

Employability Skills

Framework

for ELT

Activity Cards

for Adult Learners



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HOW TO USE

We want you to feel comfortable teaching employability skills in your classroom, whether that's in person or via remote learning. To help with this, each card in this pack tackles a component from one of the Competencies in the Cambridge Employability Skills Framework for ELT. We've created a full suite of activities for you to try with your learners, which you can glance at before a lesson or keep nearby for those all-important planning days. So, if you're stuck for an ice-breaker or have a last-minute lesson to plan, we hope you'll find plenty of inspiration right here, and feel safe in the knowledge that your learners are developing the key skills that employers look for, preparing them for their future careers.

Each card contains details of a face-to-face activity, as well as handy tips on adapting the task for online learning.

To find out more about the Cambridge Employability Skills Framework for ELT, go to: <https://www.cambridge.org/cambridgeenglish/research-insights?nestedTab=developing-skills-through-english#helping-learners-achieve>

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	Completing collaborative tasks and projects
	Dealing with conflict
COMMUNICATION	Understanding others better
	Presenting views clearly and effectively
	Adapting the way you communicate for different audiences and purposes
INNOVATION AND PROBLEM SOLVING	Developing a creative mindset
	Generating ideas
	Implementing ideas and solving problems
CRITICAL THINKING AND DECISION MAKING	Understanding and analysing information and arguments
	Evaluating ideas and arguments
	Making decisions

COMPETENCY	CORE AREA
LEADERSHIP AND GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP	Contributing to the success of an organisation
	Demonstrating leadership
	Contributing to an organisation's positive role in global issues
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT	Being organised
	Managing your professional development
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	Acting with resilience
	Demonstrating empathy and positive relationship skills
DIGITAL LITERACY	Using tools and creating digital content
	Sharing and interacting online
	Safety and wellbeing online

CORE AREA	ACTIVITY
Working well together in a group	TEAM CHARTER
	ACKNOWLEDGING CONTRIBUTIONS
	PEER FEEDBACK
Completing collaborative tasks and projects	SMART GOALS
	DELEGATION DILEMMAS
	STRENGTHS SPIES
	OVERCOMING OBSTACLES
Dealing with conflict	DEALING WITH DIFFICULT PEOPLE
	CONFLICT CONFESSIONS



TEAM CHARTER

When learners take part in a group project, ask them to think about teams they have worked in before, and discuss what worked well and what didn't (e.g. everyone's ideas were heard before decisions were made or problems weren't raised with others until it was too late). Ask them to make a list of these experiences.

Next, ask them to write a team charter – a set of 3-5 rules for how the team will work together on their current project. The team charter should be based on what they've learned about effective teamwork from their past experiences. Have them write 'Team Charter' at the top of a piece of paper, followed by 'In our team, we will ...' .

Encourage learners to refer back to their team charter regularly throughout the project and evaluate at the end how well they followed the guidelines they set for themselves.

Team Charter
In our team, we ...

Teaching online?

Encourage learners to create the team charter in an online document they can share with all members of the team.



ACKNOWLEDGING CONTRIBUTIONS

When learners are discussing a topic or making a group decision, highlight the importance of acknowledging each person's contribution, whether or not you agree with what they are saying. Briefly discuss why this might be important (e.g. it makes people feel valued, it encourages people to give their opinions even if they differ from the majority).

Ask learners to come up with some phrases they could use in the discussion to acknowledge others' contributions and encourage them to use these phrases throughout the discussion.

At the end of the discussion, ask learners to comment on the experience of acknowledging others' ideas and having their ideas acknowledged.

Teaching online?

In online meetings, some people may contribute their ideas via the chat box.

Ask learners to try this and experiment with different ways of acknowledging others' contributions (e.g. with emojis, comments etc.).



PEER FEEDBACK

Peer feedback is a great opportunity to encourage learners to support each other in their work. Begin by asking learners to discuss what types of feedback have helped them improve their work in the past (e.g. general vs specific feedback, balance of positive and negative points).

Create a list of criteria for constructive feedback as a class, based on this discussion.

During and after tasks, encourage learners to use these criteria when giving feedback on each others' work. Learners can also give feedback to the feedback-giver on how constructive their comments were.

Teaching online?

Ask learners to each create a collaborative document where their peers can provide feedback on their work. Learners can then analyse the features of the feedback and evaluate how effective they are.



SMART GOALS

In group projects, learners often have to decide on what needs to be done. Explain that having specific goals about what they need to do has been shown in research to lead to better results than not having goals and just deciding to each 'do your best'.

Many learners are familiar with the SMART framework for goal-setting. Encourage them to use this approach when deciding on their group's goals and tasks. SMART goals are:

Specific
Measurable
Achievable
Relevant; and
Time-Bound

For example, instead of just agreeing to 'do research' about companies who produce similar products to theirs, the group might set a SMART goal like 'Find the top five companies that produce smartphones, and write down their USPs (Unique Selling Points) by next class.'



Teaching online?

Encourage learners to keep track of their SMART goals in an online project management or task management tool.



DELEGATION DILEMMAS

Delegation is an important skill for managing workload in a team, but many people find it challenging. One way to explore the issues around delegation is to have learners discuss some 'delegation dilemmas'.

Put learners into small groups and provide them with a situation such as: 'You have a very tight deadline for an important report and you need help from your team to complete it. You can choose to delegate the task to Shannon, who already has a lot of work, or to Ashley, who struggles with time management and often misses deadlines. They are both equally capable of completing the task well. Which person do you delegate to and why?'

Ask each group to say who they would choose and discuss the reasons why.

Teaching online?

Use an online whiteboard for learners to share and read each others' arguments for and against each option in the dilemma.



STRENGTHS SPIES

We often tend to notice others' (and our own) weaknesses more than their strengths. To encourage learners to focus more on strengths, ask them to become 'Strengths Spies'.

Randomly assign each person in the class another learner to 'observe' over the next two or three classes. During this time, they should pay particular attention to that person's strengths (e.g. humour, thoughtfulness, critical thinking). They should write down each of the strengths they notice and include an example of when they showed the strength in class. Learners should not tell anyone who they are 'spying on'.

After the observation period, have the learners share the strengths and examples they wrote down with the person they were observing. The learner

who was being observed can then comment on anything they find interesting or surprising.

The next time learners work on a project, encourage them to share each other's strengths and use them appropriately to benefit the group's work.

Teaching online?

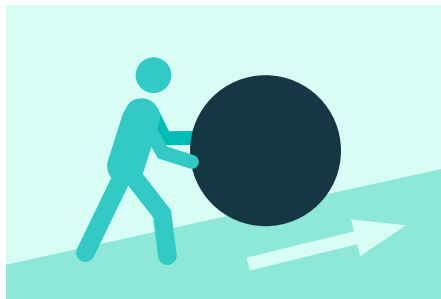
You could ask learners to pick their top strength and write it in the chat box. Then group people into breakout groups by similar strengths and ask them to discuss how they show these strengths in class.



OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

Using 'if-then' plans is a powerful strategy for overcoming obstacles and achieving goals.

When setting project goals, encourage groups to think about potential challenges and develop 'if-then' plans to overcome them. For example, in the research phase learners might plan 'If we can't find data on Company X, then we'll look for equivalent data from Company Y.' Have learners write down their 'if-then' plans and refer back to them as they progress through the project.



Teaching online?

You could ask each learner to enter their goals and 'if-then' plans into a collaborative document. Learners could identify others with similar goals and keep in touch with them about how they're progressing with their goals.



DEALING WITH DIFFICULT PEOPLE

Working in groups and teams can sometimes be challenging, especially when dealing with 'difficult people'. Explain to learners that learning to deal with these types of challenges is an important skill. Ask them to discuss the following questions:

- What behaviours would make you describe someone as a 'difficult person' to work with?
- What strengths might this person have?
- How might you work with this person to make the most of their strengths and reduce the impact of their 'difficult' behaviour?
- Do you think you could ever be described as a 'difficult person' to work with? Why?

This last question is good for raising self-awareness – we can all be difficult to work with at times!



Teaching online?

You could have learners initially discuss the questions in breakout groups. Then they describe the type of person they were talking about to the whole class, but only in terms of their strengths. The rest of the class guesses what would make them difficult to work with.



CONFLICT CONFESSIONS

Give an example of a time when you experienced some kind of disagreement or conflict with another person. As you describe the situation, include answers to the questions below, writing each question on the board as you answer it.

- What was the cause of the conflict?
- What escalated the situation?
- How was the issue resolved?
- What did I do well?
- What did I learn or what could I have done differently?

Next, ask learners to recall a time when they experienced some kind of disagreement or conflict with another person. Ask them to use the questions to reflect on the situation. Finally, have learners share their reflections and what they learned in small groups.

Teaching online?

Why not try setting up an online form (e.g. Microsoft Forms or Google Forms) with these questions and asking learners to write their answers to each question. You could then share the results with them and have learners analyse them to find any common themes.



CORE AREA	ACTIVITY
Understanding others better	QUESTIONS, QUESTIONS!
	JARGON BUSTER
Presenting views clearly and effectively	ELEVATOR PITCH
	MIMIC & MASTER
	AI WRITING COACH
Adapting the way you communicate for different audiences and purposes	TAILORING YOUR PRESENTATION STYLE
	I HAVE SOME NEWS ...
	CROSS-CULTURAL COMPARISONS



QUESTIONS, QUESTIONS!

Part of active listening is asking the speaker appropriate questions. In speaking tasks, write the question types below on the board and challenge learners to ask at least one of each type:

- Clarifying questions (to make sure you understand) e.g. *'Can you explain what you meant by ... ?'*
- Detail questions (to gain more detail or specific information) e.g. *'What did he say to that?'*
- Impact questions (to find out what impact or consequences something had or might have) e.g. *'How will that affect ... ?'*



Teaching online?

Create a shared document or an online whiteboard with three columns (one for each type of question). At the end of the activity, have learners add the questions they asked to the relevant column and choose one question someone else added that they would like to use next time.



JARGON BUSTER

A common issue when starting a new position or working in a new field is being unfamiliar with the jargon (i.e. special words that are used only in particular industries or fields that others would not understand). This can lead to communication barriers or breakdowns.

Put learners into pairs and ask them to each imagine that their partner is joining their organisation tomorrow and that they should help them avoid these communication issues by producing a jargon buster for them (i.e. a document, similar to a glossary, that helps someone new understand the most important jargons they will encounter). Ask them to include at least five jargon words or phrases. The jargon words themselves can be in English or in the learners' L1, but the explanations should be in English.

Finally, ask learners to use a piece of jargon in a sentence and for their partner to use the jargon buster to guess what the full meaning of the sentence is. If all learners are from the same company or industry and all know the same jargons, you (as the teacher) could act as the new employee.

Teaching online?

Learners could design a multimedia jargon buster and upload it into an online portfolio. Other learners could then comment on each other's jargon busters by trying to use one of the pieces of jargon in a sentence.



ELEVATOR PITCH

Introduce the concept of an elevator pitch: a short, persuasive speech that aims to get people interested in your work. Elevator pitches are usually very well structured to ensure the message is clear and concise, and last between 30 seconds and 2 minutes.

Ask learners to make an elevator pitch about their organisation to explain it to someone who has never heard of it. They should structure the pitch along these lines:

- 1) **Problem** – highlights the problem your organisation works to solve
- 2) **Solution** – says what your organisation does to solve this problem
- 3) **Uniqueness** – explains what makes your organisation different from other similar organisations

Learners can share their elevator pitches with a partner and get feedback on how easy it was to understand what their organisation does.



Teaching online?

Learners could video themselves giving their elevator pitch and upload the videos onto an online portfolio. Learners could then comment on each other's videos, giving feedback on how easy it was to understand what each organisation does.

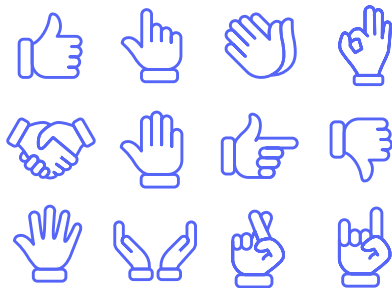


MIMIC & MASTER

One of the most effective ways of appearing confident when giving a presentation is using appropriate gestures to support what you're saying. The next time your learners are watching a video of somebody give a presentation, ask them to make notes on the following:

- When they use gestures
- What features the gestures have (e.g. big vs small / quick vs slow)
- The effect these gestures have

Next, ask learners to choose a short section of the video and mimic the gestures as closely as possible. Have them reflect on how the gestures felt, and whether they would like to use any of the gestures in their own presentations.



Teaching online?

Ask learners to watch a video of somebody giving an online presentation to look at how gestures can be used in this context. Prompt learners to think about how they can set their camera up to best capture the gestures they are making.



AI WRITING COACH

After learners have written a first draft of a piece of writing, have them ask an AI chatbot to edit it for clarity and persuasiveness and to ask it to give reasons for the changes it made.

Then ask learners to redraft their writing keeping in mind the feedback from the chatbot (and not just copying what the AI has suggested) along with a short reflection about the key points that helped make the new paragraph clearer and more persuasive.

If they are submitting the writing to you, you might ask them to submit the original text, the chatbot response and their final draft as well as their reflection.

Teaching online?

The class could gather all their feedback from the chatbots on a collaborative online whiteboard and group the feedback into themes. They (and you as the teacher) can then see what elements the class found most challenging and where they might need further practice.



TAILORING YOUR PRESENTATION STYLE

When learners are preparing for a presentation, encourage them to think carefully about which communication style would be most suitable. For example, if they are pitching an idea, a persuasive style might be most effective. But if they're updating their team on a new policy, an informative style would likely work better.

Once learners have chosen an appropriate communication style, ask them to brainstorm the key features of that style. What techniques or approaches would be most effective in conveying their message? They may need to do some additional research to carry out these tasks in enough depth.

After learners have prepared their presentations, have them deliver them to a small group or to the class. Ask the audience to provide feedback on the features of the communication style they were trying to include as well as on the overall effectiveness of the presentation in meeting its aims.

Teaching online?

Encourage learners to research what types of online presentation set-up best suit different types of presentation, e.g. whether the speaker should be visible, how much text should be on slides. They can then use this research to create their own online presentations.



I HAVE SOME NEWS ...

Ask learners to imagine that they are going to tell one of their team members a piece of news. Ask them to think of example scenarios for giving news that is positive, news that is neutral and news that is negative (perhaps based on their own experiences).

Next, ask learners to think about how their language might change according to whether the piece of news is positive, negative or neutral. Have them discuss their ideas in small groups and decide what language they would use to:

- start the conversation
- present the piece of news
- end the conversation

Finally, have groups role-play one of the scenarios in front of the class and invite the class to comment on the language used and what effect this had.

Teaching online?

Learners can discuss and practise their scenarios in breakout groups before coming together as a class to perform their role-plays and discuss the use of language.



CROSS-CULTURAL COMPARISONS

Using a listening text or video, ask learners to consider how the text might be different if it had been written for people from a culture they know well (for example their national culture). It may be helpful to give learners a copy of the transcript for this.

Ask learners to gather the differences together in the form of a tips sheet for someone who is unfamiliar with the culture they have chosen. E.g. '*Don't talk about ...*'; '*It is important to ...*'.

Ask learners to share and discuss their tips sheets with each other. Encourage them to explore 'grey areas' (i.e. when there is no clear answer or where it depends a lot on the situation). Also, prompt them to identify aspects of the culture that are changing (e.g. 'We used to talk about ...but now we don't.').

Teaching online?

Ask learners to present their tips sheet by sharing their screen (one at a time).

Invite other learners to comment in the chat or unmute their microphones to give their own perspectives on the tips presented.



CORE AREA	ACTIVITY
Developing a creative mindset	SHARE AND REPAIR
	STAKEHOLDER VIEWS
	ADVICE PLEASE!
Generating ideas	HOW TO BRAINSTORM
	WHAT IF ... ?
	RANDOM STIMULI
Implementing ideas and solving problems	PROTOTYPE & TEST
	PITCH PERFECT



SHARE AND REPAIR

When working on group tasks or projects, set a time approximately a quarter of the way through the project for learners to contribute to other groups' ideas and progress.

Begin by assigning new groups (each containing at least one person from each original group). In their new groups, ask learners to take it in turns summarising their original group's progress so far and describing any incomplete tasks or unresolved issues. Then, invite other learners in the new groups to share ideas and make suggestions on how the original group might progress more effectively.

Finally, have learners return to their original group, taking with them the new ideas and suggestions from their other classmates.

Teaching online?

Breakout groups could work well for assigning new groups. Depending on the software you use, you may be able to randomly assign learners to new groups.

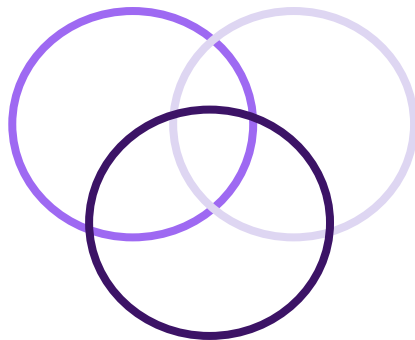


STAKEHOLDER VIEWS

When problem solving, it is important to consider different stakeholders' views. Explain that a stakeholder is a person, group or organisation who is involved in, has an interest in and/or is affected by an issue.

Ask learners to identify three key stakeholders in the problem they are discussing, and to think about what their views of the issue or problem might be. Allow time for learners to research what views these stakeholders would have, e.g. through an online search or through a role-play with an AI chatbot. Then, ask them to create a Venn diagram to illustrate these views, highlighting where they overlap.

Finally ask learners to reflect on what implications these views might have for any potential solutions.



Teaching online?

Learners could use an online mind mapping tool to collect and organise their notes. They could also include links to or extracts of the stakeholder research they have done to refer back to later.



ADVICE PLEASE!

Ask learners to think of a current challenge they are facing in their work and to write a description of it on a sticky note.

Next, have learners place their sticky notes on a wall or the board, and read each others' notes. Explain that if learners have faced a similar issue to one they read, they should use a separate sticky note to write a solution they tried and what the outcome was, and stick this underneath the original sticky note.

Finally, have learners read their classmates' descriptions and solutions and choose one solution to apply to their own challenge.



Teaching online?

Use an online whiteboard with virtual sticky notes to carry out the activity.



HOW TO BRAINSTORM

Brainstorming is one of the most popular ways to generate lots of ideas, but we don't always brainstorm in the most effective ways. In small groups, ask learners to discuss which of the two options leads to better brainstorming in each case:

- A:** brainstorming with others vs alone
- B:** brainstorming face-to-face vs online
- C:** sharing ideas verbally vs writing them down on sticky notes

Have learners vote on each of the two options in A, B and C, and nominate a few learners to share their reasons with the class.

Finally, explain that according to research, effective brainstorming often involves:

- alternating between brainstorming with others and brainstorming alone
- using online platforms with sticky notes so that everyone can contribute simultaneously, allowing more ideas to be shared by a larger number of people
- avoiding only using verbal forms of brainstorming as only one person can speak at a time and some participants will feel more confident contributing than others

Teaching online?

Try using an online poll for learners to vote on the two options for A, B, and C.



WHAT IF ... ?

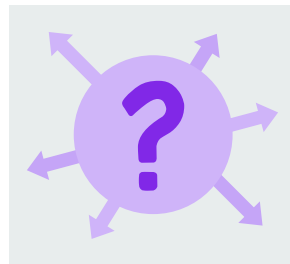
To support learners in their creative thinking, ask them to choose one of the following scenarios or to think of their own:

- What if we could only use the internet for two hours a day?
- What if we weren't allowed to use email to communicate internally with our colleagues?
- What if all meetings had to be 15 minutes long?

In pairs or small groups, have learners discuss what challenges this situation would cause and how they could overcome these challenges. Also ask them to explore the potential opportunities the situation would present to improve their current ways of working.

Teaching online?

Invite learners to make a multimedia ideas board (e.g., using an online whiteboard) to illustrate their ideas for the scenario they are discussing.

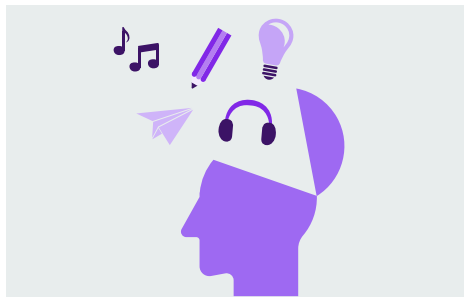


RANDOM STIMULI

When learners work on problem-solving tasks, ask them to come up with an initial set of ideas to solve the problem – as many as they can.

Next, provide them with some random words and ask them to use these to inspire further ideas. Not every word will work but encourage learners to push themselves to be creative and come up with more ideas, however strange or unrealistic. Encourage them not to discard the strange or unrealistic ideas as these often spark other ideas that are more realistic.

To come up with the random words, you could try reading out words from the dictionary, naming things in the environment around you, or using vocabulary that learners have learnt recently.



Teaching online?

Encourage learners to record their initial ideas in an online whiteboard with one colour of sticky note and to add their new ideas on differently-coloured sticky notes. This will make it clearer how many new ideas the random words inspired.



PROTOTYPE & TEST

A good way of finding out whether an idea will work is to test it early. This can be done through creating a prototype (a simple version of an idea, product or service that helps to see whether it will work or not).

When learners have come up with an idea in a problem-solving task, ask them to use a simple piece of paper and a pen/pencil to draw how it will work. For example, a process or service could be drawn in the form of a flow chart or storyboard or a product could be drawn as a sketch of that item and its features.

Next, learners should pass their prototype to another group to test. The other group should imagine they are using a real version of the solution and give feedback on what works well and what could be improved. Learners can then use this feedback to refine their solution.



Teaching online?

Online whiteboards often have templates that can help with these types of prototypes. Encourage learners to experiment with these templates to see which ones best work for their needs.



PITCH PERFECT

When learners have come up with a solution to a work-related problem, ask them to imagine they have to pitch (sell) the idea to their manager to get their agreement to implement it.

Choose some learners to act as managers and some as pitchers, matching each pitcher with a manager.

Give learners three minutes to make their pitch. Then give the managers three minutes to ask questions about it. Encourage the managers to be challenging and not just to agree.

Finally, allow 2 minutes for the manager and pitcher to discuss how the pitch could be improved.

If there is time, repeat this two or three times with new combinations of pitchers and managers.

End with a group discussion about what kind of feedback was given, and how it helped to improve the pitch.

Teaching online?

Put learners in breakout rooms consisting of one manager and one pitcher and encourage them to use a timer to make sure they spend the right amount of time on each stage.



CORE AREA	ACTIVITY
Understanding and analysing information and arguments	CAREER GRAPHS
	IDENTIFYING ASSUMPTIONS
Evaluating ideas and arguments	EVALUATION FRAMEWORK
	BEYOND THE OBVIOUS CHOICE
Making decisions	FIVE WHYS
	THREE QUESTIONS
	DEVIL'S ADVOCATE
	WHY WE DIDN'T ...
	WHAT WENT WELL?



CAREER GRAPHS

Creating visuals to represent information or data can be an effective way of noticing patterns and relationships.

Ask learners to draw a horizontal line on a piece of paper to represent time, and to add notes along it about important points in their career so far, such as jobs, promotions, changes to team etc. Then ask them to draw a vertical line on the left to represent a scale of happiness, as in the diagram below, and to draw a continuous line on their graph to show how satisfied they were with their work life at different times in their career.

Invite learners to notice any patterns of when they felt particularly happy or unhappy at work.

Finally, invite learners to share their graphs in groups to see whether there are any patterns common to more than one person.



Teaching online?

As sketching the graph is easier by hand, ask learners to draw their graph on paper and then either hold up the paper to the camera when they discuss it, or take a picture of it to share in a collaborative document.



IDENTIFYING ASSUMPTIONS

When learners encounter a written text in course materials, ask them to do some research to find another article on the same topic written from a different perspective. For example, if the initial text is about the advantages of hybrid working, learners could find an article that is more critical of this practice.

Ask learners to analyse the underlying assumptions made by the authors of the two texts. For example, in the first article, the author might be assuming that everyone has a suitable working environment for remote work. In the second, they might be assuming that no employees have a disability or carer responsibilities that hybrid working would help them manage more easily.

Teaching online?

Invite learners to share the articles they find online in a digital portfolio along with notes on any assumptions they notice, for their classmates to read.



EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

When learners need to choose between a number of options, ask them to create an evaluation framework to help them select the best one.

Explain that the first step is to decide on the evaluation criteria and to put these in a table like the one below.

Next, learners should rate each choice on a scale of 1-5 (1 = very poor, 5 = excellent).

Finally, they should add up the scores across the criteria for each option to see which option has the highest overall score. Ask learners if they're happy with their choice or whether they would change the criteria next time.

Options	Criteria

Teaching online?

Encourage learners to do this activity in a spreadsheet so that they can calculate the scores automatically for each option.



BEYOND THE OBVIOUS CHOICE

When learners are evaluating a number of options and are close to making a decision, one of the options may be more popular than the others and it is often this option that is selected. However, the most popular choice is not necessarily always the best option. To ensure all options are evaluated sufficiently, ask learners to consider the advantages of all of the alternative options before coming to a conclusion about which to select.



Teaching online?

Have learners use an online whiteboard with virtual sticky notes for each advantage they identify for the alternative options.



FIVE WHYS

When identifying a problem, we don't always think deeply enough about what may be causing it and this limits our understanding of the issue. The 'five whys' technique helps people get to the heart of a problem.

First, ask learners to state the problem. Then they should ask themselves 'why is this the case?'. Their answer will become a new statement.

Tell them to ask the same 'why' question of each statement until they have asked it a total of five times. The answer to the last 'why' question should give learners a deeper insight into the nature of the problem, and enable them to come up with some more effective solutions.

E.g.

I don't have time to look for a new job.

Why? I'm too busy at work.

Why? I can't say no when I'm given new work even if I'm already busy.

Why? ...

Teaching online?

Try inviting learners to make audio or video recordings of their answers and share these in a digital portfolio for their classmates to listen to or watch.



THREE QUESTIONS

When learners have carried out some initial research that will inform a decision, ask them to come together as a group and answer the following questions about the information they have already gathered:

- What do we already know?
- What else do we need to find out?
- How will we find out?

Learners should then find out the information they have identified is still missing.

Teaching online?

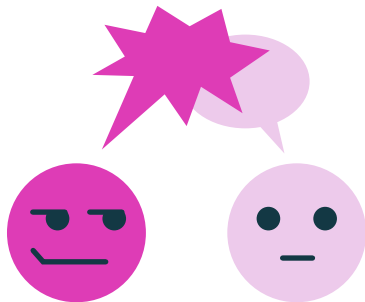
Ask learners to choose an online tool to share their research with the rest of the group.



DEVIL'S ADVOCATE

As learners are discussing options in order to come to a decision, assign one person in the group the role of 'Devil's Advocate'. This person will argue against every option presented, even if they personally agree with it.

After all the options have been considered, ask learners to make a group decision on the best choice. Have them reflect on and discuss how having a Devil's Advocate influenced their decision making and whether it helped them make a more thoughtful decision.



Teaching online?

Use breakout rooms for different groups to have their discussions. Ask them to record their arguments and the Devil's Advocate counter-arguments in a collaborative document.



WHY WE DIDN'T ...

Sometimes it can be more convincing to justify decisions by saying why you didn't decide on other options first. This shows that you have considered a range of options and thought deeply about each one before reaching a decision. When learners are presenting their decisions in a project or in a problem-solving task, ask them to use some of the following sentence starters:

- We didn't ... because ...
- We could have done X but we chose to do Y because ...
- The reason we chose to ... is because ...



Teaching online?

Learners could present their justifications in a collaborative presentation slide format and share their screen when presenting their justifications.



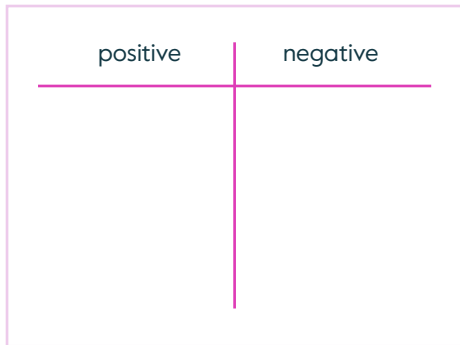
WHAT WENT WELL?

Ask learners to think of a change that was implemented in their organisation, e.g. a change to a policy or a system.

In order to come up with a balanced evaluation of this change, give learners three minutes to come with as many things as they can that are positive about the change.

Then give them a further three minutes to think about as many things as they can that are negative about the change.

They can write these down in a simple T-chart like the one below. Finally, ask learners to look at both sides of the chart and decide to what extent the change was positive overall, and what changes could be made to make it more positive.



Teaching online?

If using an online whiteboard, learners could use a similar chart and write each point on a sticky note within it.



CORE AREA	ACTIVITY
Contributing to the success of an organisation	STAR DESCRIPTIONS
	OUR NORTH STAR
	VALUES CHALLENGE
Demonstrating leadership	HOW WE COULD DO BETTER
	THE BEST LEADERS
	WHAT'S IMPORTANT
	CRITICAL FRIENDS
Contributing to an organisation's positive role in global issues	WHAT CAN WE DO?
	TAKING INSPIRATION
	CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES
	STAKEHOLDER IMPACT ANALYSIS



STAR DESCRIPTIONS

Ask learners to bring their current job descriptions to the lesson.

In pairs, ask learners to identify one or two of the main responsibilities of their job from the job description and to describe how they fulfil them.

Next, ask learners to recall one or two specific examples of when they fulfilled these responsibilities, using the

STAR technique (a technique often used in job interviews and performance reviews):

Situation	describe the situation or context
Task	explain the challenge you faced or what task you were responsible for
Action	explain what you did
Result	describe what the outcome was, backed up by evidence if possible

Teaching online?

Learners can do the exercise in breakout rooms. The learner who is listening can use an online collaborative document to make notes on one of the STAR examples their partner gives. At the end, they can check whether their notes are accurate by asking their partner to review them.



OUR NORTH STAR

When learners begin group tasks or projects, ask them to identify their 'North Star' – a clear vision of what the group is trying to achieve that will guide them in their actions and decisions.

First ask them to discuss and choose two or three core values they want to uphold (e.g. innovation).

Then ask them to imagine a vision for the project (e.g. to make their organisation the best place to work in the industry).

Finally, write on the board: 'We aim to ... by ...' and ask groups to write a North Star statement. E.g., *'We aim to transform our organisation into the best place to work in our industry by coming up with innovative solutions to help working parents achieve a better work-life balance.'*

Teaching online?

Ask learners to record a short video of them presenting their North Star statement and to upload it to an online portfolio.



VALUES CHALLENGE

Ask learners to identify their organisation's values. These are usually found on the organisation's intranet or internet site. Then ask learners to choose one thing they will do as part of their work in the next week to act in line with one or more of these values. Learners should report back in the next class and discuss how easy or difficult it was for them to act in line with the values in their current work or team.



Teaching online?

At the start of the next class, you could hold a quick poll to see how many people managed to do the action they set out to do.



HOW WE COULD DO BETTER

Ask learners to discuss in groups some of the current challenges they face in their team (e.g. high workload). Ask them to choose one of these challenges and think about how they could take the initiative to improve the situation. If appropriate, ask learners to try out their proposed solution and report back to the class what happened and what the outcome was.



Teaching online?

You could encourage learners to focus on an issue related to remote or hybrid working and ask them to consider whether any of the challenges and solutions they come up with are also relevant to the online classroom.



THE BEST LEADERS

Ask learners to write a short paragraph about the best leader they have worked for. They should describe what knowledge, skills and attitudes this person demonstrated and give at least one example of something specific they did which demonstrated that they were a great leader.

Next, have learners swap their paragraphs with a partner. Ask them to identify the good qualities of the leader in their partner's paragraph, and to write these down on the same piece of paper.

Next, put learners into groups of four or five and have them share the qualities of a good leader they have identified. Ask them to notice any similarities and differences.

Finally, bring the class together to collate all the identified qualities of a good leader and observe which ones were most commonly identified.

Teaching online?

Learners could write their paragraphs in a collaborative document to share with other class members.



WHAT'S IMPORTANT

Ask learners to make a list of all the projects or tasks they are currently working on.

Then ask them to take a look at their personal or team goals, vision or job description (depending on which they have available) and use these to prioritise which of their projects and tasks are most important.

Finally, have a group discussion about how learners can make sure that they prioritise the most important projects and tasks (e.g. by blocking out time for them in their calendar). Capture these prioritisation strategies on the board and encourage learners to try any new ones out.

Teaching online?

It can be easier to reorder items in a list on an online whiteboard. Ask learners to write each task or project on a different sticky note and then to order these in line with their goals/vision/job description.



CRITICAL FRIENDS

When learners are preparing to deliver a persuasive presentation or piece of writing, ask them to think of someone they know – or to imagine a person – who often challenges or questions ideas and arguments.

Ask them to imagine that this ‘critical friend’ is hearing or reading the arguments they’re planning on using, and to think of what challenges or questions they might pose.

Learners should then take these challenges and questions into account in developing a more persuasive argument. For example, they could address the challenges explicitly in their presentation, saying ‘*You may think that ... but ...*’ or include the answers to the questions the critical friend might ask.

Teaching online?

Learners could prompt an AI chatbot to be a critical friend for their arguments and ideas. They should ensure that they give the chatbot enough context about the role they should play.



WHAT CAN WE DO?

Ask learners to identify (through research if necessary) what initiatives are in place in their organisation to address global issues (e.g. reducing the organisation's carbon footprint).

Then ask them to think of a project they're working on and how they could change one thing they're currently doing or planning to do to better support that initiative. For example, if their team is planning an event, they could reduce the amount of paper being used by sharing the programme on a website and on a few posters around the venue rather than giving each attendee their own printed copy.

Teaching online?

Learners could prepare a multimedia presentation slide to show their idea to the rest of the class.



TAKING INSPIRATION

When discussing topics related to global issues (e.g. reducing poverty), ask learners to search for some inspirational ideas of what other organisations are doing to contribute positively to this issue. Once they have found a few ideas, ask them to choose which they could implement or adapt for their organisation and to create a short pitch to the leadership team to persuade them to try it.



Teaching online?

Learners could prepare a multimedia presentation slide to illustrate their initiative idea.



CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES

When learners encounter a topic involving a common workplace issue (e.g. a conflict within a team or a difficult decision to be made), ask them to choose another national culture that they currently work with or may work with in the future.

Then, ask learners to consider how the beliefs, values and behaviours of people from that culture might influence the way they approach the issue. Have learners carry out research (e.g. by speaking to someone from that culture or finding reliable information online) to see if their assumptions were correct. Emphasise the importance of considering different cultural perspectives while being careful not to perpetuate cultural stereotypes.

Teaching online?

Invite learners to share their research findings in a digital portfolio for other class members to read.



STAKEHOLDER IMPACT ANALYSIS

Ask learners to choose a recent decision that was made by their organisation and describe it to their group.

Explain the term 'stakeholder' (a person, group or organisation who is involved in, has an interest in and/or is affected by an issue) and ask the group to identify as many stakeholders as they can (e.g. customers, local community, employees). Challenge them to think of less obvious stakeholders too by thinking of the whole supply chain (e.g. a person working in a factory making the parts the organisation uses for their products).

Then, ask learners to think about what implications the decision made by their organisation might have on the different stakeholders they have identified, including any impact on their rights and wellbeing.

Teaching online?

Learners could use a template on an online whiteboard (e.g. a spider diagram) to record all the stakeholders they identify and then add the implications next to each stakeholder using a sticky note and/or image.



CORE AREA	ACTIVITY
Being organised	TIME BLOCKING
	WHERE IS IT?
Managing your professional development	GROW
	PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
	SMART FEEDBACK



TIME BLOCKING

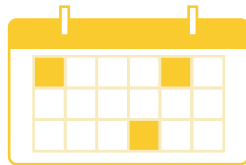
Time blocking involves scheduling blocks of time in your calendar for particular tasks (e.g. checking and responding to emails) to increase productivity and reduce stress.

When the topic of time management comes up, ask whether any learners already use the technique of time blocking. Have any learners who have used the technique briefly describe their experiences.

Next, put learners into groups and give each group a print out of a blank calendar for the following week. Ask one person in each group to volunteer to be the person for whom the group will create some time blocks. The group should ask this learner relevant questions to help work out when best to schedule different tasks.

Finally, groups present back to the whole class justifying their choices.

If possible, have the learners try out the time blocking technique with one task between classes and report back in the next lesson.



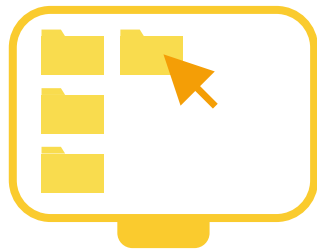
Teaching online?

Learners can use a collaborative document to work on the time blocking together, with one person in the group sharing their screen.



WHERE IS IT?

When learners are doing research for a group project, ask them to decide beforehand on how they are going to organise the information they find. In addition, they should determine where they are going to keep the documents they create so that they're easily accessible and easy to find for all members of the team. For example, they might choose to create folders in advance or to create them as and when they need them. At the end of the project, ask groups to share how they managed the information and documents they needed and to evaluate how successful this was.



Teaching online?

At the end of their projects, learners can share their screens to show how their information and files were organised.



GROW

One of the most common frameworks coaches use to help their clients reach their goals is the GROW framework (Whitmore, 1992). Ask learners to practise some self-coaching by reflecting on and writing down the answers to the following questions:

Goal: What would I like to achieve? What are the steps I need to take to reach this goal?

Reality: What have I already tried? Are there any obstacles? If so, how can I get over these?

Options: What options do I have to reach my goal? What are the advantages and disadvantages of each?

Will: Which option am I committing to?
How motivated am I to take action?
How can I increase this motivation?



Teaching online?

Give learners the choice of whether they would like to write their answers on paper (they could take a picture of this if it is going to be shared) or on their computer or device. Some people find it more helpful to reflect when writing by hand.



PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Ask learners to choose a skill or area of knowledge they'd like to develop, perhaps related to a career goal they have. Explain that they will create a personal development plan to help them develop this skill or area of knowledge and that they should use or adapt the framework below to do so. This will help them reflect on the specific steps they need to take, what actions they need for each step, what resources they can use and deadlines to keep them on track.

Once learners have created their personal development plan, have them share their plan in groups. Learners can then give feedback on the plans and suggest further ideas.

Teaching online?

Try setting up a collaborative spreadsheet document and assign each learner their own tab on which to create their personal development plan.



Step	Action	Resources	Deadline
1. Self-assessment	<i>Find out my strengths and weaknesses</i>	<i>Reflection, looking at past feedback, asking colleagues</i>	<i>3rd December</i>

SMART FEEDBACK

When learners receive feedback on a piece of work, encourage them to choose at least one point from this feedback and make a goal to implement it using the SMART goal framework:

Specific: choose one aspect of the feedback (e.g. 'I will include clear headings and subheadings to help structure my next report')

Measurable: set a target you can measure (e.g. I will include at least three headings and two subheadings)

Achievable: make sure the goal is realistic (e.g. I will allow myself extra time to think about the headings and subheadings in the planning stage)

Relevant: make sure the goal is relevant to you and your goals/work (e.g. writing clear reports is really important for my job)

Time-bound: set a deadline (e.g. in two weeks, when I have to write my next report)

Teaching online?



Create a table in a collaborative document with five headings (S, M, A, R, T) and ask learners to add their goals under the headings. Learners can then read about each others' goals and use ideas from these to refine their own.

CORE AREA	ACTIVITY
Demonstrating self-awareness	WHAT WAS I REALLY FEELING?
	EMOTIONAL RESET ROUTINE
Acting with resilience	COPING STYLES
	JOB CRAFTING VISION BOARD
Demonstrating empathy and positive relationship skills	DO YOU TRUST ME?
	HOW DO THEY FEEL?
	PAY IT FORWARD

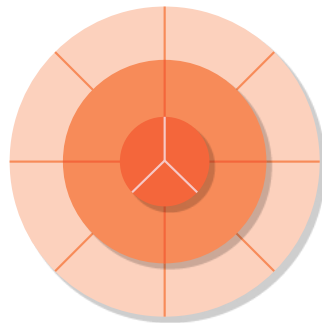


WHAT WAS I REALLY FEELING?

Put learners into pairs and ask them to reflect back on a situation at work in the last couple of weeks in which they felt a strong emotion (either positive or negative). Ask learners to explain the situation to their partner and describe what emotion(s) they felt.

Next, ask learners to find an 'Emotions Wheel' online, and to use the wheel to describe their emotion more specifically. They do this by starting in the centre and working outwards to find a more specific term. For example, if they initially said they felt angry when a co-worker used their idea without crediting them, they could use the wheel to identify a more specific adjective for what they were feeling, e.g. betrayed.

Explain that being more specific about describing how we feel increases our self-awareness and ability to manage our own emotions.



Teaching online?

Save a copy of the 'Emotions Wheel' in an online class portfolio so that learners can easily refer back to it.



EMOTIONAL RESET ROUTINE

Ask learners to work in groups to identify common situations in which they might feel strong emotions at work (e.g. facing a tight deadline).

Ask them to share any strategies that have worked to help them 'reset' their emotions in these situations.

Next, ask them to research further strategies that could help (e.g. taking a walk, focusing on their breathing etc).

Finally, encourage each learner to write their own emotional reset routine and to try this out at work. Every so often, ask learners to report back on how their routine has been working and whether they would make any changes to it.

Teaching online?

Learners could save their routine in an online portfolio and leave a comment on how well it worked each time they use it.



COPING STYLES

Ask learners to work in pairs and share a recent experience in which they had to cope with a stressful situation at work. Ask them to share what strategies they used to cope with the situation.

Next, ask them to identify whether their strategies fell into one or more of these categories:

Problem-focused: taking action to resolve the cause of the stress

Emotion-focused: managing their emotions (e.g. through mindfulness techniques)

Proactive-focused: taking action before the stressful situation to minimise its impact

Then, ask learners to think of more strategies for each of the categories, and to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each of these coping styles.

Next, ask learners to identify which category they use most frequently, and any reasons why.

Finally, encourage learners to try out strategies from different categories the next time they're faced with a stressful situation, and to reflect on their effectiveness.

Teaching online?

Use an online poll for learners to show which category they use most frequently.

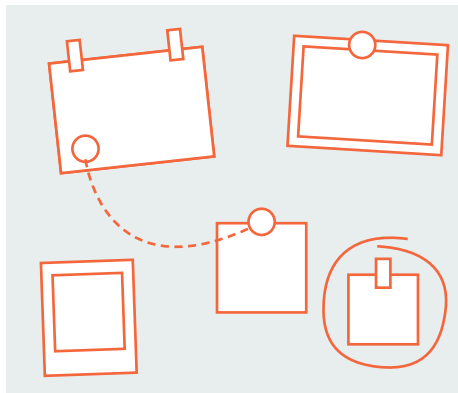


JOB CRAFTING VISION BOARD

Job crafting has been shown to be an effective strategy for increasing engagement and satisfaction at work. It involves employees proactively shaping their roles to better suit their strengths and interests.

Ask learners to create a vision board for their role including aspects of their job that they enjoy and would like to keep as well as aspects they would like to shape to align more with their strengths and interests.

Ask learners to present their vision boards in small groups and to comment on whether they think they could implement any of the ideas in their work, e.g. by talking to their manager.



Teaching online?

Have learners make short audio or video recordings of their presentations to share in a digital portfolio.



DO YOU TRUST ME?

Trust is one of the most important ingredients for positive relationships in the workplace. Ask learners to form groups and share examples of times when they felt a sense of trust at work and times when they did not feel a sense of trust. Encourage them to identify elements that contributed to these feelings of trust (e.g. open communication) vs lack of trust (e.g. leadership not being visible) and put these in a simple table like the one below. Finally, ask learners to identify how they might build more trust between people in their team by incorporating (or avoiding) one or more elements from the table.

Elements that build trust	Elements that damage trust

Teaching online?

Invite learners to use a table template on an online whiteboard to organise their ideas.



HOW DO THEY FEEL?

When learners encounter work-related scenarios in reading, listening, or video texts, put them into small groups and assign each group one character from the text. Write the questions below on the board for learners to discuss in their groups:

- Who is this character and what role do they play in the situation?
- How do you imagine they feel in this situation, and why?
- What questions would you ask them to get a deeper understanding of how they feel?
- How might you feel in this situation? Complete this sentence: If this were me, I would feel ...

Teaching online?

Add photos of the different characters in the scenario to a collaborative whiteboard and invite learners to share their sentences on sticky notes next to their allocated character.



PAY IT FORWARD

Ask learners to think of someone who has supported them in their work and to write them a thank you note (they can choose whether or not they actually send it to the person in question).

Next, explain the concept of 'paying it forward' (to do something kind or useful for someone else because someone has done something kind or useful for you).

Ask learners to identify what helpful actions the person who supported them took. They can then plan to pay these actions forward to someone else, e.g. if someone mentored them when they started in a new role, they could mentor the next person to join the team.

Teaching online?

Invite learners to share the actions they will 'pay forward' in a shared document for their classmates to read.



CORE AREA	ACTIVITY
Using tools and creating digital content	WHERE DO I FIND ... ?
	NOT THE WHOLE STORY
	PROJECT MANAGEMENT TOOLS
	VIDEO PROJECTS
Sharing and interacting online	SWAP THE TECH
	ASYNCHRONOUS PROJECTS
	MAKING POLICIES ENGAGING
Safety and wellbeing online	DIGITAL FOOTPRINT AUDIT
	PREVENTING ONLINE MEETING FATIGUE
	PHISHING QUIZ



WHERE DO I FIND ... ?

Give learners five minutes in groups to brainstorm as many different ways as they can for finding digital information they might need in their work (e.g. intranet, search engine, AI, asking a colleague).

Then ask them to choose some common work scenarios for which they would need to find digital information.

They should decide which of the methods would be the most and least suitable, and why (e.g. asking a colleague might be quicker than looking through the intranet site; using an AI chatbot may not give up-to-date results and has a high environmental cost)

Teaching online?

Learners can use an online mind mapping tool to capture and organise their ideas.



NOT THE WHOLE STORY

Ask learners to get into groups and design a short questionnaire for the rest of the class about a work-related topic, e.g. opinions on hybrid working or performance-related pay policies.

Learners then collect the data for their questionnaire by asking other members of the class to answer the questions.

They then do a basic analysis of the results and draw some initial conclusions.

Finally, have learners identify ways in which the survey does not tell the whole story (e.g. it was a small sample, we didn't have enough information about each person's context, we didn't ask about [financial implications] etc.).

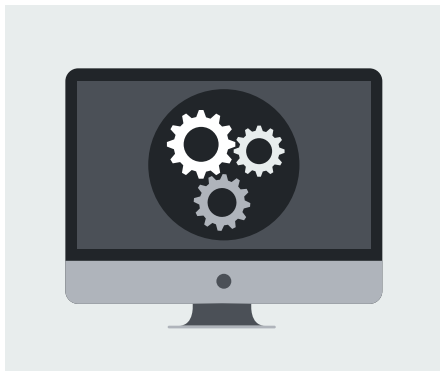
Teaching online?

Encourage learners to create the questionnaire using an online form such as Microsoft Forms or Google Forms.



PROJECT MANAGEMENT TOOLS

When learners are completing a project, encourage them to use a simple online project management tool to assign and keep track of tasks and set deadlines. Once the project is finished, ask learners to reflect on how useful they found the project management tool and to write a short review of the tool they used.



Teaching online?

Learners could add their reviews to a collaborative document and group them according to the tool used.



VIDEO PROJECTS

When learners are completing a project in groups, challenge them to create a video as an output.

Give them time to research what makes an impactful video (e.g. camera angles, lighting, sound, length of video etc) and then ask them to use their phones to film the video.

If time allows, learners could edit their video using suitable software.

Once the project is complete, ask learners to evaluate how impactful their video was using the criteria they found in their research.

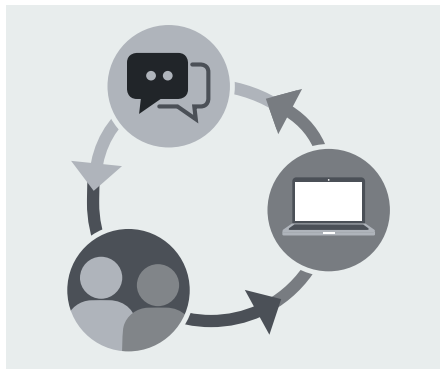
Teaching online?

Set up an online portfolio in which learners can share their video outputs.



SWAP THE TECH

When learners encounter a text related to a workplace scenario, ask them to consider how the way the characters were communicating (e.g. face-to-face, over email) positively or negatively influenced the outcome. Then ask them to discuss how changing the kind of communication technology (e.g. using email instead of instant messaging) might have affected their communication and the outcome.



Teaching online?

Encourage learners to consider how learning online changes the way people in the class communicate with each other and what the advantages and disadvantages of this might be.



ASYNCHRONOUS PROJECTS

Working asynchronously means that everyone works at their own pace and to their own schedule and there are no real-time communications. It is a common way of working in many modern workplaces but it can pose some challenges.

Assign learners a small project to work on outside of the class and explain that all work must be done asynchronously. Ask learners to experiment with ways of making this work for their group and then to report back to the class about what challenges they faced and what solutions they came up with.

Teaching online?

You could ask learners to record an audio or video reflection on asynchronous working and upload it to an online portfolio for the rest of the class to review and comment on.



MAKING POLICIES ENGAGING

Most workplaces have a policy related to confidentiality but struggle to get employees to read or engage with it.

Challenge your learners to find a confidentiality policy from their place of work and to change the format to make it more engaging, e.g. by turning it into a video with real-life scenarios.

Finally, ask learners to identify at least one way that their current digital work practices follow the policy and at least one way in which they could ensure their work could follow the confidentiality policy more closely.

Teaching online?

Learners could share their newly created policies in a digital portfolio for their classmates to comment on.



DIGITAL FOOTPRINT AUDIT

Ask learners to search for themselves online to see how much information about them comes up and is accessible for anyone to view. Ask them to put together a profile of themselves based on only the information that is publicly viewable through this search, including pictures, videos etc. Finally, discuss what options they have to remove any of this information if they would prefer it not to be viewable by the public.

Teaching online?

Learners can create a multimedia profile of themselves using online whiteboard platforms or word processing software.



PREVENTING ONLINE MEETING FATIGUE

With the rise of remote and hybrid working, online meetings have become much more common. This means that many employees spend a large proportion of their day in online meetings and this can lead to fatigue.

Ask learners to form pairs or groups and rank these potential solutions to this issue in order of which they think would be the most effective:

- having shorter meetings
- allowing people to join meetings without having their camera on
- having breaks in all meetings
- having meeting-free days or times of the day
- learners' own idea(s)

Challenge learners to try out the option that they ranked first and report back on how it worked.

Teaching online?



Using an online whiteboard can be helpful for ranking tasks in which learners need to move statements around easily. Ask learners to write each statement on a separate sticky note to facilitate this.

PHISHING QUIZ

Have learners form groups and create a short phishing quiz for their classmates to take.

Encourage them to do some research and find at least one tactic that they were not aware of. They will include this tactic in their quiz as well as other tactics they know about.

Give learners the choice of how to format their quiz, e.g. a five-question quiz including extracts from genuine and phishing emails or a full phishing email in which their classmates have to find all the suspicious elements.

Once groups have written and formatted their quizzes, have them swap these with another group to answer.

End by having groups share with the class anything new they learned about phishing tactics.

Teaching online?

Learners could create their quiz using an online form such as Microsoft Forms or Google Forms or use a collaborative and sharable document.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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