights into customer behavior, market trends, and competitive landscape.
- Implement continuous learning and adaptation strategies to stay updated with evolving marketing and sales trends and technologies for sustained business success.

Legal and Regulatory Compliance



This module concentrates on ensuring that business owners comprehend the legal landscape. It encompasses business law, intellectual property, employment law, and regulatory compliance, providing a comprehensive understanding of legal obligations and structures necessary for business operations.

- **Duration:** 14 hours
- **Theoretical Teaching:** 5 hours
- **Practical Teaching:** 9 hours

Literature in English Language:

- Business Law: Text and Cases" by Kenneth W. Clarkson, Roger LeRoy Miller, Frank B. Cross
- "Intellectual Property: Patents, Trademarks, and Copyrights" by Richard Stim
- "Employment Law: Cases and Materials" by Mark Rothstein, Lance Liebman, Kimberly Yuracko
- "EU GDPR: A Pocket Guide" by Alan Calder
- Industry-specific regulatory guides and publications provide insights into sector-specific compliance requirements, ensuring businesses are aware of and adhere to relevant regulations

Specific Teaching Aids:

- Case studies and scenarios based on real legal cases help illustrate legal concepts and compliance issues in practical contexts, fostering critical thinking and decision-making skills
- Simulation exercises allow participants to navigate intellectual property scenarios, such as trademark registrations or copyright infringement disputes, providing hands-on experience in intellectual property management
- Workshops on employment law topics, such as hiring practices, employee contracts, and workplace discrimination, offer participants an opportunity to explore legal compliance challenges and solutions
- Compliance checklists and templates assist businesses in assessing GDPR compliance and implementing data protection measures effectively
- Interactive sessions on conducting regulatory compliance audits help participants identify potential compliance gaps and develop strategies to address them, ensuring adherence to industry-specific regulations
- Access to a curated legal resource library containing relevant statutes, regulations, and compliance guides provides participants with additional reference materials for further study and research

These literature and teaching aids are designed to enhance participants' understanding of legal and regulatory compliance requirements, enabling them to navigate the legal landscape effectively and mitigate compliance risks in their businesses.

Objectives:

- VET students will gain a foundational understanding of business law principles, including contract law, company structures, and legal obligations for business operations.
- They will develop knowledge of intellectual property laws, such as trademarks, patents, and copyrights, and understand their significance in protecting creative and innovative work.
- VET students will acquire knowledge of employment laws and regulations, including employee rights, workplace safety standards, and fair employment practices, to ensure compliance in hiring and managing employees.
- Understanding the principles of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and other data protection laws will enable learners to implement data protection measures and comply with regulatory requirements.
- Learners will identify and comprehend industry-specific regulations and compliance requirements relevant to various sectors, such as healthcare, finance, or manufacturing, to ensure adherence to industry standards and regulations.

Topics Covered:

- Understanding Business Law and Legal Structures
- Intellectual Property Rights (Trademarks, Patents, Copyrights)
- Employment Law and Regulations
- GDPR and Data Protection Compliance
- Industry-Specific Regulatory Requirements

Learning Activities:

- Guest lectures from industry experts
- Case studies on successful small businesses
- Role-playing exercises for client interactions
- Business planning and strategy development workshops
- Peer feedback and collaboration on marketing campaigns

Session 1
Introduction to Business Law

- Overview of business law fundamentals
- Legal structures for businesses: sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation
- Legal rights and responsibilities of business owners

Steps

- Provide case studies involving legal issues faced by businesses and discuss potential solutions based on legal principles learned.
- Assign roles to VET students representing different stakeholders in a business transaction and conduct negotiations to highlight legal considerations.
- Task VET students with researching and presenting on a specific legal topic related to business law, encouraging deeper understanding through independent study.

Duration

60 min theoretical

Session 2
Contracts and Commercial Law

- Principles of contract law and contract formation
- Types of contracts: sales contracts, service contracts, employment contracts
- Contractual obligations and enforcement mechanisms

Steps

- Divide VET students into groups and have them draft sample contracts for common business transactions, focusing on clarity and enforceability. Provide VET students with sample contracts and ask them to identify potential legal issues or ambiguities, promoting critical analysis and attention to detail.
- Organize a simulated courtroom debate where VET students argue for and against the enforceability of a contract clause, honing persuasive argumentation skills. Q&A

Duration

60 min practical

Session 3

Business Liability and Legal Risks

- Understanding business liability: tort law, negligence, product liability
- Managing legal risks in business operations
- Insurance and risk mitigation strategies for small businesses

Steps

- Guide VET students through a risk assessment exercise where they identify potential legal risks in hypothetical business scenarios and develop strategies to mitigate them.
- Provide VET students with sample insurance policies and ask them to analyze coverage terms and exclusions, fostering understanding of insurance as a risk management tool.
- Task VET students with developing a legal risk management plan for a small business, including preventive measures, contingency plans, and insurance coverage recommendations. Q&A

Duration

60 min practical

Session 1
Introduction to Intellectual Property

Overview of intellectual property rights (IPR) Types of intellectual property: trademarks, patents, copyrights, trade secrets Importance of intellectual property protection for businesses.

Steps

- Guide VET students through the process of conducting a trademark search and preparing a trademark registration application for a fictional business name or logo.
- Provide examples of creative works and discuss strategies for copyright protection, including registration, licensing, and enforcement.
- Present case studies of intellectual property disputes and facilitate group discussions on the legal issues involved and potential outcomes. Q&A

Duration

60 min theoretical

Session 2
Trademarks and Copyrights

Understanding trademarks: registration process, protection of brand names and logos Copyright basics: rights of creators, copyright registration, fair use

Steps

- Have VET students design their own trademarks or logos for a hypothetical business and discuss the criteria for trademark registration and distinctiveness.
- Present scenarios involving potential copyright infringement and ask VET students to analyze the situations and propose appropriate actions based on copyright law.
- Divide VET students into groups and assign them different scenarios involving fair use of copyrighted material, then have them debate the legality of each use and reach a consensus.

Duration

120 min practical

Session 1

Basics of Employment Law

Overview of employment law principles Employment contracts: terms and conditions, termination clauses Rights and obligations of employers and employees

Steps

- Provide case studies of real-life employment law scenarios and discuss how employment law principles apply to each situation.
- Provide sample employment contracts and ask VET students to review them, identifying key terms and conditions as well as any potential legal issues.
- Divide VET students into groups and assign roles as employers, employees, and legal advisors to act out scenarios involving employment law issues, such as disciplinary actions or termination.

Duration

60 min theoretical + 30 min practical

Session 2

Workplace Health and Safety

Understanding workplace health and safety regulations Duties of employers to provide a safe work environment Employee rights regarding workplace health and safety

Steps

- Conduct a simulated workplace safety inspection where VET students identify potential hazards and discuss strategies to mitigate risks.
- Task VET students with developing workplace health and safety policies and procedures tailored to specific industry settings, considering regulatory requirements and best practices.
- Simulate emergency scenarios (e.g., fire, medical emergency) and guide VET students in developing emergency response plans, including evacuation procedures and first aid protocols.

Duration

60 min practical

Session 3

Discrimination and Equal Employment

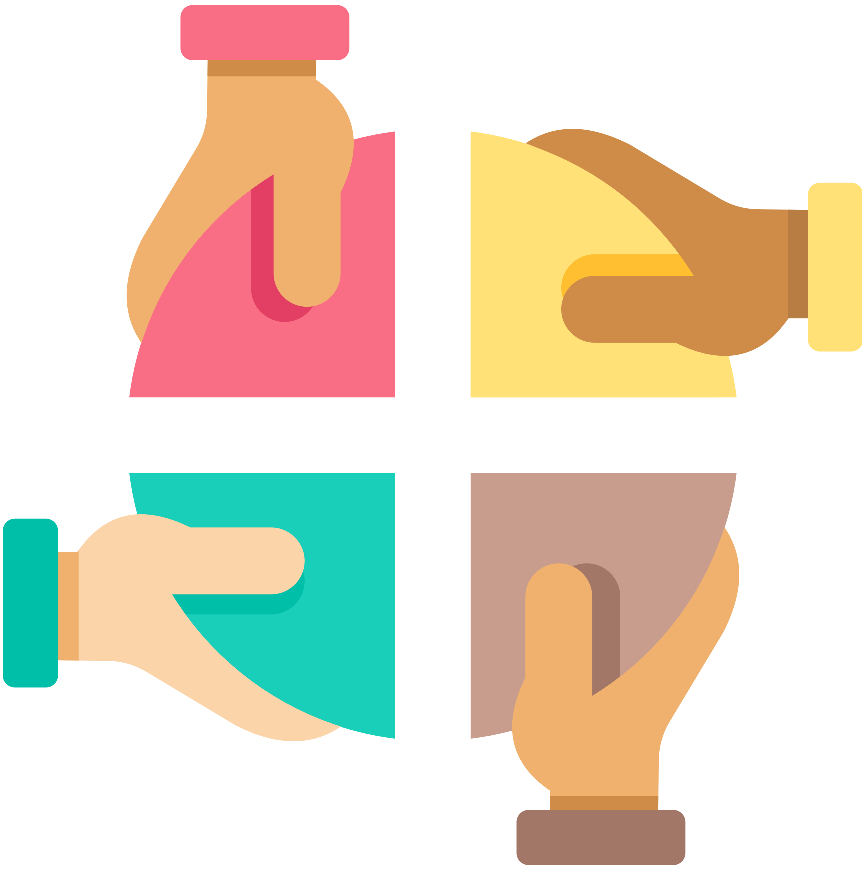
Opportunity Laws prohibiting discrimination in employment Promoting diversity and inclusion in the workplace Handling discrimination complaints and legal consequences

Steps

- Present an interactive lecture on discrimination laws and equal employment opportunity principles, interspersed with case studies for discussion and analysis.
- Facilitate a diversity workshop where VET students engage in activities and discussions to promote awareness and understanding of diversity issues in the workplace.
- Conduct a simulated discrimination investigation where VET students role-play as investigators, witnesses, and complainants to explore the process of handling discrimination complaints and legal consequences.

Duration

60 min theoretical and 30 min practical



Session 1

Introduction to GDPR and Data Protection

Overview of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Principles of data protection and privacy Key obligations for businesses under GDPR

Steps

- Provide a checklist of GDPR compliance requirements and guide VET students in conducting a compliance audit of a fictional business, identifying areas for improvement.
- Lead VET students through the process of conducting a PIA for a data processing activity, assessing risks to data subjects' privacy and determining mitigation measures.
- Create a quiz game with questions related to GDPR principles, obligations, and terminology to reinforce understanding in a fun and interactive way.

Duration

60 min theoretical and 60 practical

Session 2

Data Handling and Security Measures

Data handling best practices: data collection, storage, and processing Implementing security measures to protect personal data Responding to data breaches and reporting requirements

Steps

- Present scenarios involving data handling practices and ask VET students to identify potential privacy risks and suggest appropriate data security measures.
- Conduct a tabletop exercise where VET students role-play as members of a data breach response team, developing a response plan and practicing communication and decision-making skills.
- Provide training materials and resources on data security best practices, including phishing awareness, password management, and secure data disposal, followed by discussions and quizzes to reinforce learning.

Duration

60 min practical

Session 3

Compliance and Accountability

Ensuring GDPR compliance: data protection policies and procedures Data subject rights: access, rectification, erasure Role of data protection officers and regulatory authorities in enforcement

Steps

- Provide sample data protection policies and procedures and ask VET students to review and revise them to ensure compliance with GDPR requirements.
- Assign VET students roles as data subjects and data controllers in a role-playing exercise where they practice exercising and responding to data subject rights requests, such as access or erasure requests.
- Present hypothetical scenarios involving regulatory investigations or enforcement actions related to GDPR compliance and facilitate group discussions on appropriate responses and compliance strategies.

Duration

60 min practical

Module 4

Legal and Regulatory Compliance

Theoretical Teaching (5 hours):

Methodology: Theoretical teaching sessions will involve lectures, presentations, and discussions to cover topics related to business development, marketing strategies, client acquisition, proposal writing, contract negotiation, and client relationship management.

- Topics Covered: Understanding Business Law and Legal Structures, Intellectual Property Rights (Trademarks, Patents, Copyrights), Employment Law and Regulations, GDPR and Data Protection Compliance, Industry-Specific Regulatory Requirements

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Practical Teaching (9 hours):

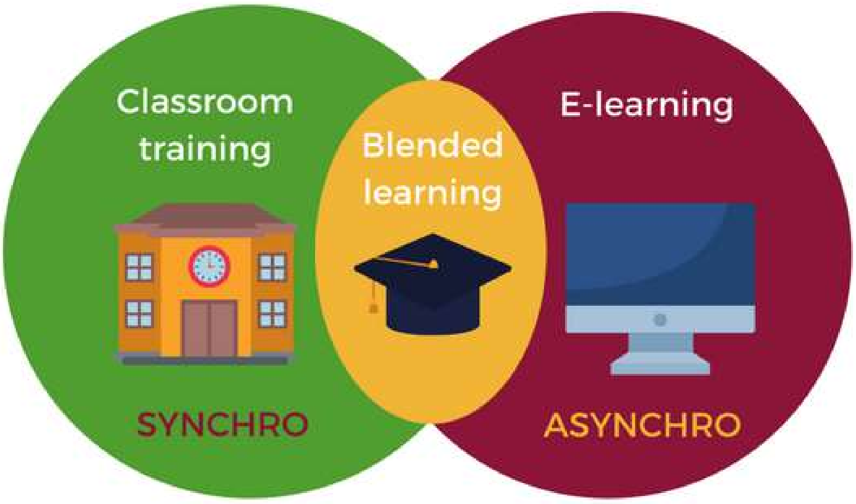
Methodology: Practical teaching sessions will include workshops, case studies, role-playing exercises, and interactive activities to allow participants to apply theoretical concepts in practical scenarios.

- Activities: Role-playing simulations, mock client meetings, drafting proposals, negotiating contracts, and developing client management strategies will be used to reinforce practical skills and enhance participants' ability to effectively manage legal aspects of starting and running a small business.
- Integration: Practical sessions will be closely integrated with theoretical content, enabling participants to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world situations and develop the skills necessary for successful business development.

Learning outcomes:

- By combining theoretical insights with practical applications, Module 4 aims to empower participants to navigate legal and regulatory aspects effectively in their small business operations.
- Understand the fundamentals of business law and legal structures relevant to small business ownership.
- Identify and differentiate between various forms of intellectual property rights, including trademarks, patents, and copyrights.
- Comprehend key principles and regulations governing employment relationships, including hiring, termination, and workplace safety.
- Familiarize oneself with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and data protection compliance requirements applicable to small businesses.
- Recognize industry-specific regulatory requirements relevant to their business sector and ensure compliance.
- Develop strategies to mitigate legal risks and liabilities in business operations.
- Implement policies and procedures to safeguard intellectual property assets and ensure legal compliance.
- Establish effective data protection measures and procedures to comply with GDPR requirements and protect customer data.
- Identify potential employment law issues and proactively address them to maintain compliance and mitigate legal risks.
- Demonstrate an understanding of legal contracts and agreements relevant to their business activities, including vendor contracts and client agreements.
- Implement measures to ensure ongoing compliance with relevant laws and regulations, including regular audits and updates to policies and procedures.

METHODOLOGICAL INSTRUCTIONS



Resource: Resource: Resource: https://improvingcareand.education/2023/02/16/online-hybrid-and-blended-learning/

At the outset of the program, provide a comprehensive overview to the participants, outlining the program's objectives, methodologies, and potential assessment techniques, including a straightforward evaluation of acquired knowledge.

Creating a welcoming and comfortable environment for participants upon their entry into the program is paramount, as it sets the tone for the subsequent interactions. Participants will expect the trainer to exude qualities of respect, trust, and friendliness, regardless of the chosen educational model, whether traditional or interactive.

Your conduct as a trainer should consistently reflect professionalism and approachability, as participants will closely observe your demeanor throughout the program. It is crucial to maintain a balance between professionalism and friendliness to foster an engaging learning atmosphere.

Taking the time to acquaint yourself with the participants, irrespective of the educational model, is beneficial for fostering camaraderie among participants and enabling mutual understanding. This initial step also allows you to gauge the expectations and needs of the participants, as well as identify any knowledge gaps to address throughout the program.

For participants engaging in interactive teaching through independent learning systems, provide guidance on managing the program's duration and suggest a structured plan for effectively mastering the curriculum. This proactive approach ensures participants have a clear roadmap for their learning journey.

Example of activities to be conducted at the beginning of the training FACE2FACE learning:

- Prepare the room to encourage learning and foster interaction among group members, ensuring a conducive environment.
- Introduce yourself to the participants, establishing rapport and setting a welcoming tone for the session.
- Invite drivers to introduce themselves, sharing details about their work experience, education, and the nature of their work.
- Record the expectations of the participants regarding the training program, facilitating transparency and alignment of goals.
- Present the administrative aspects of the program, such as attendance lists and other relevant logistics, ensuring clarity on procedural matters.
- Define the objectives of the program and outline the specific competencies that participants are expected to acquire through the training activities.
- Explain the structure and organization of the training process, providing participants with a clear understanding of what to expect.
- Present the basic rules of communication, emphasizing principles such as mutual respect, active listening, and proper internet etiquette, to promote a conducive learning environment.

BLENDED LEARNING

The terms 'online, 'hybrid' and 'blended' are to be found described in slightly different ways. For the purposes of this post: online simply refers to methodologies which only take place online; hybrid denotes that some learners are physically in attendance while others are online but perhaps, now and then, use is being made of both styles; and blended indicates a combination of conventional teaching or training with members present along with online/e-learning also being employed to extend accessibility, independent contributions and flexibility.

Resource: https://improvingcareand.education/2023/02/16/online-hybrid-and-blended-learning/

ONLINE LEARNING

Full Technology integration - appropriate digital platforms can be selected (eg. Zoom, Teams, etc) and tools for delivering virtual training sessions, hosting discussions, sharing resources, and assessing learner progress. Each trainers should be familiar with the platform and tools and to be sure that the chosen technology is user-friendly, accessible, and compatible with various devices and operating systems.

Offer training and technical support to learners to facilitate smooth navigation and troubleshooting.

Monitoring and evaluation - Diverse assessment methods such as quizzes, assignments, presentations, and skill demonstrations should be designed to evaluate learners' comprehension and application of virtual assistant skills. Provide timely feedback to learners to help them identify areas for improvement and track their progress throughout the program. Encourage peer evaluation and self-assessment to foster a culture of continuous learning and development.

Should be planed fostering a sense of community among learners through virtual networking events, discussion forums, and in-pairs/in-teams projects. Access to mentoring, coaching, and career development resources should be introduced to help learners succeed in their virtual assistant roles.

EXAMPLE OF ACTIVITIES TO BE CONDUCTED AT THE BEGINNING OF THE TRAINING ON LINE LEARNING:

Virtual introduction - Utilize a video conferencing platform (e.g., Zoom, Microsoft Teams) for a virtual introduction session.

- Each participant introduces themselves, sharing their name, role, and a fun fact about themselves.
- Encourage participants to use virtual backgrounds or share photos representing their interests or hobbies.

Virtual Scavenger Hunts - Use a video conferencing platform with breakout rooms functionality or use

- Create a list of items or themes related to the training or participants' backgrounds.
- Assign participants to small breakout rooms and instruct them to find and share items related to the list within a time limit.
- Reconvene in the main session to debrief and share findings.

Icebreaker polls or quizzes - Use polling features available in video conferencing platforms or dedicated polling tools like Mentimeter or Poll Everywhere.

- Create icebreaker questions or quizzes related to the training topic or general interests.
- Participants respond to the polls or quizzes, and results are shared anonymously to spark discussions.

Virtual team bilding games - Play online team-building games such as virtual escape rooms, online trivia quizzes, or collaborative puzzle-solving activities.

- Use platforms like Kahoot!, Quizizz, or online escape room platforms.
- Participants work together in teams to solve challenges and compete against each other in a fun and engaging manner.

Digital whiteboard brainstorming - Utilize digital whiteboard tools like Miro, MURAL, or Google Jamboard.

- Pose a question or topic related to the training and invite participants to brainstorm ideas, share insights, or collaborate on solutions.
- Encourage participants to use virtual sticky notes, drawings, or annotations to contribute their thoughts.

Digital whiteboard brainstorming - Utilize digital whiteboard tools like Miro, MURAL, or Google Jamboard.

- Pose a question or topic related to the training and invite participants to brainstorm ideas, share insights, or collaborate on solutions.
- Encourage participants to use virtual sticky notes, drawings, or annotations to contribute their thoughts.

Virtual team challenges - Assign virtual team challenges that require collaboration and problem-solving.

- For example, participants can work together to create a virtual team logo using graphic design tools like Canva or Adobe Spark.
- Encourage creativity and teamwork in completing the challenge within a specified timeframe.

Vitual coffee or lunch breaks - Schedule informal virtual coffee or lunch breaks where participants can join optional video calls to chat and get to know each other in a relaxed setting.

- Provide conversation starters or discussion topics to facilitate interactions and connections among participants.

MORE DETAILED EXPLAINATION OF THE ACTIVITIES

2 truths and a lie - Each participant shares three statements about themselves, two of which are true and one is a lie.

- Other participants guess which statement is the lie.
- This activity helps participants learn interesting facts about each other in a fun way.

Virtual show and tell - Participants choose an item from their surroundings and briefly explain why it's meaningful to them.

- They can share stories, memories, or interesting facts related to the item.
- This activity fosters personal connections and encourages participants to share more about themselves.

Emoji introduction - Participants introduce themselves using only emojis.

- They select emojis that represent their name, job, hobbies, interests, etc.
- Others guess the meaning behind the emojis and ask follow-up questions.

Photo sharing scavenge hunt - Participants share a photo from their phone or computer related to a specific theme (e.g., favorite vacation spot, pet, hobby).

- They briefly describe the photo and its significance.
- This activity encourages creativity and provides insights into participants' lives outside of work.

Would you rather - Facilitator poses a series of "Would You Rather" questions related to various scenarios or preferences.

- Participants respond with their choices and briefly explain their reasoning.
- This activity sparks conversation and reveals participants' personalities and preferences.

Virtual name bingo - Create a bingo card with various characteristics or experiences (e.g., "Has traveled abroad," "Speaks more than one language," "Plays a musical instrument").

- Participants mingle in the virtual room and find others who match the characteristics on their bingo card.
- They ask each other questions to fill out their bingo card.

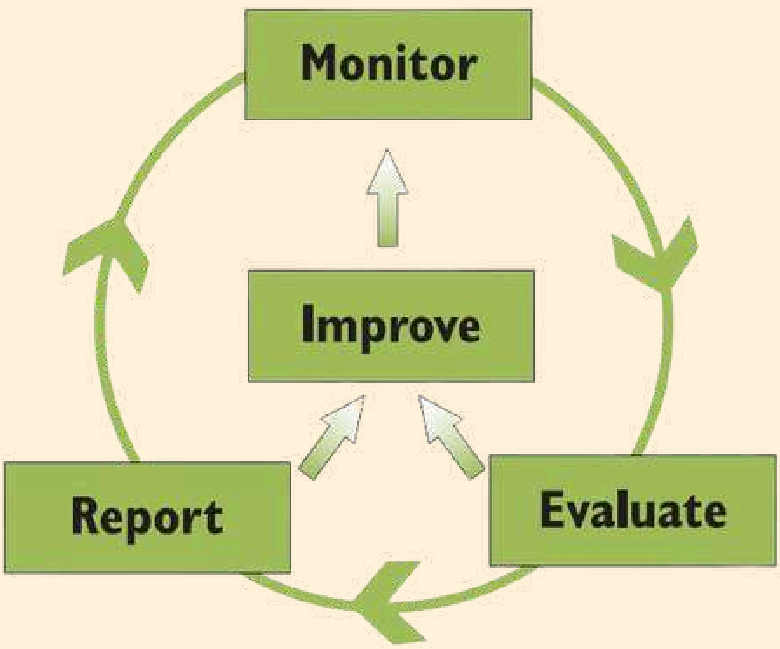
Speed networking rounds - Participants are paired up for short one-on-one video calls (e.g., 2-3 minutes each).

- They introduce themselves, share a quick overview of their background, and discuss a prompt provided by the facilitator.
- After each round, participants rotate to meet someone new.
- This activity facilitates networking and allows participants to connect on a more personal level.

Virtual collaborative playlist - Create a collaborative playlist on a streaming platform like Spotify or YouTube.

- Participants add songs to the playlist that represent their favorite genres, artists, or moods.
- They can listen to the playlist together during breaks or downtime, sparking conversations about music preferences.

These activities are designed to promote engagement, build connections, and create a welcoming atmosphere for participants in online training sessions. All activities mentiond above can be implemented in real face2face situations but here is adaption to online learning environment.



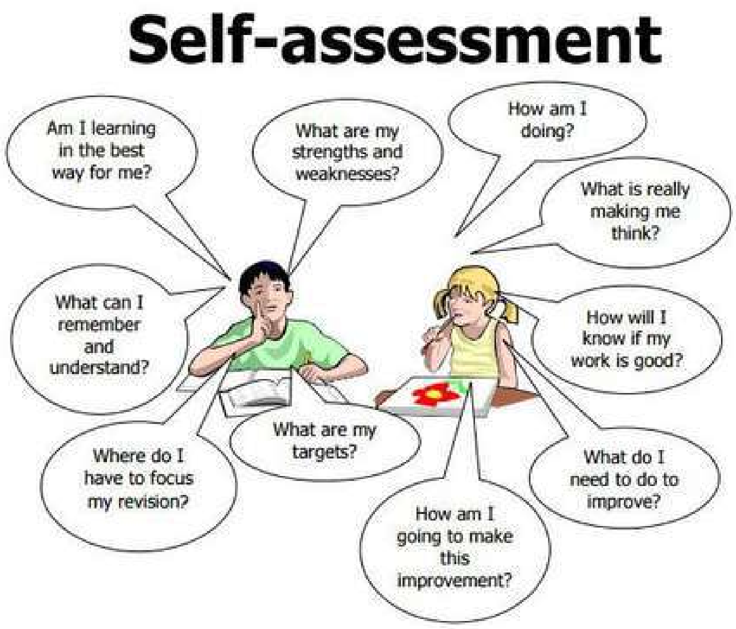
RECOMMENDED METHODS OF MONITORING THE QUALITY AND SUCCESS OF PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

In monitoring the quality and performance of the education program, the following activities are implemented:

- Conducting research and anonymous surveys among participants to evaluate various aspects, including the delivery of classes, adequacy of literature and learning resources, effectiveness of support strategies, implementation and enhancement of the learning and teaching process, participant workload, knowledge assessments, and communication with trainers.
- Undertaking research and surveys among trainers to gather feedback on similar aspects mentioned in the preceding paragraph.
- Analyzing the effectiveness, transparency, and objectivity of assessments, as well as the attainment of learning outcomes.
- Evaluating the material and personnel resources required for the execution of the learning and teaching process.
- The outcomes of these surveys furnish insights into the program's success and serve as a means to assess the quality of trainers' work.

Valuation Procedures

- Evaluation procedures are geared towards monitoring and assessing achievements in line with learning outcomes. This is accomplished through written, oral knowledge assessments and practical tests evaluating participants' proficiency in operating the different tasks in online environment, based on predetermined criteria for evaluating achievements.
- A self-assessment questionnaire for individuals who have completed a virtual assistant curriculum can help them reflect on their learning journey and identify areas for further growth.



Resource: https://images.sampletemplates.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Self-Assessment-Examples.jpg

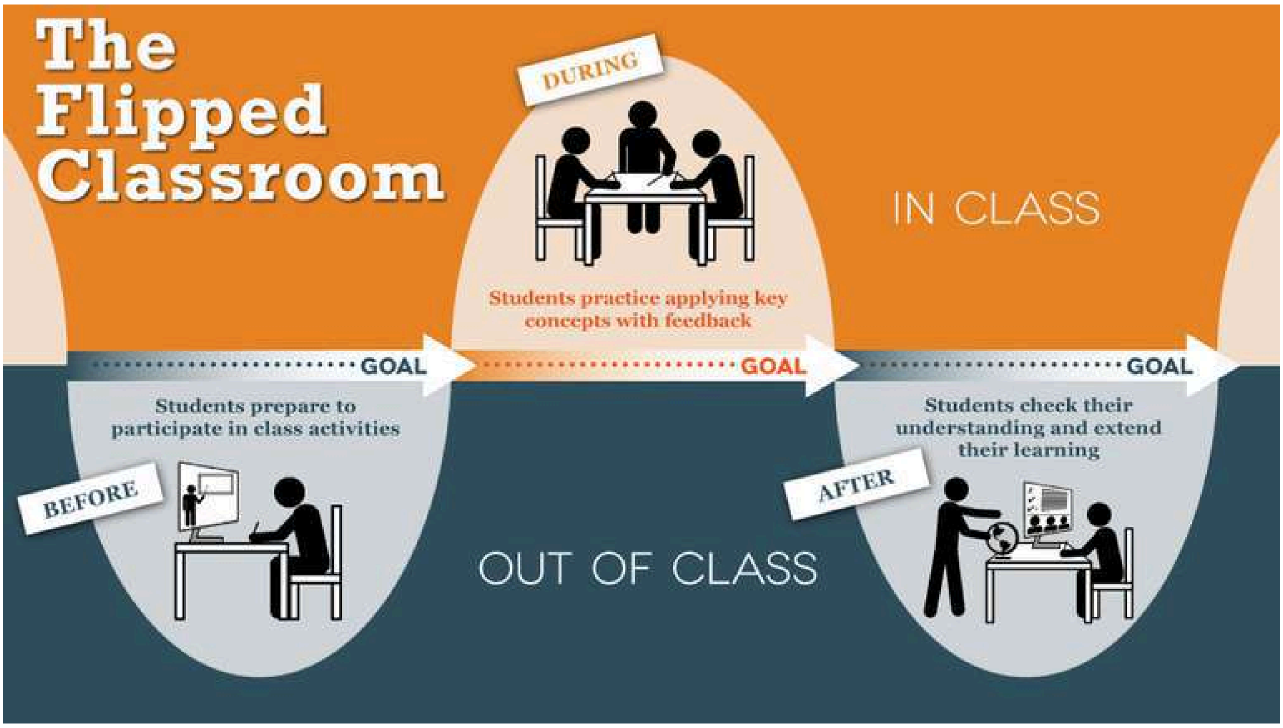
FLIPPED CLASSROOM – CAN BE INTRODUCED INTO CURRICULUM

Blended learning and flipped classrooms are two distinct approaches to teaching.

- The blended learning is more traditional, while the flipped class is more digital.

There are many advantages to flipping your classroom:

- Content is available outside traditional classroom time. Students have access to the videos to prepare for new content, to review, and not fall behind if they miss class.
- Students have the ability to rewind, pause, and rewatch. They can prepare their questions ahead of time.
- Frees up time for teachers to work one-on-one in the classroom with students.



Resource: https://ctl.utexas.edu/sites/default/files/flippedgraphic(web960px).png

A typical example of a flipped class is one in which the instructor pre-records the lectures, posts the recordings to Canvas for VET students to watch before class, and then assist the students as they work through assignments during class time.

Co-funded by
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