



VIRTUAL & AUGMENTED REALITY TOOLKIT TO ENGAGE ELDERLY BRAIN
WITH
INTER-GENERATIONAL UNDERSTANDING

ERASMUS+ PROJECT

Intellectual Output 3

An Empowering Guide to Exploiting AR/VR with Seniors

Chapter 8

**Social and emotional skills ready for a
technoworld:**

**Maturity and the ability to take
responsibility – problem solving –
creativity – risk taking.**

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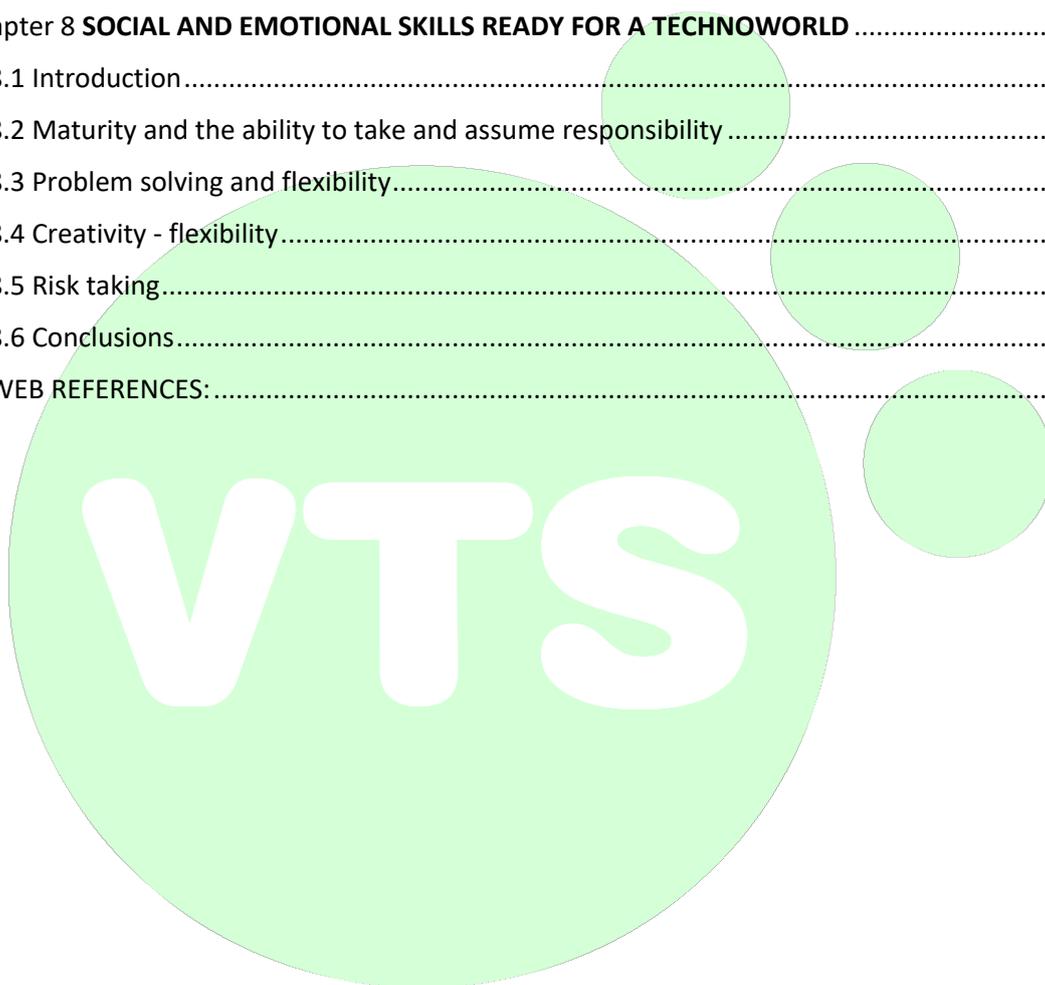
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Chapter 8 SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL SKILLS READY FOR A TECHNOWORLD

8.1 Introduction

In an increasingly fast-changing and diverse world, the role of social and emotional skills is becoming more important. A faster pace of living means people need to engage with new ways of thinking and working and new people. Ageing and more diverse populations and the dismantling of traditional social networks place additional emphasis on people's sense of trust, co-operation and compassion.

The increasing speed of technological change ask us for the ability to act independently and to adjust to changes on-the-go

People need to adjust to an environment that changes very fast. The development of adequate social and emotional skills is needed. The ability of citizens to adapt, be resourceful, respect and work well with others, and to take personal and collective responsibility is the key of a well-functioning society. Increasing ideological polarisation and social tensions are increasing the need for tolerance and respect, empathy and generosity, and the ability to co-operate in order to achieve and protect the common good.

In this chapter we are going to analyse some of the soft skills needed to face a continuously changing world. These are maturity, ability to take responsibility, problem solving, creativity, risk taking and flexibility.

8.2 Maturity and the ability to take and assume responsibility

Maturity when related to work has nothing to do with age or experience. It rather describes the ability we must respect other people's values and cultural backgrounds, take responsibility for actions and behave appropriately in the workplace. Whether employee or employer, it is important to meet responsibilities and treat everyone with respect. Politeness, loyalty, commitment, and integrity are all essential.

When it comes to teaching personal responsibility, the key is shifting someone's focus to the factors that are within their own control. Most often, when an employee struggles with personal responsibility, it is because they are unable to see beyond the factors that are outside their control.

It is essential to demonstrate maturity in the workplace and treat others the way you want to be treated. Maintain high ethical standards, acknowledge employees' hard work and respond appropriately to co-workers or customers when conflict arises. Dress professionally and look for excellence in everything you do .



There is no way for anyone to avoid outside complications entirely. The difference is that those who take personal responsibility can shift the focus from external blame to internal inquiry:

What things are within my control, right now?
Where will I focus my attention and energy?
What are my options?
What's the plan?
What are my next steps?

Those who fail to take responsibility for their work will be less productive and accordingly less successful overall.

To get a high level of responsibility, these skills should be developed :

Trustworthiness
Discipline
Motivation
Conscientiousness
Accountability
Resilience
Adaptability

Taking responsibility means taking ownership of not only your goals but those of others you work with and that is the way to success

8.3 Problem solving and flexibility

Problem-solving is a soft skill that applies to almost any position. While everyone faces some form of problem-solving in their work or environment, not everybody has developed effective problem-solving skills. Getting clarity on the various aspects of problem-solving can help you develop these skills

Problem-solving requires observational skills, lateral thinking, and critical analysis abilities. Using a combination of these skills can help you identify the issue and determine the underlying cause that's creating the problem.

"You can never solve a problem on the level on which it was created." — Albert Einstein

that means in whatever situation we are facing; we need to rise up to a new consciousness. A new way of thinking and to do so we need to improve our problem-solving skills

You can develop your problem-solving skills by:

Practicing brainstorming activities
Approaching daily circumstances with a "what if" mentality, regularly testing new approaches
Keeping a journal in which you take notes of all your ideas, even the ones that seem unrealistic
Working through logic games and puzzles
Read publications that deal with strategies



8.4 Creativity - flexibility

A broad distinction may be drawn between creativity and innovation (Bateson & Martin, 2013). In human behaviour, creativity refers to coming up with a new idea whereas innovation refers to changing the way things are done.

Although creativity and innovation are often treated as synonymous, the terms can be usefully distinguished.

Torrance identified three main components of creativity: **fluency, flexibility and originality** (Torrance, 1972).

Fluency refers to the number of unique ideas that are generated when a person is asked about uses for a particular object.

Flexibility refers to the capacity to switch between approaches; someone who generates ideas within one category will be perceived as less flexible than someone who generates ideas from multiple categories. Being flexible is all about preparation and accepting that things will change. While it's impossible to expect the unexpected, you can still anticipate new developments before they happen and have a plan of action ready to meet the occasion.

Originality refers to the novelty of an idea without relying on routine or habitual thought.

Creativity can be influenced by specific forms of education. Some training of creativity can be successful but other factors are needed and can help.

Exhaustion from too many demands, distractions that fragment thought, laziness, and lack of direction can all affect us to be creative.

So, if we follow some of Csikszentmihalyi advice we need to avoid time-wasting distractions i.e watching television. We need also to know our body and to learn which is the best time for us to be creative. Choosing the right location or space, the one that helps us to reflect can be a positive factor too.

Mood is crucial. Many authors have noted how a positive state of mind stimulates creativity (Lyubomirsky, King, & Diener, 2005). That positive state can be enhanced by humor. Humor and play have common features. They both involve social signals, are associated with a positive mood and are sensitive to prevailing conditions.

When referring to creativity we should think also about creative thinking and creative problem-solving.

Creative thinking is pretty simple to define, but a bit harder to implement. A creative thinker comes up with ideas that are entirely unique but also understands the success in failure.

Creative thinkers know that one's talents are best used to make results that might come from unordinary circumstances or out-of-the-box methods.

Creative people could look at all sides of the issues, and many times can come up with solutions that might be completely new and interesting.



Groups are often more creative than individuals because more ideas arise in groups and those ideas are combined. The most creative groups consist of people with different backgrounds and a diversity of knowledge, experience and skills. They give each other space, every idea is valuable, there is no competition and there is a great willingness to play together. Diversity in a team increases the chance of refreshing and useful ideas

Creative people are not necessarily innovative because often they do not come up with a practical translation of their ideas. Innovative people usually rely on the ideas of creative people and translate them into practical applications.

Innovation starts with curiosity about how something works. Curious people are interested in new concepts and experiences and try to avoid boredom.

Innovation is about realising a new idea with a practical value that is embraced by others. Converting new ideas into successful innovation often requires tremendous effort. Innovative people are analytical, persistent and resilient. They take a positive attitude and are willing to play collaboratively

8.5 Risk taking

Great leaders recognize that in order to be innovative, they will need to be able to take risks. In fact, risk-taking is such a critical skill, research shows that leaders who take risks are more likely to be positively perceived by others. Although risk-taking is an individual action, it can enhance the broader functioning of the team and organization.

To assess the ability to take risks we should ask ourselves these questions:

- Do the risks I take serve a greater purpose?
- Do I anticipate and prepare for some of the risks I take to fail?
- Am I aware of my own strengths and limitations?
- Are the risks I typically take small or large in size?
- Do I take risks that benefit others?
- Do I rely on the expertise of others to inform which risks I take?

We should also define clear goals and consider whether the risk is we take related with our team or the mission or vision of the organization we work with. Smart risks to broader goals and vision.

Do not fear failure and think about it. Create a proactive, realistic plan.

And finally understand your own strengths and limitations: If you are faced with a risk in an area that you do not know much about, then seek out the advice of others with complementary strengths.



8.6 Conclusions

In this fast technological world, the 'social emotional learning' is essential. By improving social-emotional skills, we enable people to reach their personal and professional goals. The development of self-awareness and empathy toward others help individuals navigate through life and social interactions more easily, which in turn improves the quality of life and even health and well-being in the long run but these are typically the hardest skills to master.

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