



Co-funded by  
the European Union

**ERASMUS+**  
**COOPERATION PARTNERSHIPS**  
**IN YOUTH**  
**"GIG UP"**

Project n°2021-1-DE04-KA220-YOU-000028951

GIGUP- HANDBOOK FOR  
PRACTITIONERS



## Contributors

### Team members:

Julia Fernández Valdés	Acción Laboral
Dimitra Ioli Chatzoudi	Innovation Hive
Prof. Emma Zavarrone	IULM University
Dr. Alessia Forciniti	IULM University
Dr. Roberto Solinas	Mine Vaganti NGO
Prof. Dr. Houshmand Masoumi	Technische Universität Berlin (TU Berlin)
Dr. Melika Mehriar	Technische Universität Berlin (TU Berlin)

## Table of Contents

Contributors.....	2
Introduction .....	5
Chapter 1: The Gig economy in Europe and around the world.....	6
Module 1 – The Gig Economy.....	7
Module 2 – The European Gig Economy .....	8
Module 3 – The Global Gig Market .....	9
Module 4 – Advantages and Disadvantages of Gig Workers.....	11
Module 5 – Gig Economy within the European Union .....	12
References:.....	14
Chapter 2: Skills needed by gig workers .....	14
Module 1 - Identifying NEETs gaps in skills .....	15
Module 2 – What are the skills needed by Gig Workers .....	16
Module 3 – The importance behind the skills needed by GIG Workers .....	18
Module 4 – Learning to assess own skills and competences .....	19
Module 5 – Developing the missing skills .....	21
References .....	23
Chapter 3: The skills of the future .....	24
Module 1 – The forces driving the need for skills of the future .....	24
Module 2 – The most in-demand skills of the future .....	25
Module 3 – Why these skills are important for the future .....	26
Module 4 – Evaluate yourself in future skills .....	26
Module 5 – How to prepare yourself for the future.....	27
Resources: .....	28
Chapter 4: Becoming a better professional.....	29
Module 1 – How to become a professional? Improve your emotional intellect! .....	30
Module 2 – How to grow professionally? Develop your working skills IN and WITH a team! .....	31
Module 3 – How to explore opportunities? Amplify adaptability! .....	33
Module 4 – How to behave more professionally? Learn conflict resolution!.....	34
Module 5 – How to organise yourself? Persuasion and self-positioning! .....	34
Chapter 5: Your rights as a worker in the EU .....	36
Module 1 – Awareness – raising about rights and regulations of working in the EU.....	36
Module 2 - Improving conditions of gig workers by teaching rights related to gig workers ..	37
Module 3 – Solving problems of gig workers by awareness-raising.....	38

Module 4 – Gaining a better understanding of working in the EU .....	39
Module 4 - Avoiding being taken advantage by employers .....	40
Chapter 6: Professionalism and active citizenship .....	43
Introduction & Learning objectives .....	43
Module 1 – Citizenship in today's world.....	43
Module 2 – The effects of globalization .....	44
Module 3 – Active citizenship and NEETs.....	44
Module 4 – Social involvement and civic engagement .....	45
Module 5 – Platforms.....	47
References.....	51
Bonus chapters.....	53
Chapter 7 – Communication skills.....	54
1) The importance of communication skills .....	54
2) Communication skills in the workplace.....	55
3) Common Barriers to Effective Communication.....	60
4) Tips to enhance communication skills in the gig economy .....	61
5) Stress management strategies for gig workers in communication with clients .....	63
References.....	64
Chapter 8 – A train the trainer’s manual.....	65
1) Why a train the trainer manual for Gig workers.....	65
2) Roles and competences of a good trainer: .....	65
3) Soft skills .....	67
4) A Gig workers’ classroom.....	68
5) How to run a class.....	70
6) Conclusion .....	72

## Introduction

Welcome to the Handbook for GigUp Trainers, a comprehensive training guide developed to equip trainers with the knowledge, skills, and training strategies necessary for effectively delivering training to gig workers.

This handbook delves into the challenging gig economy domain, not just in Europe but globally, providing insights into the unique challenges and opportunities it presents.

The gig economy's flexible nature has constituted gig economy a growing segment of the global workforce.

This creates implications for workers, especially those identified as NEET (Not in Employment, Education, or Training).

Our handbook provides a structured and systematic approach to address these changes, offering trainers a roadmap to navigate this dynamic sector.

The handbook is divided into eight chapters, each focusing on a different aspect of training gig workers.

From understanding the gig economy's landscape to developing future-proof skills, all chapters, including the bonus chapters are designed to cover a broad spectrum of topics relevant to both gig workers and professional trainers.

The handbook is not a collection of information it is a toolkit designed to empower trainers and the gig workers they support.

Understanding the complexities of the gig economy and mastering the skills outlined in this guide, will arm trainers with the knowledge required to make a significant impact in the professionals' lives of gig workers and at the same time contribute to shaping a more adaptable, skilled, and resilient workforce.

Join us on this journey that will allow us to foster a future-ready gig economy workforce.

## Chapter 1: The Gig economy in Europe and around the world

Introduction & Learning objectives:

The gig economy is a global phenomenon and refers to labour markets that includes short-term contracts or freelance work in contrast with conventional jobs. This type of work has become very popular in recent years due to the rapid development of the technology and the Internet. Nowadays, gig workers can be found in many countries around the world. It is expected to continue growing within the next years and change the world of labour.

Learning objectives:

Upon the completion of this chapter, the learners will be able to:

1. Comprehend the concept of Gig Economy,
2. Explore and acquire knowledge about the labour market of the European Gig Economy,
3. Explore and acquire knowledge about the Global Gig Market,
4. Recognize advantages and disadvantages of a Gig Worker,
5. Built in depth knowledge about Gig Economy and its relevance to the European Union.

## Module 1 – The Gig Economy

The gig economy refers to a specific labour market with the traits of short-term contracts or freelance work. This is a relatively new concept that is opposed to conventional jobs with open or long-term contracts and focus on one employer. More specifically, the term “gig economy” made its first appearance in the early 2000s to describe a trend of musicians using certain platforms as [Craiglist](#) to look for gig opportunities. In other words, this platform offered them the chance to occasionally work for more than one people in various locations.



Source: [https://www.iimb.ac.in/turn\\_turn/unlocking-technology-gig-workers.php](https://www.iimb.ac.in/turn_turn/unlocking-technology-gig-workers.php)

The term Gig Economy refers to a specific economic system where individuals offer various services via short-term contracts or freelance occupation for a certain period of time. It has a growing number of workers who are engaged on-demand or flexible work arrangements (Mulcahy, 2016).

Other definitions that exist in the field are by [Merriam Webster](#) dictionary “An economy system in which individuals are hired for short-term contracts to perform specific tasks or projects, rather than being employed by a single company on a permanent basis”. [Investopedia](#) refers to the Gig Economy as “an economy in which temporary positions are common and organizations contract with independent workers for short-term engagements”.

The above definitions highlight key characteristics of the Gig Economy such as flexibility to work from anywhere/anytime, short-term work arrangements and prevalence of independent work in terms of services that an individual can offer. In recent years, the gig economy has gained rapidly popularity due to the rise of platform-based work arrangements in various industries. It is also inextricably linked with the sharing economy, on-demand services and freelance economy. The Gig Economy has been driven mainly by technological assets such as the availability of smartphones and the widespread usage of Internet that have made easier and more accessible to individuals to search or take on a gig work.

At the same time, it has been noted that more and more people are changing their attitude towards conventional working conditions. They tend to seek more flexible work arrangements and liberty to pursue entrepreneurial ventures (Alstete, 2022). Gig Economy is offering a significant range of options. Some examples of gig workers are:

- Ride hailing drivers (e.g. Uber, Lyft)
- Food delivery drivers (e.g. Uber Eats, Grubhub)
- Online tutors and teachers (e.g. VIPKid, Outschool)
- Freelance writers, graphic designers and web developers (e.g. Upwork, Fiverr)
- Personal assistants (e.g. Fancy Hands)

- Health and wellness professionals (e.g. Soothe, Heal)
- Event and wedding planners (Zola, The Knot)

Overall, gig economy is still an emerging field of information and unlimited job opportunities that has speedily increased during the last two decades. We cannot be yet sure about its future as the regulations are continuously changing and technology evolving. But we can certainly be optimistic about its course as the percentage of individuals turning in this type of occupation is continuously increased.

## Module 2 – The European Gig Economy

The Gig Economy has a relatively short history considering the expanding of digital platforms available to the public in combination with the sharing economy during the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. One of the earliest examples of the gig economy in Europe made its appearance with the launch of the ride-hailing platform Uber in Paris in December 2011 (Wirtz and Tang, 2016). This initiation was quickly expanded to other European cities as well. At the same time, the trend was followed by the growth of other platforms, such as Airbnb for home-provision, and food delivery services like Deliveroo.

The rise of these platforms during the early stages of the gig economy was fuelled by a mix of consumer demand for more flexible and convenient services as well as the expansion of smartphones and mobile internet. Due to this, the gig economy grew swiftly throughout Europe, both in terms of the number of gig workers and the size of the Gig Economy. However, there has also been opposition to and controversy surrounding the expansion of the gig economy in Europe, with discussions centred on the rights and protections of gig workers as well as the effects of the gig economy on regular employment and the labour market. This theme will be discussed further in *Chapter 5*.



The proportion of gig workers in Europe varies by nation and is difficult to estimate. However, research by the European Parliament estimates that up to 15 million people – or around 5% of said total workforce in the gig economy in the European Union (Gig Economy, 2023). The Gig Economy is more pervasive in some nations where estimates indicate that up to one in five workers participate in. It is essential to keep in mind that the gig economy is a quickly developing industry and over time, the exact figure of gig workers

in Europe may fluctuate. Estimates regarding the number of gig workers and the Gig Economy may also be inaccurate due to different definitions of the terms mentioned.

Source: <https://www.mckinsey.com>

### Greek Gig Economy

In recent years, the gig economy in Greece has expanded as more people have turned to gig labour as a method to supplement their income or as a way to find flexible work schedules. According to research by the International Labour Organization (ILO), the development of the gig economy in Greece has been significantly influenced by the use of digital platforms to connect people with employment possibilities (Johnston and Land-Kazlauskas, 2018).

### Spanish Gig Economy



Spain's gig economy has expanded quickly in recent years, propelled by the rise in flexible work schedule demand and the usage of internet platforms to connect people with employment possibilities. Research by the European Parliament claims that Spain's gig economy is characterised by a high proportion of self-employed individuals and a lack of job stability, which has raised questions about worker rights and social benefits (Kerikmäe and Kajander, 2022).

### Italian Gig Economy

The rise in demand for flexible work schedules and the expanding use of digital platforms to link employees with job possibilities have fuelled the growth of the gig economy in Italy in recent years. The gig economy in the country is characterized by a sizable number of self-employed employees, many of whom do not have access to fundamental social safeguards like unemployment benefits and health insurance, according to research by the European Commission - Joint Research Center (Urzi Brancati, et al., 2020).

### Cypriot Gig Economy

Eurofound (2018), the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, sponsored a study that claims that "There are just a few platforms and gig-related activities in Cyprus, where the gig economy is still in its infancy. The general public is beginning to exhibit interest in these job arrangements, albeit they are well aware of the gig economic growth advantages and risks."

### German Gig Economy

The gig economy in Germany is still in its early phases of development, according to a report by the Hans-Böckler-Stiftung (2018), a research centre linked with a German labour union, and the majority of gig employment is given through intermediaries like platforms. According to the report, delivery and transportation services as well as online markets for services like cleaning and home repair are the most popular forms of gig employment in Germany.

## **Module 3 – The Global Gig Market**

According to research, the Gig Economy is expanding globally as a result of technology making it simpler for people to sell their services as independent contractors (Katz & Krueger, 2016). As more employees choose contract or freelance work over full-time employment, this type of economy has the potential to undermine traditional forms of employment. The Gig Economy affects people and the economy as a whole in a variety of ways, both good and bad. On the one hand, it gives employees greater freedom and flexibility, and on the other, it enables businesses to swiftly and easily access talent for particular projects. Contrarily, gig employment is frequently connected to low compensation and a lack of benefits, and many employees in the gig economy struggle with stability and job security.

Governments around the world are debating how to control the gig economy and guarantee worker protection. While some nations have opposed such initiatives, emphasising the need to safeguard the flexibility and creativity that the gig economy affords, others have proposed or implemented laws to grant gig workers additional rights and benefits.



Source: <https://www.bis-hendersonrecruitment.com/the-pros-cons-of-the-gig-economy/>

### Gig Economy in the USA

There has been a notable *shift* in how many Americans work as a result of the Gig Economy's rapid growth in the US in recent years. In the United States, the number of gig workers climbed by more than 20% between 2014 and 2016, according to a JPMorgan Chase Institute (2016) analysis, while the Pew Research Center (2017) reported that roughly one-third of American employees engage in the gig economy in some capacity. Overall, as more Americans resort to gig work as a source of income, the Gig Economy in the US is set to keep expanding in the years to come. An Intuit analysis (2020) states that by 2027, gig work may account for more than 40% of the American workforce.

### Gig Economy in Australia

Australia's gig economy has expanded quickly in recent years thanks to the proliferation of online marketplaces that match freelancers with clients. The Reserve Bank of Australia (2021) stated that during 2014, the number of gig workers in the nation has surged by more than 60%. Same as in the United States, more and more Australians resort to gig labour as a source of income. As a result, the gig economy in Australia is set to keep expanding in the years to come. According to a projection, up to 40% of the Australian workforce may be engaged in gig work by 2025 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2020).

### Gig Economy in Asia

Asia's Gig Economy is expanding quickly and has been the focus of many research and articles. In Asia, the Gig Economy has been fuelled by a number of factors, including the expansion of the middle class, the availability of mobile internet and digital platforms, and the rising cost of living in many Asian cities (ILO, 2021). Notably, the Gig Economy is particularly well-liked among young, urban workers in Asia, who value the flexibility and independence it offers.

Overall, the global Gig Economy is a growing trend in which individuals perform short-term, flexible jobs typically through online platforms. Next, we are going to have a closer look to advantages and disadvantages in its framework.

## Module 4 – Advantages and Disadvantages of Gig Workers



Source:

<https://www.annexcloud.com/blog/10-pros-and-cons-of-loyalty-programs/>

Gig workers frequently benefit from a number of benefits, including:

- *Flexibility:* Gig work gives people the freedom to choose their own schedules and work from any location, which increases their independence and flexibility. This asset that gigs employment offers is one of its key advantages. This a great option for people who might find it difficult to commit to a regular 9–5 schedule, such students or stay-at-home parents, this is especially advantageous.
- *Income diversification :* it is possible with gig labour since employees can work many tasks at once and generate multiple streams of income. Workers can boost their overall earning potential and lower their financial risk by taking on various gig jobs and generating multiple streams of income.
- *Developing talents:* Gig employment gives employees the chance to learn new skills and get experience in a variety of industries. Worker skill development and career advancement can both be aided by the options that gig labour might offer to work in various businesses and gain expertise in new fields.
- *Access to employment:* People who might encounter difficulties obtaining traditional employment, such as stay-at-home parents or people with impairments, may find employment options in the gig economy. This may aid in lowering unemployment and expanding economic opportunities.
- *Increased earning potential:* Working several jobs gives employees the chance to make more money because gig work frequently pays more than regular employment do. Workers have the chance to earn more money by taking on numerous tasks. Those who want to earn extra money on the side or as a supplement to their current salary may find this to be especially helpful.

It's crucial to keep in mind, though, that these perks can also pose serious hazards and obstacles, including a lack of benefits, a lack of work security, and uncertainty about the stability of one's income. In more detail, some of the disadvantages are:

- *Job insecurity:* Gig workers frequently don't have set hours or a reliable source of income. The lack of a long-term contract or a defined number of hours for gig workers makes it challenging for them to obtain a stable income or prepare for their financial future.

- *Benefits* that are typically not provided to gig workers, including health insurance, paid time off, and retirement benefits. Contrary to regular employment, gig workers typically are not entitled to benefits. Financial hardship may result from this, particularly for gig workers who get sick or hurt and are unable to work.
- Gig workers are frequently categorized as independent contractors, and as a result, they are *not covered by labour regulations* like those governing minimum pay and overtime.
- *Future savings* may be challenging for gig workers due to their uncertain income and lack of perks. They may also have trouble coming up with long-term financial strategies. For gig workers who are also supporting a family or juggling other financial commitments, this can be very difficult.
- *High taxes:* Gig workers frequently bear a heavy financial burden because they are required to pay both the employer and employee portions of payroll taxes. Because of this, it may be challenging for gig workers to make a living salary, especially if they are working for several different customers or businesses.

## Module 5 – Gig Economy within the European Union



Source: <https://industrialrelationsnews.ioe-emp.org>

The gig economy's effects on workers' rights and benefits have drawn criticism from the European Union. On this subject, the EU has released a number of papers and pronouncements, including:

- The Report of the European Parliament on the Protection of Workers (2017) in the Platform Economy: This study underscored the significance of guaranteeing gig workers the same protections and benefits as regular employees. In order to give platform workers, the same rights and protections as other workers, it proposed for the development of a new legal category.
- Communication on the Gig Economy (2017), by European Commission: This statement acknowledged the potential advantages of the gig economy but also emphasized its drawbacks and issues, such as the absence of job security and social safety for gig workers. In order to guarantee that gig workers have proper protection and benefits, the Commission urged for action at the EU level.
- The 2018 Resolution of the European Parliament on the Gig Economy: This resolution demanded that the EU adopt a more aggressive stance toward the gig economy, including the creation of new legislation to safeguard gig workers and guarantee the protection of their rights.

The EU has urged for steps to ensure that gig workers have the same rights and benefits as traditional employees and has generally expressed worry about the effects of the gig economy on workers. In order to ensure that employees are safeguarded, and their rights are upheld,

the EU has also underlined the need for a more comprehensive approach to the gig economy, including the creation of new laws and regulations.

## References:

1. Alstete, J. W. (2002). On becoming an entrepreneur: an evolving typology. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research*, 8(4), 222-234.
2. Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2022). The Future of Work in Australia. <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/future-work/the-future-of-work-in-australia>
3. Escudero, V., & Mourelo, E. L. (2015). *The Youth Guarantee programme in Europe: Features, implementation and challenges*. Geneva: ILO.
4. Eurofound (2018). Study on the gig economy in the European Union. Dubli: Eurofound. Available at: <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/>
5. *Gig economy*. Eurofound. (n.d.). Retrieved February 2, 2023, from <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/nb/node/92501>
6. Hans-Böckler-Stiftung (2018). *The gig economy in Germany: A study of the gig economy in Germany and its implications for the future of work*. Düsseldorf: Hans-Böckler-Stiftung. Available at: [https://www.boeckler.de/pdf/p\\_hbs\\_wp\\_823\\_2018.pdf](https://www.boeckler.de/pdf/p_hbs_wp_823_2018.pdf)
7. ILO (2021). The Future of Work in Asia and the Pacific: Trends, Challenges and Opportunities. [https://www.ilo.org/asia/publications/WCMS\\_761910/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/asia/publications/WCMS_761910/lang--en/index.htm)
8. Intuit. (2020). *The Future of Work: The Rise of the Gig Economy*. <https://turbotax.intuit.com/tax-tips/freelance-contractors/the-future-of-work-the-rise-of-the-gig-economy/L9Wzj8zs7>
9. JPMorgan Chase Institute. (2016). The Online Platform Economy: Crowd-Based Capitalism. <https://www.jpmorganchase.com/corporate/institute/document/2021-0617-jpmci-online-platform-economy.pdf>
10. Johnston, H., & Land-Kazlauskas, C. (2018). *Organizing on-demand: Representation, voice, and collective bargaining in the gig economy*.
11. Katz, L. F., & Krueger, A. B. (2016). *The rise and nature of alternative work arrangements in the United States, 1995-2015*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University, Industrial Relations Section Working Paper No. 567.
12. Kerikmäe, T. & Kajander, A. (2022) Gig economy workers in the European Union: towards changing their legal classification. *Revista CIDOB d'Afers Internacionals*, 131 p. 117-136. doi.org/10.24241/rcai.2022.131.2.117/en
13. Mulcahy, D. (2016). Who wins in the gig economy, and who loses. *Harvard Business Review*, 27.
14. Pew Research Center. (2017). The Gig Economy. <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/06/06/the-gig-economy-in-the-us/>
15. Reserve Bank of Australia. (2021). The Gig Economy in Australia. <https://www.rba.gov.au/publications/bulletin/2021/jun/the-gig-economy-in-australia.html>
16. Wirtz, J., & Tang, C. (2016). Uber: Competing as market leader in the US versus being a distant second in China. *SERVICES MARKETING: People Technology Strategy*, 626-632.

## Chapter 2: Skills needed by gig workers

Introduction & Learning objectives:

Labour markets within the world have changed dramatically due to digitalisation, volatile and economic changes within society. That is why new concepts such as smart working, agile methodologies and home office have become popular and have reshaped labour environments. The crisis caused by Covid-19 has accelerated this process and for that very reason experts are talking now of a New Work Order.

In this “New Work Order”, the so-called gig economy has been gaining importance, and recent data from Eurostat determines that between 20-30% of European population participated on gig economy last year. The workers of gig economy are the so called giggers. People tend to adhere to this tendency because of the flexibility, opportunities and reconciliation that this new way of working allows.

Not only that but freelancers are a source of talent of high qualification and specialisation that could bring important added value to enterprises, but as it is pointed out within the **“Study to support the impact assessment on improving working conditions in platform work”** of the European Commission, there are still several challenges within freelancers.

One of the most important, and regarding the fact that gig economy is something new, is the lack of some skills and abilities for these workers. Digital environments and the gig economy require different approaches as well as competences that normally are not acquired in formal education and training.

It is very significant to be conscious of that gap, because without the proper acquisition of the skills, there is a risk of not leveraging the opportunities, flexibility and innovation gig economy offers.

For that very reason the objective of this chapter is to identify, describe and contribute to develop the necessary skills and competences that are needed for gig workers within the new digital economy and the new work order.

In that regard, the **5 learning objectives** of the chapter are:

1. To Identify NEETs gaps in skills,
2. To explore and understand the skills needed by Gig Workers,
3. To understand the importance behind the skills needed by GIG Workers,
4. To assess their own skills and competences to see what they lack,
5. To develop those missing skills.

Below you will find a description and tips for improving and developing these five main objectives, into five individual modules.

### **Module 1 - Identifying NEETs gaps in skills**

Today young people are changing jobs more frequently and it takes a longer time to get established on the labour market. Not only that, but the transition from education to work is smooth and also highlight the risks of being neither in employment nor in education or training.

This situation has been studied by EU as the so- called by its acronyms NEET (young people neither in education nor employment)

In 2021, and according to Eurostat data, an average of 13.1 % was identified as NEET within EU. However, there are differences between Member States as several countries have already reached less than 10%.

Addressing NEETs is also one of the main targets of objective number 8 of 2030 Agenda of the United Nations.

Although NEET groups are highly diverse (different reasons such as disabilities, not suitable jobs available, are behind the problematic), it is common that NEETs experience a lack of skills and competences that are highly valued in labour markets and that could facilitate school-to-labour-market transitions. Although the constellation of issues keeping young people out of the workforce is complex, there is no escaping the central role played by lack of skills.

The study carried out by the OECD<sup>1</sup>, "*NEET Youth in the Aftermath of the Crisis: Challenges and Policies*", identifies two main NEETs gaps: one within non-cognitive skills, (personality traits such as conscientiousness, emotional stability) and the second within cognitive skills (attention, memory, language skills, reasoning, problem solving). Not only that, but the challenge is greater when prospective employees are youth with limited or no work experience or references.

In addition, the recent report carried out by UNICEF, "*Reaching YES! Addressing the youth employment and skilling challenge*" pointed out the fact that there are important gaps within NEETs skills. This gap can be the hardest one to bridge, given the breadth and complexity of multiple demographics within a country, but it is also the most fundamental to getting youth into work. To bridge this gap, youth need the basics:

- Connectivity,
- Access,
- Education and training.

Furthermore, the "VET toolkit for empowering NEETs" also identify several NEETs gaps and proposes a guide aimed to design policies and implement practices that will better address the needs of NEETs, helping them to reintegrate into education or training and the labour market.

One of the main targets of these policies is the opportunity within Gig economy, but special skills are needed.

## Module 2 – What are the skills needed by Gig Workers

The GIG up project has identified a wide range of skills needed for gig workers that we can summarize on the following:

- **COMMUNICATION SKILLS:** Compared to traditional full-time employment or permanent employment, gig employment is typically performed in an online environment and gig workers engage in a work style that differs from full-time workers, being often a special type of solo self-employed workers. That is why special communication skills are needed. The DigComp Framework introduced by the European Commission, also identifies communication as one of the main competences within digital environments.

For the online library of the GIG UP Project, communication skills are examined in terms of two main aspects:

---

<sup>1</sup> Carcillo, S., et al. (2015), "NEET Youth in the Aftermath of the Crisis: Challenges and Policies", OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers, No. 164, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/5js6363503f6-en>.



- Internal business communication: from a gig worker to his/her client, from a gig worker to another (as in a small team of professionals collaborating to the same project), and communication within a group (such as one based on a single company)

Internal communication also should develop three main aspects: 1) client communication, 2) teaming up and communication and 3) group dynamic communication.

- Communication and engagement in public: aiming at fostering stakeholders' engagement overall, which can be done through effective communication of the gig worker's vision in informal settings, managing feelings when talking with people in general, or communicating effectively in different socio-cultural contexts and situations.

This communication and engagement involve the competence on communicating the vision of the freelance and its project, managing his/her feelings and engagement and dissemination through for example social media.

- **FINANCIAL SKILLS**: Financial skills are equally important in the gig economy as in any other economic sector. Giggers need to efficiently manage their finances, secure the funds required to pay their debts and other financial obligations, and sustain their lifestyle and that of their families.

Concretely, the project has identified the following:

- Budgeting: Planning and maintaining the budget is crucial as it can provide guidance for the forecasted income and expenses and ensure financial health.
- Financial Goals: Financial goals can serve as a beacon for the financial and business decisions.
- Cashflow Management: Cash flow management can help to ensure that there is enough money to pay your expenses, debts, salaries, and other financial obligations.
- Bank account basics: Banks are licensed financial institutions that accept deposits from depositors and lend money to borrowers.
- Risk management: Financial risk is the possibility of losing money from a project, a business venture, an investment, or another business undertaking.
- Accounting skills: Fundamental understanding of the principles related to financial statements like balance sheet, profit and loss and income statements is important.
- Decision making.

- **MANAGERIAL SKILLS**: It can be said that self-management is now an essential skill to succeed in the workplace and maintain a stable income as a freelancer. A gig worker should be able to independently set deadlines while building a stable routine. That is why managerial skills are that important. Nonetheless, managerial skills can be classified within two groups:

- Project management planning competences: Planning is the first and the most significant step to getting started toward achieving goals.
- Time management competences: Most freelancers or gig workers will probably recognize the direct relationship between productivity and earnings. Proper time

management practices could dramatically increase the profit margin and assist in growing a business.

- **RESILIENCE AND COPING STRATEGIES FOR STRESS:** Stress is part and parcel of working, and it could be enhanced when working alone, as freelancers do. On its part, resilience is defined as an individual's capacity to adapt positively to pressure, setbacks, and challenges. Resilience should be considered an essential quality for enhanced job performance in today's world of work.
- **PERSONAL BRANDING AND PITCHING:** The secret to creating a strong online presence as a career professional is to think carefully about how your talents and knowledge may benefit your target market (e.g. developing job search, interviewing or career management skills). Your professional visibility will soar with a thorough digital profile. That is the reason why this kind of abilities are essential for gig workers. At the same time these competences are grouped in:
  - o *Professional digital profiles management,*
  - o *Online identity perception,*
  - o *Accessible digital contents,*
  - o *Personal branding,*
  - o *Copywriting,*
  - o *Pitching skills to approach costumers.*

### Module 3 – The importance behind the skills needed by GIG Workers

The importance of developing the abovementioned skills by GIG workers could be explained by several reasons.

Regarding **communication skills**, gig workers engage in a work style that differs from full-time workers. A style where communication is vital since all the job is done online and using digital means. In digital environments communication is essential.

When talking about **financial skills**, while gig workers enjoy the luxury and flexibility of working on their own, they still need to efficiently manage their finances, secure the funds required to pay their debts and other financial obligations, and sustain their lifestyle and that of their families. Moreover, when they are the unique responsible for financial outcomes.

Regarding **resilience skills** and coping strategies for stress because gig employment has little to no labour rights, it is associated with financial instability and raises worries about the health and well-being of the workers. Not only that but, freedom in gig economy comes with a precariousness that doesn't appear to get better over time. Even the most successful, well-established people in the gig economy still worry about money and reputation and sometimes feel that their identity is at stake. The studies show how freelancers experiences a high level of anxiety, stress and mental health problems. That is why resilience skills are that important.

**Managerial skills** are equally important since being a freelancer means that it is needed to be adapting to the needs of every different project or organization. A gig worker should be able to independently set deadlines while building a stable routine.

Finally, and regarding **personal and branding skills**, gig workers do not work within the umbrella of an enterprise or organisation and that is why they cannot benefit from the name brand and all the facilities it implies. For that very reason, personal and branding skills are very needed within gig workers.

#### **Module 4 – Learning to assess own skills and competences**

Once we have seen the importance that skills have from the leverage of opportunities gig economy has, it is equally important to be conscious about our level of competence within those skills.

Assessing the skills is an important step in order to identify what is missing, what needs to reinforce or even what kind of skills need learning from zero.

GIG-up project offers a range of methods and techniques that teach us how to assess the own skills and competences.

First and foremost, for **communication skills** we need to focus on how able we are to communicate our services, vision, mission and values, as well as our professional services. At that end, gig up worker, in order to assess him or herself could answer the following questions:

- Can I translate my needs, wants, interests and aspirations into goals that help me reach them?
- Can I design professional development strategies for me based on a clear understanding of my strengths and weaknesses, in relation to both current and future opportunities to create value?
- Can I allocate enough resources to each step of my action plan and for the value creating activity?
- Can I come up with strategies to reduce the risks that may arise during the value-creating process?
- Can I organise information, data and content to be easily stored and retrieved?
- Do I know how to share digital content across multiple devices?
- Do I know how to create and manage different profiles in digital environments for professional purposes?
- Can I identify the steps needed to research the potential for an innovative idea in light of its development into an existing enterprise, a new venture or an opportunity for social changes?
- Can I manage innovation processes that respond to emerging needs and make the most of opportunities as they become available?

Secondly and regarding **financial skills**, we need to assess the following:

- Can I apply the financial planning and forecasting concepts that I need to turn ideas into action?
- Can I judge the cash-flow needs of a complex project?
- Do I know how to use the internet to conduct transactions of goods and services of all kinds?
- Can I use financial indicators to assess the financial health of a value-creating activity?

- Can I choose the most appropriate sources of funding to start up or expand a value-creating activity?

Not only that, but when assessing financial skills, it is determinant to understand the following concepts:

- Interest,
- Loans,
- Risk,
- Credit Score,
- Financial Security and Growth,
- Liquid Savings.

Finally, in order to complete the assessment of financial skills it is important that the gig worker is able to:

- Estimate how their financial decisions affect their taxes,
- Evaluate high-risk long-term investments using a structured approach,
- Use strategies to reduce the risks that may arise during the value-creating process.

When assessing **Managerial skills**, we should answer the following questions:

- Can I develop and stick to a detailed project management plan, adjusting to changing circumstances to make sure goals are reached?
- Can I design a strategy to achieve goals in line with my vision?
- Can I adapt my value-creating activity's business model to face new challenges?
- Can I design managerial procedures to effectively deliver value in challenging circumstances?
- Can I judge key resources needed to support an innovative idea or opportunity to develop an existing business, launch a new venture, or initiate a social enterprise?
- Can I define priorities in uncertain circumstances, with partial or ambiguous information?
- Can I take my work to a higher level of performance based on the feedback collected and by learning lessons from achievements and failures?
- Can I develop the performance indicators I need to monitor progress towards a successful outcome in changing circumstances?

Assessing **resilience skills and managing emotions and stress** could be more difficult, but answering these questions could help:

- Can I take responsibility in complex value-creating activities?
- Am I able to manage my feelings when talking with other people?
- Can I manage interactions and conversations in different socio-cultural contexts and domain-specific situations?

- Can I effectively delegate tasks within and outside my organisation to make the most value?
- Can I translate my needs, wants, interests and aspiration into goals that help me reach them?

Finally, when assessing **personal branding skills**, these questions can be very useful:

- Can I communicate the vision for my venture in a way that inspires and persuades external groups, such as funders, partner organisation, volunteers, new members and affiliate supporters?
- Can I define a communication strategy to mobilise people in relation to my value-creating activity?
- Can I use my network to bring together different perspectives to inform my value-creating process?
- Can I cluster different opportunities or identify synergies among different opportunities to make the most out of them?
- Can I team up with others to compensate for our weaknesses and add to our strengths?

With all that we can draw a picture of the abilities and competences that gig workers should acquire, strengthen or maintain.

## Module 5 – Developing the missing skills

Finally, once we have detected the main skills to be developed, as well as its importance it is important to focus on how we can develop them. For that very reason, gig up project has developed several techniques and proposals in order to achieve the commitment.

Firstly, and regarding **Communications Skills**, one of the main recommendations is to create norms around the client. Also, it is important to determine with advance what kind of channels of communication you would use. Also fixing a normal time of response for the clients could be very useful.

On the other hand, it has been detected that create a roadmap of the vision, mission and values is key when developing communication skills as well as writing a vision statement.

Finally learning about emotions managing could be extremely useful for improving communication.

Secondly, regarding **financial skills**, being able to develop financial ratios could offer a way to evaluate a company's performance and a comparison with other similar businesses in the same industry. Furthermore, it is necessary to develop skills regarding the management of variable income. In that very regard, it is useful to know how to Open a business account, establish a budget and understand loans and expected risk. Sometimes and depending on the difficulties experienced by the gig worker, could be useful to talk to a financial adviser.

Thirdly, we have seen how **Managerial skills** are vital for freelancers. That way, we can develop such skills using the following techniques:

- Learning how to plan effectively: Planning effectively is an activity that should be carried out following the next steps: 1. Setting up the goals, 2. Developing motivation techniques (in order to create adherence), 3. Decision making (It ensures the effectiveness of your action plan and its realization).

- Developing a project life cycle: Every project has a beginning, middle and end. In order to achieve success, it is important to define, set the strategy, implement, execute and control all the edges of the project.
- Setting SMART goals: A SMART goal could be the guidance toward a goal-setting procedure that reflects Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely targets. SMART GOALS could be a vital tool for a gig worker as they work independently thus, they are in need of self-organization.
- SWOT analysis: SWOT goals analysis is a vital tool that provides guidance in locating and assessing a strategic plan. When it comes to the practical aspect of an organization or a gig occupation, SWOT analysis could be the guidelines for creating a business. In detail, SWOT analysis stands for identifying Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and threats.

Fourthly, and regarding the development of **resilience skills and coping strategies for stress**, results of the project suggest that techniques for managing stress, such as breathing, cognitive re-framing, and learning to embrace challenging emotions could be very useful.

Not only that, but we have developed a number of steps that could reframe the learning and development of such strategies.

- a. Recognize and counter signs of stress,
- b. Take time for yourself,
- c. Try new routines,
- d. See problems through a different lens,
- e. Seek help with problems.

Finally, **skills regarding personal branding and pitching** could be developed by, firstly, have written permissions policy, or best practices document may help guarantee your business has a thorough and consistent strategy to clearing digital permissions, whether you're clearing copyright in traditional or digital content. Furthermore, it is useful as well to develop a communication strategy and a strategy for engaging your partners and stakeholders. Finally, developing a program of communication based upon theories from the Social and Behavioural Social Communication, which have proved to be the most successful.

## References

1. *Study to support the impact assessment on improving working conditions in platform work*, European Commission, 2021, <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=es&pubId=8428&furtherPubs=yes>
2. *Young people not in employment, education or training*, technical brief N° 3, International Labour Organization, [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26634NEET\\_Sida\\_brief.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26634NEET_Sida_brief.pdf)
3. OECD (2023), Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET) (indicator). doi: 10.1787/72d1033a-en (Accessed on 09 March 2023)
4. Carcillo, S., et al. (2015), "NEET Youth in the Aftermath of the Crisis: Challenges and Policies", OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers, No. 164, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/5js6363503f6-en>.
5. "VET toolkit for empowering NEETs " CEDEFOP, 2021 <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/neets/blog/what-vet-toolkit-empowering-neets>
6. "How To Approach A Larger Client: 13 Essential Strategies For Crafting The Perfect Pitch", publ. November 19, 2019, by the Expert Panel of the Forbes Agency Council, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesagencycouncil/2019/11/12/how-to-approach-a-larger-client-13-essential-strategies-for-crafting-the-perfect-pitch/?sh=70e71ba42b99>
7. "How to develop a monitoring and evaluation plan", in How-to-guides, by Compass, supported by the US Agency for International Development, <https://thecompassforsbc.org/how-to-guide/how-develop-monitoring-and-evaluation-plan>
8. "Personal Branding Strategy: A Roadmap for Professional, Experts and Executives", publ. October 6, 2022, by Hinge - Branding and Marketing for Professional Services, <https://hingemarketing.com/blog/story/personal-branding-strategy-a-roadmap-for-professionals-experts-and-executives>
9. "How to create a brand strategy part 2: developing positioning for a branded product, service or behavior", in How-to-guides, by Compass, supported by the US Agency for International Development, <https://thecompassforsbc.org/how-to-guide/how-create-brand-strategy-part-2-developing-positioning-branded-product-service-or>

## Chapter 3: The skills of the future

Introduction & Learning objectives:

In a world of unprecedented changes, with technology rapidly shifting the business, social and career environment, understanding the skills of the future and more importantly being able to adapt and become relevant is of paramount importance.

### Learning objectives:

By the end of this chapter, the reader will be able to:

1. Understand the driving forces behind the need for skills of the future,
2. Comprehend what are the most in-demand skills of the future,
3. Understand why these skills are important for the future,
4. Evaluate yourself in future skills,
5. Understand what actions need to be taken to prepare yourself.

The following modules will navigate learners through the learning process:

### Module 1 – The forces driving the need for skills of the future

The global reality and especially our work and lifestyle are characterized by constant change and continuous transformation. Government and government policies, business and business models and operations are changing quickly to adapt and to survive.

Digitalization is the new normal and is leading the economy and the society to the new digital age. The benefits of digitalization are countless: reduced costs, improved customer experience, improved employee productivity, drive growth, improve product and service quality, faster decision making, increased transparency and more.

Although digitalization and digital transformation are helping the creation of more jobs, those who do not have the needed skills and knowledge will fall behind. Digitalisation, and especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, has led to the automation of some jobs and therefore certain skills have become less demanded. Additionally, the structure and the way that businesses work have changed dramatically. People can work from anywhere and everywhere and hierarchical management is beginning to disappear since working teams are forming internally based on the needs of projects.

The skills and characteristics of employees much be such that they respond fast and effectively to high-tech working environments and working ways. The way of work people do today is extremely different that the work they did pre-pandemic. The existing workplaces have transformed to hybrid workplaces. Today, people have access to highspeed internet access, advanced mobile devices and cloud-based applications that make working from anywhere at any time, possible.

Most companies are focusing on looking for employees not only with technical skills and technological superiority but also for employees with advanced behavioural skills, which combined with technological training, will highlight the new leaders.

The reality is that jobseekers lack the skills demanded by the labor market and this is causing skills shortage despite the high rate of unemployment. According to OECD (2016), "Skills



shortages and mismatches", in *Getting Skills Right: Assessing and Anticipating Changing Skill Needs*, OECD Publishing, "Increased globalisation and rapid technological change, but also demographic migration and labour market developments, have altered considerably the structure of skill requirements in most countries in recent decades – and these trends are expected to continue in the foreseeable future."

## Module 2 – The most in-demand skills of the future

According to the World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report, 50% of all employees will need reskilling by 2025, as adoption of technology increases. According to the same source, the 10 most in-demand skills of the future are:

### 1. Analytical thinking and innovation:

Analytical thinking is the ability to handle complicated issues by gathering, organizing and evaluating information. By the term innovation we mean the implementation of new ideas that result in new products and services or improve existing products and services.

Companies search for analytical thinkers since they can help their team make decisions based on data and information and to create new ideas through an innovative approach.

### 2. Active learning and learning strategies:

Active learning is a method by which people are actively involved in the learning process. Active learning promotes higher engagement, improves collaboration skills and stretches innovation. It promotes critical thinking and improves decision making skills.

### 3. Complex problem solving:

Complex problem solving is a soft skill and is defined as a collection of self-regulated psychological processes and activities necessary in dynamic environments to achieve ill-defined goals that cannot be reached by routine actions.

### 4. Critical thinking and analysis:

Critical thinking is self-guided, self-disciplined thinking which attempts to reason at the highest level of quality in a fair-minded way. Critical thinkers use intellectual tools such as concepts and principles that enable them to analyse, assess and improve thinking.

### 5. Creativity, originality and initiative:

Creativity and originality are two concepts that often are mistaken as the same. Creativity is the ability to create something new whilst originality refers to something that has never been done. Initiative is to take the opportunity to act or take charge before others do and the ability to assess and initiate things independently.

### 6. Leadership and social influence:

Leadership has been described as a form of social influence and it is considered as an important leadership quality since people will listen to you and follow you. A leader can influence his/her colleagues with his/her behaviour, attitude and beliefs. In addition, a leader can influence and support others in accomplishing a task/target or completing a project.

### 7. Technology use, monitoring and control:

Technology use, monitoring and control is considered one of the skills that employees need to have to make them as employable as possible. Being able to use technology, to monitor and identify and control disruptions and malfunctions so that the company's data are secure the customer journey is undisrupted is considered crucial by employers.

#### 8. Technology design and programming:

Design technology and programming is the skill of designing, developing and supporting computer and non-computer-based technologies for product design constructability purposes. Employers seek people with design technology and programming skills since these people are able to solve problems and plan next steps and projects.

#### 9. Resilience, stress tolerance and flexibility:

To be resilient simply means to be able to cope and recover from difficult situations, to remain calm in a disaster. A resilient employee is able to keep working towards achieving his/her goals through crises and setbacks. *Stress Tolerance* is the ability to tolerate pressure without turning to negative toward self or others. People who are stress tolerant can flourish in high stress situations and can solve problems effectively and productively. Flexibility is a closely related concept which means to be able to change your plans and adapt quickly to the changes.

#### 10. Reasoning, problem solving and ideation:

Reasoning, in combination with problem solving and ideation is an important skill that one uses daily. Reasoning is the process to proceed from hypothesis to conclusion in a logical way. Problem solving is highly related to reasoning since it is the ability to find solutions to difficult situations. Ideation is the creative way to generate and develop ideas.

### Module 3 – Why these skills are important for the future

Today is characterized by fast technological advancements which in turn affect our lives and our society. In addition, technological innovation and globalization are changing the existing workplace. These changes have become more drastic during the Covid-19 pandemic, where many of us have become remote workers, facing new protocols, new technologies and new ways of working.

In order to cope and keep up with these changes, employees realized that they need to improve and even learn new skills so that they don't fall behind. Furthermore, these skills are important not only because they can help an employee to become more adaptable to changes and to adjust and operate to the new digital world but also because they help employees to offer benefits to their companies. Having these future skills, employees can adjust more easily to new environments and career changes, will improve their teamworking skills, will be able to add value beyond what technology offers and will be able to succeed in a variety of surroundings.

### Module 4 – Evaluate yourself in future skills

What skills you need to improve or develop depends on the job and the industry you work in. A basic process of evaluating yourself in future skills is:

1. Identify your current skills

2. Recognize your skills gaps
3. Pursue continuous learning
4. Gaining practical experience

Skills identification involves assessing your skills by gathering information within your organization and colleagues. Recognizing your skills gap is about researching what skills are needed so that you excel at your position, identifying what skills you need to remain marketable, to improve your performance and to develop in the long term for your career objectives. Once you record what you need, you must start learning through various ways: on the job-training, training courses, articles, blogs, books, certificate programs and network channels. Then, seek opportunities to learn and grow and implement what you have learnt in your working environment.

### **Module 5 – How to prepare yourself for the future**

The skills needed for an employee to remain marketable will always change. To keep up with the changing environment, you must be aware of what is changing around you and how these changes will affect your current position. According to the WE Forum, an employee can follow the Mode 1-2-3 Strategy to remain relevant in the working environment:

Mode 1: Sharpen your existing skills:

- refresh and improve your existing skills,
- stay aware with new developments,
- be prepare to show your best self,
- ensure that you have a competitive advantage.

Mode 2: expand your near scape

- learn adjacent skills to extend your expertise into your near scape,
- use any opportunity you get to upskill,
- take courses, certifications, free online learning modules,
- gain skills that are growing in demand and you place yourself in a strong position.

Mode 3: Future-proof your career

- understand where you stand along the half-life of your skill sets and assess your depreciated value.

**Resources:**

1. [The Top 10 Most In-Demand Skills For The Next 10 Years \(forbes.com\)](https://www.forbes.com)
2. [Future-citizen skills | McKinsey - https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/public-and-social-sector/our-insights/defining-the-skills-citizens-will-need-in-the-future-world-of-work](https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/public-and-social-sector/our-insights/defining-the-skills-citizens-will-need-in-the-future-world-of-work)
3. [https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/10/top-10-work-skills-of-tomorrow-how-long-it-takes-to-learn-them/?DAG=3&gclid=EAIaIQobChMikLe04omD\\_QIVTZ\\_VCh0wfwdrEAAAYASAAEgIZBfD\\_BwE](https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/10/top-10-work-skills-of-tomorrow-how-long-it-takes-to-learn-them/?DAG=3&gclid=EAIaIQobChMikLe04omD_QIVTZ_VCh0wfwdrEAAAYASAAEgIZBfD_BwE)
4. OECD (2016), "Skills shortages and mismatches", in *Getting Skills Right: Assessing and Anticipating Changing Skill Needs*, OECD Publishing, Paris <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264252073-3-en>.
5. <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/05/3-key-steps-to-making-sure-your-skills-stay-relevant/>
6. <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.01153/full#:~:text=Complex%20problem%20solving%20is%20a,set%20of%20strategies%20are%20needed.>
7. [https://www.criticalthinking.org/pages/defining-critical-thinking/766?utm\\_content=cmp-true](https://www.criticalthinking.org/pages/defining-critical-thinking/766?utm_content=cmp-true)

## Chapter 4: Becoming a better professional

### Introduction & learning objectives

In this chapter, you will find information and advice on how the library can support your personal and professional growth by increasing the understanding of current employability skills connected to time organization, professional behaviour, opportunities exploration and learning. By the end of the chapter, you will master the employability skills and become able to replicate the development programme, update it and make it available for other participants in the future.

Many of us would like to improve our personal lives or careers. Professional development - often called continuing professional development (CPD) - is how to do this in your work. There are many different forms of professional development with many different intended outcomes. The CPD is like a fitness plan for your career.

Personal and professional growths stand parallel to each other. If you want to grow your personal career, you need to develop your skillset to invade professional growth and then find new ways to explore the success of your desire. Success stories are not written in a single night. Nobody knows there is a long and consistent struggle behind it, but they embrace your success. Most people need clarification with professional growth as they think they are working in their comfort zone and earning more than their expectation is professional growth. They must become more familiar with their willpower and its magical impacts on their career and personal life. They keep striving on the same board by putting all their force on the wrong wall; that will not show them a new path.

When developing your skillset by learning new things, leaving your comfort zone, and opening your mind to think out of the box to set new paths towards the success of your career, you are working on professional growth! The good news is that there are plenty of tools out there that can help you be more productive and more efficient without spending a fortune.

To begin with, given the volatility of the modern world, it is already impossible not to agree that we need to develop qualities that will allow us to adapt to new conditions easily and will be universal assistants in ordinary and professional life.

If we turn to the universal generalisation of the necessary skills to become a more qualified professional, we can use the concept of soft skills. However, with the development of the popularity of the topic of soft skills, such a wide variety of skills began to be attributed to the number of skills that one can quickly get confused and lost.

Well, recent research has revealed universal skills, the development of which is a priority in a real situation.

The 5 learning objectives of the chapter are:

1. To study the situation affecting the need for professional personal growth,
2. Identify core competencies that help an individual grow professionally,

3. To study the relationship and cause-and-effect relationships between the initial goals and the means to achieve them in the framework of professional growth,
4. Familiarise yourself with the library competencies that help an individual grow and develop professionally,
5. Master the professional skills to apply them in employment services through support provision in capacity building programmes directed to the client needs.

In the modern world, it is only possible to imagine achieving all the above goals by developing personal skills and qualities.

A person who wants to grow professionally by organising their time, behaving more professionally, exploring opportunities, and learning needs to develop 5 key characteristics:

- emotional intelligence,
- working in and with a group,
- adaptability,
- conflict resolution,
- and persuasion and self-positioning.

Mastering these qualities helps them find and hone their voice by working on developing continuous Lifelong Learning and confidence in expressing themselves. Inspiring clients by demonstrating your belief in their abilities and providing the support they need to succeed in their employment challenges.

In the modules that follow you will find a description and tips for improving and developing all 5 qualities that help a person grow professionally by organising their time, behaving more professionally, exploring opportunities, and learning!

### **Module 1 - How to become a professional? Improve your emotional intellect!**

This concept, as such, appeared in 1960 in the works of Michael Beldock. But the idea itself has taken root in people's minds since the publication of the non-fiction book Emotional Intelligence: Why It Matters More Than IQ, authored by New York Times journalist Daniel Goleman. The book was published in the mid-90s of the last century but is still one of the most relevant in the field of personal effectiveness. Generally speaking, emotional intelligence (EI) is seen as the ability to work with emotions and show empathy. This includes the ability to recognise emotions, negative and positive feelings, separate personal perception from visual facts, to manage one's own and other's emotions. It is in human abilities to feel the situation correctly and sensitively, understand the desires of others, be resistant to stress and the influence of negative emotions, and work with them correctly and distinguish them.

The emotional intelligence theory received significant scientific development in the works of D. Caruso, P. Salovey, J. Mayer - American scientists. They divided emotional intelligence into 4 components:

- the ability to identify their own and other people's emotions, to find differences between them;
- the ability to use the full potential of emotions to solve specific problems;
- the ability to be aware of each emotion and understand how it arises;
- the ability to control and manage their emotions.

Emotional intelligence is an innate human ability that can be trained throughout life. But in this case, starting with yourself and your own emotions is necessary. Only in this way will you learn to understand others.

To the question “is it possible to increase emotional intelligence”, experts say an unequivocal “yes”, and here are the tips they give most often:

1. Do not divide emotions into "bad" and "good." Instead, listen to the feelings that cover you at one time or another. Think about what might have caused them. Evaluating emotions, on the contrary, devalues them and does not allow you to fully understand what you feel.
2. Keep a diary of emotions. Every day, write down what and when you felt, and describe the situation and any possible triggers. Literally, in a month, it will become easier for you to understand yourself and the mechanism of your emotions.
3. Notice the translation of your emotions in books, films or music. For example, when watching a movie, does it happen that you notice how one of the characters says a phrase that describes exactly what you feel at that moment? Not be surprised: this is quite normal. As well as when some song or monologue of a book hero goes against your worldview. Be more attentive to such situations because they allow you to feel your inner world better and broader.
4. Know how to work in a "bad" mood. A bad mood has one insidious property: as soon as it sets in, it seems that all life loses meaning, and there is no light. The decline of emotions is just a "cloud" that, with due effort on your part, can quickly fly past. Again, an analysis of the origins of this condition will help in this. Remember that mood plays a huge role in decision-making; you can't do anything meaningful in a bad mood.
5. Become aware of how your body reacts to stress. Critical situations and emotional overload are displayed in the work of the whole organism. Learn to read his signals; you will better understand when you need to pause and recuperate. Meditation and various mindfulness exercises also help in the development of emotional intelligence.

## **Module 2 – How to grow professionally? Develop your working skills IN and WITH a team!**

The effectiveness of teamwork, regardless of the management concept, has long been proven. A person's intellectual and professional resources are revealed better when interacting with colleagues than when working alone. Furthermore, success is achieved through a synergistic effect. Involvement, mutual understanding and support of colleagues stimulate the achievement of a common goal.

It is undeniably important for professionals working with people to develop the skills of working in and with a team!

What distinguishes a team from a group of people? There is a single goal for all participants, the number and efficiency. In 1965, American psychologist Bruce Tuckman developed a four-stage theory of group dynamics (known as the Tuckman Team Development Model):

1. **Formation.** It is the fastest and most positive stage; when the team is just being created, people are charged and have high hopes for an interesting project. They are polite and careful, look closely and recognise each other. However, often the roles still need to be assigned, and clear responsibilities need to be spelt out.
2. **Storm.** There is real interaction, and people begin to storm. Each specialist has his own interests, and first of all, he tries to satisfy his basic needs. However, the desire to achieve the goal requires specialists to cooperate. Often conflicts arise in connection with different communication styles, powers and approaches to the work of team members. For any team that goes through this, there is no need to be afraid of this stage. If the storm stage has not been passed, the team has remained in its original, embryonic state and will not be able to develop harmoniously.
3. **Normalisation.** The team agrees on the norms and rules of interaction. All participants feel confident and comfortable, appreciate each other's strengths, are ready to help, and listen to constructive feedback. The leader should fade into the background, and the team should start working with minimal participation. If the manager is still very involved, then some points need to be spoken out, and there is a chance to slide back to the storm stage. These fluctuations can occur for quite a long time if the rules of the "game" are not spelt out at the stage when a new task arrives.
4. **Performance.** After the storms have subsided and the rules of interaction have been worked out, the team begins to work effectively. Now it is a close-knit team of like-minded people:
  - all issues and conflicts are discussed and resolved openly;
  - people are sincerely interested in raising the professional level of each other;
  - relationships between colleagues become trusting;
  - the manager can delegate most of his work and concentrate on the development of employees.

The next important stage is motivation. Motivation plays a precious role in any organisation. This trait should be instilled in every organisation member, regardless of their assignment or responsibilities. Having said this, top management must consider ways to increase team motivation in the organisation.

Team motivation dynamics:

1. Don't let assumptions rule. Thus, you can evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of a person and mistakenly conclude that this person will not function effectively in a team due to their personal qualities.
2. Know that people are different. Secondly, it should be noted that people are different from each other. So when it comes to motivating a team, managers will need to do certain things to counterbalance the adverse effects. Although you will be dealing with different



personalities, although there is a set of rules by which the team works, your diplomacy and flexibility in work will also help keep the team motivated.

3. Don't isolate anyone. The third factor is not to isolate anyone. It is essential to consider the interests of all the players included in the team; instead of isolating someone, you need to be skilful enough to appease the sense of belonging. The fact is that then, all people will feel protected and important.
4. Understand the psychology of things. You don't need to study psychology formally to understand the basic concepts. However, it may be useful if you read about a couple of motivational theories and factors that contribute to human dynamics. When you know the underlying factors of a particular concept, you will be better able to solve the problem.
5. Lead by example. If you are mentoring a team and trying to build a team spirit among people, but if you yourself are not a good enthusiastic person, it will be challenging for you to get your team to achieve a sense of identity as a team. Thus, there should always be someone on the team to lead by example and to be sufficiently motivated.

### **Module 3 – How to explore opportunities? Amplify adaptability!**

The ability to quickly make decisions and act in new conditions is one of the key skills in an ever-changing reality. Finding yourself in an unforeseen situation in a short time without having the necessary information and not having relevant experience, you need to learn how to act. In this case, adaptability is considered from the point of view of not physiology but sociology and psychology.

Adaptability is a person's ability to change their behavioural patterns depending on environmental conditions and manage their mental state. In some people, this ability is more developed; in others, it is less. In psychology, the term "rigidity" means unwillingness to change behaviour following new situational requirements.

How to develop adaptability?

- Let go of habitual behaviour patterns! Start doing familiar things in a new way. You can start with everyday situations: preparing breakfast, getting to work, exercising in the gym, and cleaning algorithm. Ask yourself: how can this be done differently?
- Take risks! Sometimes the risk can be justified. Of course, you should not put yourself in serious danger and intentionally deprive yourself of your home, family, job, and so on. For example, try to increase the scope of the task and reduce the deadline for its completion. At first glance, this seems unlikely. But in such a stressful situation, you will start to think differently and look for new ways to solve it.
- Surround yourself with progressive people! Writer Henry Cloud in his book *The Power of Others. The environment defines us* explains in detail how even unfamiliar people can influence our views. Therefore, the more you communicate with people with open views, the more your picture of the world expands.
- Constantly learn new skills! The human brain has a unique feature - flexibility. It, in turn, is provided through constant development, so new behavioural patterns are formed.
- Use your browser less often! If you need to find a new address, try to navigate the new location without a navigator to guide you. Remember the photo of this place and the

entrance, and be guided by the names of streets and house numbers. This is how you develop spatial thinking.

- Develop behavioural algorithms! Think over several scenarios for developing events and a plan of action. Of course, you can act very differently in an actual situation, but in this way, you train your brain to think differently.

#### **Module 4 – How to behave more professionally? Learn conflict resolution!**

Conflicts arise all the time when there are at least two people. What can we say about large companies that employ thousands of people? In such an intricate interweaving of characters, aspirations and views, misunderstandings and disputes are inevitable. The word "conflict" itself is translated from Latin as "collision". And if this collision cannot be prevented in time, then you need to neutralise its consequences.

Science interprets the concept of conflict with different formulations. However, in general, everything comes down to one thing - this is a contradiction, the resolution of which has acquired an acute form. The many factors that cause conflicts can be divided into 2 categories:

- External: e.g. social polarisation, economic and political situation in the country, aggravation of social stratification, tense atmosphere in society,
- Internal: reasonable (financial, organisational issues) and unreasonable (psychological factor, personal hostility).

If we consider conflicts in the context of the organisation, we can distinguish 4 main types: conflict within a person, interpersonal, a conflict between group and individual, and intergroup.

American psychologist Kenneth Thomas identified five main approaches to resolving a conflict situation: rivalry (the main goal is to impose your point of view, a decision that is beneficial for you, to the opposite side), compromise (both sides make concessions to each other, partially waiving their conditions and claims), cooperation (renunciation of their demands in a forced or voluntary form), care (avoiding conflict, trying to get out of it with minimal losses), adaptation (the most efficient method, consists in a constructive analysis of the problem, a joint search for the best solution).

#### **Module 5 – How to organise yourself? Persuasion and self-positioning!**

Success is impossible without working on yourself and constantly striving for improvement. Based on these simple principles, our article will be built on the correct self-positioning as an opportunity to give impetus to your career and personal growth.

Tactical steps for personal self-positioning:

- Focus on your positive qualities. Self-positioning of a person should not begin with the identification of shortcomings. Instead, emphasise the dignity of your personality: develop your best skills.
- Try to find problems that only you can solve. In one of his books, the famous American success psychologist Napoleon Hill said: "Do more than what you are paid for, and then you will be paid more than you deserve." The same rule can be projected onto the features of

self-positioning. A person who takes on complex tasks without any problems will always be respected in a professional environment.

- Try to get the most out of your work. If possible, consistently exceed expectations. That is, not just to solve the problem, but to do it better than others.
- Focus on people who are successful in your field. Adopt their demeanour, style of dress, and ability to speak. Act as if you have already achieved the desired result. The main goal of this tactical step is to feel meaningful and successful, but at the same time, you do not need to succumb to pride and look down on the people around you.
- Make step-by-step plans and fix the result. It is always easier to work if you develop a plan of action. So, make sure to make time for this. And to feel the achieved result - record it in your diary. This will teach you to appreciate the work done.
- Write down all your ideas for performance improvement, optimisation, and quality improvement. If not now, then in the future, these thoughts may be helpful.
- Create a positive atmosphere around you. One way or another, in life, people
- will look at any of your undertakings with scepticism. Often these are relatives: relatives and colleagues. So, it is important to be psychologically stronger and more stable.
- Before starting a new business or solving a new task, ask yourself: "Why am I doing this?" Every action you take must be conscious. Only in this way will you be able to accumulate experience and use it in the future.

All of the above skills are necessary steps for those who want to develop as a professional and become better than they are today. However, at each stage, stopping in more detail and not stopping your development throughout your life is recommended.

Through familiarity with the information in this chapter, the reader was able to achieve 5 outcomes necessary to achieve the main goal: to study the situation influencing the need for professional personal growth, to identify the core competencies that help the individual grow professionally, to study the relationship and cause-and-effect relationships between the original goals and means their achievements within the framework of professional development, to become familiar with the core competencies that help an individual grow and develop professionally, learn to identify and get acquainted with tips that help develop core competencies that help an individual grow professionally.

## Chapter 5: Your rights as a worker in the EU

### Introduction & learning objectives

In Chapter 5 we aim to support workers understand the multifaceted gig work world within the European Union. The Chapter is developed around 5 modules. Module 1 raises awareness about the key rights and regulations affecting EU gig workers, from equal treatment to social security. Module 2 builds on this, focusing on improving gig workers' conditions, educating them about their legal rights. Module 3 addresses problem-solving, using awareness-raising to tackle challenges like worker exploitation and discrimination while promoting better wages and working conditions. Module 4 delves into the specifics of working in the EU, discussing various work categories, employment conditions, contractual issues, and legal and social protections. These modules are designed to empower gig workers with the knowledge and tools they need to navigate and thrive in the EU's gig economy.

### Learning Objectives:

1. Understanding Key Rights and Regulations through a thorough understanding of the fundamental rights and regulations for gig workers in the EU.
2. Country-Specific Regulations and Employment Classification by learning about the variations in gig worker rights across different EU countries.
3. Awareness of Gig Workers rights by becoming familiar with specific rights for gig workers.
4. Navigating Legal Protection and Advocating Rights by understanding how to navigate the rights provided under EU and national laws.
5. Problem Solving and Negotiation Strategies by learning practical strategies for addressing common issues faced by gig workers.

### Module 1 – Awareness – raising about rights and regulations of working in the EU

Some key rights and regulations for gig workers in the European Union (EU):

1. Equal Treatment: All workers, including gig workers, are entitled to equal treatment under EU law. This means that they should not face discrimination in terms of working conditions, pay, and other benefits based on their contract type.
2. Health and Safety: Gig workers are entitled to a secure and healthy workplace. Employers are expected to take precautions to avoid workplace accidents and injuries, as well as to give gig employees the necessary training and tools.
3. Working Time: Gig workers are entitled to limits on their working hours and rest periods, as well as the right to paid annual leave.
4. Minimum Wage: Gig workers are entitled to compensation of at least the minimum wage set by the government, or the amount specified in their employment agreement.
5. Social Security: Gig workers may be entitled to social security benefits such as sick pay, maternity/paternity leave, and pensions. However, this can vary depending on the country and the worker's employment status.
6. Collective Bargaining: Gig workers have the right to join or form a trade union and engage in collective bargaining to improve their working conditions.

7. Data Protection: Gig workers have the right to have their personal data protected under the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Employers are obligated to make sure that any information they gather about gig workers is handled securely and is only used for appropriate purposes.

It's important to note that the rights and regulations for gig workers can vary by country and by employment status. Some EU countries have specific regulations for gig workers, while others are still developing their approach to this type of work. Additionally, gig workers may be classified as employees, self-employed, or independent contractors depending on their working arrangement, which can have an impact on their rights and entitlements.

Also, there are some specific rights for gig workers in the European Union:

1. Right to a written contract: Gig workers are entitled to a written contract detailing all of the details of their employment, including compensation, working hours, and any additional benefits.
2. Right to fair remuneration: Gig workers are entitled to receive fair pay that reflects the work they do, including any additional costs they may incur while working.
3. Right to protection from discrimination: Gig workers have the right to protection from discrimination on the grounds of age, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, or any other protected characteristic.
4. Right to occupational health and safety: Gig workers have the right to work in a safe and healthy environment, and employers are responsible for providing appropriate protective equipment and training.
5. Right to join a union: In order to enhance their working conditions and safeguard their rights, gig workers have the ability to join a union and participate in collective bargaining.

These specific rights are often enshrined in national and EU-level legislation, such as the EU's Platform Work Regulation that is currently being developed.

## **Module 2 - Improving conditions of gig workers by teaching rights related to gig workers**

The working circumstances of gig workers can undoubtedly be improved by educating them about their rights. It's possible that many gig workers are unaware of all of their legal safeguards or lack access to information about them. By receiving instruction and training on these rights, gig workers will be better equipped to stand up for their rights and bargain for improved working circumstances.

Among the potential advantages of educating gig workers about their rights are the following:

- Awareness raising: It's possible that many gig workers are unaware of their legal rights and safeguards. They can better safeguard themselves against exploitation and mistreatment by their employers or clients if they are informed about these issues.

Better compensation, hours, and working conditions can be negotiated by gig workers if they have a greater grasp of their legal rights. When their rights are violated, they can also act by submitting a complaint or taking legal action.

This requires:

1. Having knowledge of their legal rights gives gig workers the confidence to assert themselves at work and fight for their rights. This can result in a better sense of self-worth, dignity, and respect.
2. Collective action: Gig workers can band together and fight for improved working conditions and legal safeguards by being aware of their rights. This may result in a better coordinated and powerful labour movement that can affect long-term change.
3. Protections for pay and hours: It's possible that gig workers are unaware that they are entitled to overtime compensation and the minimum wage under both federal and state regulations. They can make sure they are getting paid properly for their labour and take legal action if they are not by being aware of these rights.
4. Protections from discrimination and harassment: It's possible that gig workers are unaware of their rights to be free from workplace discrimination and harassment. They can identify when they are being abused and respond appropriately if they are aware of these protections.
5. Protections for health and safety: Gig workers might not be conscious of their legal entitlement to a secure and healthy working environment. They can take precautions against risks and make sure that their customers or employers are providing the required safety gear and training by becoming knowledgeable about this issue.
6. Benefits access: It's possible that gig workers are unaware that they are eligible to certain benefits like workers' compensation and unemployment insurance. They can make sure they are covered in the event of an injury or employment loss by becoming knowledgeable about these benefits.
7. Contract negotiations: It's possible that gig employees lack the skills necessary to successfully bargain with clients or employers. They can better protect themselves and make sure they are receiving a fair deal by learning how to negotiate and being informed about what to look for in a contract.

In general, informing gig workers of their rights is a crucial first step toward improving their working conditions and giving them the power to take charge of their professional lives. We can develop a more just and equitable labour market for everyone by offering information and resources on this subject.

### **Module 3 – Solving problems of gig workers by awareness-raising**

Raising awareness can be an effective tool for addressing some of the issues that gig workers encounter. We can contribute to the development of a more just and equitable labour market by increasing public knowledge of the problems that gig workers face as well as the rights and safeguards to which they are entitled.

The following are some issues that can be resolved with the aid of increasing awareness for gig workers:

1. Fighting exploitation: Because of their precarious job situation, many gig workers are at risk of being taken advantage of by employers or clients. By making people aware of these problems, we can empower contract workers to spot instances of exploitation and take protective measures.

2. Combating discrimination: Depending on their race, gender, or other traits, gig workers may experience discrimination. We can contribute to the development of a more inclusive and equitable labour market and the fight against discrimination by increasing awareness of these problems.
3. Enhancing wages and working conditions: Many gig workers struggle to make ends meet and frequently put in long hours without receiving sufficient compensation or benefits. We can put pressure on employers and decision-makers to improve compensation and working conditions for gig workers by bringing attention to these problems.
4. Fostering solidarity: It may be challenging for gig workers to speak out for their rights because they may feel alone and helpless in their jobs. We can contribute to the development of a feeling of belonging and empowerment among gig workers, which can inspire group action and constructive change.
5. Raising awareness can aid in the promotion of policy change at the municipal, state, and federal levels. We can put pressure on policymakers to pass laws and regulations that safeguard gig workers and guarantee their treatment fairly by increasing knowledge of the problems they face.

#### Module 4 – Gaining a better understanding of working in the EU

Although the working conditions in the EU differ by nation and industry, there are some common standards that apply equally throughout all of the member states. The EU has set minimum requirements for working conditions through its social policy, including the Working Time Directive, and the Health and Safety at Work Directive.

Generally, the EU strives to ensure that all workers are entitled to fair working conditions, including equal treatment, protection from discrimination, and the right to form and join trade unions. However, enforcement of these standards can vary between countries and industries, and it is important for workers to be aware of their rights and advocate for fair treatment.

Overall, working as a gig worker in the EU can provide freedom and independence, but it's critical for gig workers to be informed of their legal rights and safeguards as well as any potential hazards and difficulties. To gain a better understanding of working as a gig worker in the EU, it's important to consider several factors:

1. Category of work: There are various types of gig work in the EU, ranging from ride-hailing and food delivery to freelance work and micro-tasks. Each type of work may have different regulations and requirements.
2. Employment condition: Gig workers are often classified as self-employed, which means they may not be entitled to the same rights and benefits as traditional employees. However, some gig workers may be considered as employees under certain circumstances, which can afford them additional rights and protections.
3. Contractual arrangements: Gig workers typically operate under short-term or task-based contracts, which can make it difficult to secure stable income and benefits. It's important for gig workers to carefully review their contracts and negotiate terms where possible.

4. Legal protections: The EU has introduced various regulations and directives to protect gig workers, including the Platform Work Regulation that is currently being developed. Additionally, gig workers may be entitled to protections under national laws and regulations.
5. Social protections: Gig workers may not have access to traditional employee benefits such as sick pay, paid time off, or retirement benefits. However, some countries have implemented social plans specifically for gig workers, such as the "clicks and mortar" scheme in the Netherlands.

#### **Module 4 - Avoiding being taken advantage by employers**

To protect, gig workers from taken advantage by employers, it is necessary to consider some points and have a piece of knowledge about working conditions, rights, and regulations. Below, there are some important points that can help gig workers:

1. Know your rights: Know the laws and regulations governing employment in your nation and the rights that apply to you as a gig worker.
2. Negotiate fair pay: Never be hesitant to discuss compensation and working conditions with your employer. Verify that you are receiving a reasonable wage for the work you are performing.
3. Keep records: Keep a detailed record of your work, including the hours you work, the tasks you perform, and the pay you receive. This will help you to ensure that you are being paid fairly and will provide evidence in case of a dispute.
4. Communicate effectively: Keep the lines of communication with your employer open and honest. Inform your employer as soon as you can if you have any questions or concerns.
5. Seek support: Join a trade union or professional association to access support and advice. These organizations can provide guidance on your rights and help you to navigate any disputes with your employer.
6. Review contracts: Before accepting a gig, review the contract carefully and make sure you understand the terms and conditions. If you have any questions or concerns, seek legal advice.
7. Stand up for your rights: If you believe that your employer is not treating you fairly, don't be afraid to stand up for your rights. You have the right to a safe and fair working environment, and it is important to assert these rights to protect yourself and other gig workers.

In general, it is very important that gig workers are protected by governments. Government can enact laws and regulations to protect gig workers from abuse. There is a need for a governmental system that monitor wage, benefits, protections, access to healthcare and other benefits, and fair working conditions. Also, gig workers need to organize bargains for better working conditions. This can be done through unions, worker cooperatives, or other worker-led organizations.

Using rating systems, dispute-resolution mechanisms, and other tools can help gig workers to hold employers accountable for their actions.



In the end, employers, gig workers, and governments can collaborate and cooperate to develop solutions that protect workers from taking advantage. This can include developing industry standards, best practices, and other initiatives that promote fair and safe working conditions for all workers.

## References

1. Syed, J., & Özbilgin, M. (2019). The precarity of work and employment among the gig economy workers: Insights from a UK survey. *International Journal of Manpower*, 40(8), 1422-1437. doi: 10.1108/IJM-02-2019-0090
2. Kuek, S. C., Paradi-Guilford, C., Fayomi, T., & Imaizumi, S. (2015). Measuring the gig economy: Current knowledge and open issues. *International Journal of Manpower*, 36(1), 2-16. doi: 10.1108/IJM-07-2014-0134
3. Woodcock, J., Graham, M., Lehdonvirta, V., Hjorth, I., & Barnard, H. (2019). Good gig, bad gig: Autonomy and algorithmic control in the global gig economy. *International Labour Review*, 158(3), 355-380. doi: 10.1111/ilr.12120
4. European Parliament Briefing: The Gig Economy in Europe [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2019/633143/EPRS\\_BRI\(2019\)633143\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2019/633143/EPRS_BRI(2019)633143_EN.pdf)
5. European Commission: EU initiative on platform work <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1311&langId=en>
6. European Trade Union Confederation: Platform Workers' Rights <https://www.etuc.org/en/issue/platform-workers-rights>
7. International Labour Organization: Non-standard employment around the world: Understanding challenges, shaping prospects - [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms\\_618957.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_618957.pdf)
8. European Labour Authority: Platform work - <https://ela.europa.eu/platform-work>

## Chapter 6: Professionalism and active citizenship

### Introduction & Learning objectives

In this chapter, we explore the evolving concept of citizenship in the context of a globalized, interconnected world, within the European Union.

We will explore how traditional notions of citizenship are expanding in response to the EU's emphasis on shared values, free movement, and active participation in society. The chapter further examines how citizenship today transcends in our digital world while we consider the implications of this new paradigm of citizenship for young people, particularly those not in education, employment, or training (NEETs), and how education plays a pivotal role in promoting active citizenship and civic engagement.

The chapter further addresses the challenges and opportunities presented by globalization, digitalization, and the gig economy, highlighting the need for active, informed, and responsible citizenship at both local and global levels.

### Learning Objectives:

1. Understanding modern citizenship.
2. Active Citizenship in a globalised world.
3. The role of education in fostering citizenship.
4. Citizenship challenges for NEETs
5. The impact of digitalization and Gig Economy on Citizenship.

### Module 1 – Citizenship in today's world

In general culture, the term “citizenship” represents a set of political rights and duties, where the citizen's participation in the life of a national state is sovereign (Neset, 2018). This participation is associated with the belonging (Harris, 2013) and the identity of an individual to a nation or country.

However, today's interconnected world makes this definition reductive, in the context of the European Union (EU) where common and fundamental values that are enshrined in the various treaties guarantee the free movement of persons. In this perspective, a knowledge of the shared values, rights, responsibilities, history and culture of the Member States is intrinsically required in respect of the principles of democracy and to participate in the labour markets.

Therefore, the concept of “active citizenship” is closely linked to that of education covering fields of study such as civic science, political science, social psychology, law, history, and where the idea of intercultural education is increasingly central (Gundara, 2014).

Participation in civil society, political life in respect of democracy, human rights and non-violence represents in the narrow sense the principle of “active citizenship”, where skills play a key role not only in an intercultural and role-conscious dimension but, also for the awareness of their role in society through self-criticism and self-reflection.

This multidimensional knowledge towards social, political and civil engagement determines the so-called professionalism. The idea of professionalism reflects norms and ideologies shared by groups of reference (Goldberg, 2008), and this case by EU states. In current political, economic, and social situations, the complexity of labour market and of new forms of workers is

increasingly seen as an emerging phenomenon with non-linear and uncertain dynamics, by strengthening the definition of “active citizenship” and transversal and multidisciplinary skills.

## Module 2 – The effects of globalization

The effects of globalization may be seen as a shifting and lowering of geographical and temporal boundaries, creating a world community with shared issues and opportunities for participation in civil society and international labour markets. International treaties that grant people common rights have increased in quantity and variety in terms of social, economic, and political developments aimed at improving conditions where citizens can be more competitive, aware of opportunities, limitations, and regulations, and advantaged because of particular knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

In particular, studies conducted in this field frequently discuss professionalism education as a crucial area for developing human capital (Porter *et al.*, 2004). Students are prioritized in this human capital strategy because they will be future employees who need to get the necessary skills and knowledge to compete successfully in the global market and to maximize their economic and social benefits (Apple, 2000). In fact, the situation now governed by digital culture (Schultz *et al.*, 2016) that witnesses a decline in civic engagement among young people is of particular interest to many academics (Dalton, 2022), and the active citizenship identifies the final result of educational processes (both formal and informal), not only based on social, civic, or political participation but also incorporated into an individual's process of personal growth, able to stimulate democratic values, cultural diversity, empathy, cooperation skills, and an open mind to changes in a conceptualization of lifelong learning process (Peucker & Ceylan, 2017).

A measure of civic engagement is also the participation of citizens in non-governmental groups. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are widely acknowledged to have a significant role in the development of sustainable social systems, despite the fact that the statistics on membership in NGOs cannot be regarded as accurate. Thus, the literature generally agrees that education affects civic engagement and social participation.

According to the European Commission *et al.* (2017), “citizenship education supports students in becoming active, informed, and responsible citizens who are willing and able to take responsibility for themselves and their communities at the local, regional, national, and international level”.

## Module 3 – Active citizenship and NEETs

At the same time, the European Commission underlined that citizenship only has value if it is active, allowing individuals to use their right to participate. This is especially important in situations where many young people feel less and less like citizens.

We're talking about young people who are "NEET" (not in education, employment, or training), as well as young people who are migrants and refugees (with no rights), young people without a job, or young people in situations of protracted precarity, all of whom run the risk of social exclusion and losing faith in democratic institutions and political commitment.

Therefore, citizenship education policies are fundamental to enhancing their life prospects, enabling their social inclusion, and contributing to their capacity to play a more active role as citizens in their settings by acquiring mastering processes.

The link between education, active citizenship, and civic engagement is growing at the European level. Indeed, in the EU, discussions on youth civic participation and the role of education in

fostering active citizenship have become serious issues, also in the face of several studies that have shown the strong relationship between civic participation and education.

The multilevel regression model used by Hingels *et al.* (2009 in Neset, 2018) to identify the drivers for active citizenship demonstrated that the most important "predictors" of active citizenship include an individual's level of education and involvement in lifelong activities. In particular, individuals with a higher level of education are more engaged citizens with greater significance in some countries than others.

However, most of the current education systems concentrate on competitive components of market labour based on education and local employment rather than on aspects concerning poverty, justice, and inequities (Shiel & McKenzie, 2008); probably unaware that educational institutions play a critical role in developing a new generation capable of addressing pressing and emerging global issues.

Professional citizenship must be seen as a collection of chances to participate in pertinent, worthwhile activities that broaden students' perspectives on the world, their country, and their community and enable them to contribute. This perspective of education based on knowledge and values can contribute to human growth globally, even more so in an era characterized by culture and digitalized work, where there are changing forms of citizenship based on digitalized transformation (such as online social networking sites, forums, chat rooms, and so on) about which Neset (2018) highlights the performative dimension of citizens' participation in public life (Peucker & Ceylan, 2017), above all for the young generation.

A deeper understanding of the elements that could promote young people's social participation and civic engagement is necessary in light of the rise of nationalist political discourses, increased by the large influx of immigrants and the refugee crisis (Neset, 2018).

#### **Module 4 – Social involvement and civic engagement**

Social involvement and civic engagement nowadays are the two basic manifestations of active citizenship that may be measured.

Verba *et al.* (1995 in Schulz *et al.*, 2016) discovered three key predictors of political participation:

1. Resources that allow people to participate including time and knowledge,
2. Psychological involvement based on interest and efficacy, and
3. Recruitment networks including social movements and organizations for drawing people into political activism.

From the above, professional citizens need to change visions, skills, and mental patterns by means of:

1. active problem-solving abilities,
2. information technology (IT),
3. communication skills,
4. mental and emotional competencies,
5. skills of data integration, summarizing, and connecting among elements to generate patterns,
6. critical thinking,

7. information management,
8. ability to detect valid alternate views.

Only by appreciating the impact of context on its conceptualization can citizenship education be completely understood (Kerr, 2003; in Safaei Fakhria & Talebzadeh, 2011). The attempts to define and redefine citizenship and citizenship education are connected to the modern world's rapid rate of change and the shared concerns or issues that change has brought (ibidem).

These problems in turn raise difficult questions about diversity, ethnic and cultural heritage, and other topics. In fact, recently, Kersh *et al.* (2021) provided a series of guidelines despite the cultural differences of countries by determining essential cross-cutting elements of citizenship education. They concern relevance and contextualization based on young adults' personal backgrounds and professional ambitions; affordances that do not consider gender differences but provide the same opportunities for everybody; customized educational programs as opposed to standardized methods; multiculturalism and confidence: developing young adults' resilience, confidence, and self-esteem; multiculturalism to promote tolerance for diversity; and encouraging communication between stakeholders (Toiviainen *et al.*, 2022).

Despite the geographical difficulties, below is a summary of the essential components that identify professional citizenship as proposed by Leila Safaei Fakhria and Fatemeh Talebzadeh (2011) with regards to professional citizenship (Fig. 1):

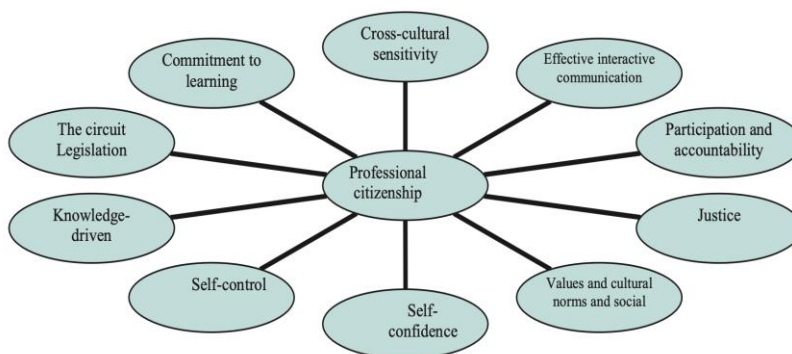


Fig. 1. Component of professional citizenship (Source: Leila safaei fakhria & Fatemeh Talebzadeh, 2011)

With reference to the concept of professional citizenship, the above-mentioned authors drew some fundamental dimensions oriented toward regulative development, self-knowledge, collective/social values and their ramifications, the development of intellectual curiosity, and alternative viewpoints. As a result, the idea of citizenship encompasses both belonging to a group, whether it be political or social, as well as a set of responsibilities.

To educate the citizenry implies fostering a sense of solidarity, dedication, and respect in the context of identity, values, and community, as described in the EU Council's recommendation of May 2018 about key competences for lifelong learning, which sees "citizenship competence as the ability to act as responsible citizens and to fully participate in civic and social life, based on an understanding of social, economic, legal, and political concepts and structures, as well as global developments and sustainability". Schultz *et al.* (2016) affirm that there is an unequivocal relationship of dependence (Hegles, 2009) between professionalism and active citizens, as well as the components of professional citizenship.

The literature recognizes the pivotal role of education in civic engagement, which we cannot understate. Despite numerous references to "active citizenship" in EU political discussions and

policy texts, it is still among the most difficult subjects to teach. According to statistics from recent research, young people (Driel *et al.*, 2016; Strohmeier *et al.*, 2017) have a particular intolerance for immigration and a rising domestic diversity. Therefore, it is important to offer to teachers, educators, and youth workers clear methodological guidelines and examples of effective teaching civics.

There are methods used in the EU that have been beneficial in fostering intercultural, social, and civic skills and, as a result, active citizenship and civic engagement.

## Module 5 – Platforms

Most recently, in 2018, “**The Lifelong Learning Platform**”<sup>2</sup> became operational in order to provide a hub for 42 European organizations working in the fields of education, training, and youth. For the time being, these networks include more than 50, 000 educational institutions and organizations that span all formal, non-formal, and informal learning sectors in an effort to ensure that we can support individuals as they go through life changes. Learning promotes justice, social cohesiveness, and active citizenship and is not just confined to formal schooling. According to the platform, the goals of education and training should also be viewed as a framework for personal development rather than just being defined in terms of economic growth or employability.

The Platform welcomed the “**Education and Training 2020 work programme**”<sup>3</sup> dedicated Commission Thematic Working Group which was created to facilitate knowledge and experience sharing across Ministries of Education. By exchanging knowledge and identifying best practices, the more than 400 experts from the administrations of Member States and other stakeholders who make up the ET 2020 Working Groups (WGs) offer advice and expertise to the European Commission as it develops legislative proposals and policy initiatives. They also assist Member States in overcoming the major difficulties in their education and training systems.

“**Intercultural telecollaborations**” on civic education programs, such as the “**Erasmus+ European projects**” and the “**Virtual Exchange**” and online “**eTwinning**” program were active in 2017 (Byram *et al.*, 2017).

In 2022, initiatives assisting young people in locating volunteer activities to build their multicultural, collaborative, and active citizenship skills were developed in EU through “**European Voluntary Service**”<sup>4</sup> and “**European Solidarity Corps**”<sup>5</sup>, involving volunteering traineeships, jobs (but discontinued in the new programme 2021-2027), local Solidarity Projects Humanitarian aid volunteering (European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps).

Since 2015, the “**Action plan on the prevention of the processes of radicalization which may culminate in extremism and terrorism**” has been in effect in the Flemish community of Belgium (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2016).

---

<sup>2</sup> <https://llplatform.eu/who-we-are/about-us/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/a1ffa181-8ac4-11eb-b85c-01aa75ed71a1>

<sup>4</sup> [https://youth.europa.eu/go-abroad/volunteering\\_en](https://youth.europa.eu/go-abroad/volunteering_en)

<sup>5</sup> [https://youth.europa.eu/solidarity\\_en](https://youth.europa.eu/solidarity_en)

The 2015 saw the release of a French action plan titled "**Equality and citizenship: The Republic in action**"<sup>6</sup>. A required course on "**Life and Society**"<sup>7</sup> has taken the role of religious instruction in Luxemburg in order to ensure that students acquire respect for others in the classroom.

In 2015, Italy issued **Law No. 107/2015**<sup>8</sup> to affirm the central role of school in the knowledge society and to raise the levels of education and skills to counter inequalities, to prevent and recover abandonment and dispersion, to promote education for active citizenship, the right to study and equal opportunities. In addition, in Italy was founded "**Cittadinanzattiva**"<sup>9</sup> (active citizenship), an Italian non-profit organization created in 1978 and unaffiliated with political parties, labour unions, or for-profit businesses, which pursues among its goals the support of civil society.

Through 250 "Active Citizenship" assemblies, which are held locally, promotes civic engagement and defending citizens' rights in Italy and throughout Europe. It has three main strategies:

1. to give people and organizations more authority so they can better protect basic human rights, look after public goods, and take part in policymaking. They can do this by using civic instruments like their organization's charter of rights and being able to access citizen advisory services.
2. to create data on citizens' rights that may be accessed, gathered, and analysed by citizens.
3. to promote communication with political parties and governmental organizations.

EU<sup>10</sup> proposed in 2014 a programme to contribute citizenship about the treaties, international human rights conventions, and equality principles.

In order to identify potential advantages resulting from the growth and networking of volunteer efforts for urban and suburban green spaces and urban parks in European towns, Greece<sup>11</sup> established a project in 2011.

In 2009, Germany has realised a project called "**eOpinion**"<sup>12</sup> with the overall goal of enhancing public participation and citizen acceptance of public policies, by combining know-how and technical competence for public engagement. The Federal Ministry of Family, Elderly People, Women in Germany, and Youth still proposed the "**Federal Volunteer Service**"<sup>13</sup> (Bundesfreiwilligendienst) as a separate entity in 2012. Including all national stakeholders in the creation of a national strategy for the promotion of volunteering was the overarching goal.

A project called "**The Active Citizenship Club**"<sup>14</sup> was put forth in Cyprus in 2009 to promote interest in current events, diverse cultures, environmental concerns, school-related issues, racism, nationalism, immigration, anti-war organizations, social problems, religious concerns, and military-related concerns.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.gouvernement.fr/partage/3593-comite-interministeriel-egalite-et-citoyennete-la-republique-en-actes>

<sup>7</sup> <http://downloads.slo.nl/Documenten/dialog-als-burgerschapsinstrument-po.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2015/07/15/15G00122/sg>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.activecitizenship.net/>

<sup>10</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/justice/grants1/programmes-2014-2020/rec/index\\_en.htm](https://ec.europa.eu/justice/grants1/programmes-2014-2020/rec/index_en.htm)

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.kean.gr>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.eopinio.de>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.bmfsfj.de/BMFSFJ/freiwilliges-engagement.html>

<sup>14</sup> <http://active-citizenship.blogspot.com>



In 2006, Spain promoted documentations about “**EL ENLACE**<sup>15</sup>” project promoted by the Ibero American Development and Integration Centre. was developed. The objectives of the project are to facilitate and accelerate the process of migrants’ social and employment integration, reducing vulnerability caused by ignorance of bureaucratic and socio- economic procedures.

Citizenship is related to professionalism often acquired through labour practices, in particular in a context of digitalization of work. Digital platform firms have built a business model around the idea that they do not hire their workers but rather treat them as independent contractors, who are far more susceptible than employees when it comes to fundamental rights and protections at work. The prevalence of app-based gig employment is rising quickly in the world's most affluent nations. Many gig workers who rely on apps are immigrants, and their occupations are unstable, erratic, and sometimes risky. As a result, there is negative relationship between international students who are looking to immigrate through education which for paying the tax have to work adopting a gig economy model. Gig workers have little protection and assistance against unfair treatment and abuse by platforms that are not recognized to be employers due to limited, or non-existent, appropriate regulation or hurried legislative solutions (van Doorn *et al.*, 2020). According to Urbanaviciute *et al.* (2019), access to decent work is related to sustainable career development, which benefits employees' health, happiness, and productivity, as well as learning, some level of security and stability, and a job that is in line with their skills, interests, and values (De Vos *et al.*, 2020). These factors pose a particular difficulty for employees, particularly in the context of mobility, which sees workers who are migrants and are facing their post-migration career journey.

Good practices and initiatives aimed at improving the working conditions, the legislative framework and the platforms management in or to develop inclusion and active citizenship have also been implemented within the workforce of the gig economy.

In particular, a procedure on “**Fair working conditions, rights and social protection for platform workers - New forms of employment linked to digital development**<sup>16</sup>” was launched by the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL) of the European Parliament in 2019. The procedure was adopted in September 2021. The resolution also emphasized the necessity of recognizing platform employees' skills and their entitlement to get basic training from the platform.

The European Parliament (GUE/NGL) unveiled a draft **EU directive on digital platform employees** on November 2020. The proposed directive's objective was to ensure the safety of persons employed by digital platforms by integrating their social and labour rights with those of all other workers. The directive would require Member States to ensure platform workers enjoy fair working conditions, leave and rest times, pay, processing of personal data, health and safety, representation, and access to social protection. Since its founding in 2021, the “**Observatory on the Internet Platform Economy**<sup>17</sup>” has kept track of the sector's development in order to assist and advise the Commission in developing its online platform-related policies. It is made up of a group of 15 unaffiliated specialists and a group of Commission employees.

<sup>15</sup> <https://innovationforsocialchange.org/europes-economic-prosperity-relies-on-civic-participation-say-eu-reports/>

<sup>16</sup> [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2021/698839/EPRS\\_BRI\(2021\)698839\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2021/698839/EPRS_BRI(2021)698839_EN.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> <https://platformobservatory.eu>

Around the world, **Ius Laboris**<sup>18</sup> is born with offices deployed worldwide and numerous in Europe, which works with employers to arm them with the knowledge they need to operate in local and international markets. It is consistently recognized as the leading legal service provider in employment, immigration and pensions law and provides guidance on employment rights, diversity and inclusions, health and safety developing citizenship.

The city of Bologna in Italy signed a “**Charter of Basic Rights of Digital Work**”<sup>19</sup> in 2018 alongside platforms and labour organizations. This charter's goal is to promote a new digital culture while improving the working circumstances for digital professionals. The first “**help desk for riders**”<sup>20</sup> was launched in Milan the same year. It was devoted to gathering information, providing guidance, and advocating for riders' rights about issues like as road safety and labour rights. The initiative aims to be both a tangible support for workers and a catalyst for the achievement of agreements and initiatives to eliminate disputes and ensure the development of skills that can be applied to other workplace contexts.

In 2023, the Lazio region opens “**Sportello Mobbing-Work Disorder-Arbeit-Related Stress**”<sup>21</sup>, an urban haven for riders and vulnerable and disadvantaged workers in order to provide awareness

In Campania<sup>22</sup>, a project has been developed in partnership with Inail of Campania and Aps Napoli Pedala with the aim of implementing informational campaigns and promoting health and safety at workplaces targeted at workers who provide goods for others in an urban setting while using motorized vehicles, through both traditional and digital platforms. Finally, another example the **help desk against exploitation**<sup>23</sup> created in Palermo in 2022. "Power to the People" is aimed at providing legal support for black and or precarious workers. In Palermo, in 2023 was also founded the **help desk dedicated to accidents**<sup>24</sup> of workers.

However, both the world of education and that of the labour market with a focus on the digital economy are gaining increasing importance in governmental and legislative discussion tables both nationally and internationally. The theme of active citizenship connected to professionalism is therefore one of the focal points of interconnection between the various themes. Therefore, numerous and innovative initiatives are being developed aimed at raising awareness, proposing initiatives and tools to resolve the currently problematic and unresolved issues.

---

<sup>18</sup> <https://iuslaboris.com/about/>

<sup>19</sup> [http://www.comune.bologna.it/sites/default/files/documenti/CartaDiritti3105\\_web.pdf](http://www.comune.bologna.it/sites/default/files/documenti/CartaDiritti3105_web.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> <https://economiaelavoro.comune.milano.it/news/apre-il-primo-sportello-dedicato-ai-riders>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.ferpress.it/fit-cisl-lazio-da-oggi-apre-lo-sportello-mobbing-alla-stazione-lavoro/>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.inail.it/cs/internet/comunicazione/progetti/progetto-dr-campania-2021-nuovi-lavori-tutele.html>

<sup>23</sup> <https://poterealpopolo.org/palermo-nasce-lo-sportello-contro-lo-sfruttamento/>

<sup>24</sup>

<https://www.collettiva.it/copertine/lavoro/2021/05/24/news/palermo-riders-e-sicurezza-lo-sportello-per-la-tutela-degli-infortuni-al-patronato-inca-cgil-1142286/>

## References

1. Apple, M., W. (2000). Can critical pedagogies interrupt rightist policies? *Educational Theory*, 50:2 , 229-254.
2. Byram, M.; Golubeva, I.; Han, H.; Wagner, M. (eds.) (2017). *From Principles to Practice in Education for Intercultural Citizenship*, Multilingual Matters, Bristol.
3. Dalton, R. (2002). 'The decline of party identifications'. In Dalton, R., Wattenberg, M. (eds.) *Parties without partisans*, (Oxford, UK, Oxford University Press, pp. 19–36.
4. De Vos, A., Van der Heijden, B. I. J. M., & Akkermans, J. (2020). Sustainable careers: Towards a conceptual model. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2018.06.011>
5. European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice (2016). Promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education: Overview of education policy developments in Europe following the Paris Declaration of 17 March 2015. Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg
6. European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice (2017). *Citizenship Education at School in Europe*. Eurydice Report. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.
7. European Union (2018). *Council Recommendation of 22 May 2018 on key competences for lifelong learning*(2018/C 189/01).
8. Goldberg JL. Humanism or professionalism? The White Coat Ceremony and medical education. *Acad Med*. 2008;83:715–722. doi: 10.1097/ACM.0b013e31817eba30.
9. Gundara, J. S. (2014). 'Global and Civilisational Knowledge: Eurocentrism, Intercultural Education and Civic Engagements.' *Intercultural Education*, 25(2), pp. 114-127
10. Harris, A. (2013). *Young People and Everyday Multiculturalism*, Routledge, New York.
11. Kersh, N., Toiviainen, H., Pitkänen, P., Zarifs, G.K. (eds.) (2021). *Young Adults and Active Citizenship. Towards Social Inclusion through Adult Education*. Springer Open Access.
12. Neset (2018): The links between education and active citizenship/civic engagement. Ad hoc report.
13. Porter, M. E., Ketels, C. H. M., Miller, K & Bryden, R. T. (2004). *Competitiveness in Rural U.S. Regions: Learning and Research Agenda*. Institute for Strategy and Competitiveness, Harvard Business School, Cambridge, MA.
14. safaei fakhria, L. & Talebzadeh, F. (2011). A framework for Professional citizenship education based on knowledge management principles. *Social and Behavioral Science*, 1133-1142.
15. See Peucker, M.; Ceylan, R. (2017). 'Muslim community organizations – sites of active citizenship or self-segregation?' *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 40(14), pp. 2405-2425. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2016.1247975>
16. See Schulz, W.; Ainley, J.; Fraillon, J.; Losito, B.; Agrusti, G. (2016). *IEA International Civic and Citizenship Education Study 2016: Assessment Framework*, International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.
17. Shiel, C., & McKenzie, A. (2008). Introduction. In C. Shiel & A. McKenzie, (Eds.), *The Global University: the role of senior managers* (5-9). London: DEA River House .

18. Strohmeier, D.; Barrett, M.; Bora, C.; Caravita, S.C.S.; Donghi, E.; Dragoti, E. *et al.* (2017). 'Young People's Engagement with the European Union: The Importance of Visions and Worries for the Future of Europe', *Zeitschrift für Psychologie*, 225(4), pp. 313-323, <https://doi.org/10.1027/2151-2604/a000314>
19. Toiviainen, H., *et al.* (2021). Conclusion: Divergences or Convergences? Facilitating Active Citizenship Through Adult Education Across Europe and Beyond. In Kersh, N., Toiviainen, H., Pitkänen, P., Zarifs, G.K. (eds.). *Young Adults and Active Citizenship. Towards Social Inclusion through Adult Education* (167-182). Springer Open Access.
20. Urbanaviciute I., Bühlmann F., & Rossier J. (2019). Sustainable careers, vulnerability, and well-being: Towards an integrative approach. In J. G. Maree (Ed) *Handbook of innovative career counselling* (pp. 53–70). Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-227999\\_4](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-227999_4).
21. Van Doorn, N., Ferrari, F., Graham, M. (2020). Migration and migrant labour in the gig economy: An intervention. SSRN. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3622589>
22. Van Driel, B.; Darmody, M.; Kerzil, J. (2016). 'Education policies and practices to foster tolerance, respect for diversity and civic responsibility in children and young people in the EU', NESET II report, Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union. <https://doi.org/10.2766/46172>.
23. Verba, S.; Schlozman, K. L.; Brady, H. E. (1995). *Voice and equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics*. Cambridge, MA, USA: Harvard University Press as referred in Schulz *et al.* (2016). IEA International Civic and Citizenship Education Study 2016: Assessment Framework, International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

## Bonus chapters

## Chapter 7 – Communication skills

Being able to communicate effectively is perhaps the most important of all life skills. It is what enables us to pass information to other people and to understand what is said to us.

Communication skills are a set of abilities that facilitate the effective exchange of information, ideas, thoughts, and emotions between individuals or groups. It includes several various verbal and non-verbal techniques, such as speaking, listening, writing, reading, body language, and facial expressions. Communication skills play a crucial role in personal and professional interactions, as they determine how effectively one can express themselves, understand others, and build meaningful relationships.

Communication, at its simplest, is the act of transferring information from one place to another. It may be vocally (using voice), written (using printed or digital media such as books, magazines, websites, or emails), visually (using logos, maps, charts, or graphs), or non-verbally (using body language, gestures, and the tone and pitch of voice). In practice, it is often a combination of several of these.

Good communication skills include actively receiving and analysing messages in addition to sending information. It includes being able to express ideas and thoughts simply, utilizing suitable language, tone, and context, as well as paying attention to people with empathy and understanding. In a variety of contexts, such as the job, social connections, educational settings, and intimate relationships, communication skills are essential.

Those with good communication skills can explain their ideas, bargain, work together, and develop trust with others. Clear communicators are able to explain their ideas and views, prevent misunderstandings, and settle disputes. Also, effective communication skills are crucial for leaders since they must convey their vision, inspire others, and drive their teams.

Improving communication skills requires practice, self-awareness, and continuous learning. It involves developing active listening skills, using appropriate language and tone, understanding non-verbal cues, and adapting communication style to different situations and audiences. Enhancing communication skills can lead to better relationships, increased productivity, and improved overall success in various aspects of life.

### 1) The importance of communication skills

Communication skills are incredibly important in today's world for several reasons:

1. Effective communication is essential for building and maintaining relationships: Whether it's personal relationships, professional relationships, or even online interactions, effective communication is crucial. It helps in building trust, resolving conflicts, and establishing meaningful connections with others.
2. The ability to communicate effectively is essential for success at work: Employers place a great emphasis on effective communication skills in the increasingly competitive employment market of today. You may succeed in job interviews, work productively with colleagues, and express your thoughts and viewpoints to superiors, clients, and customers with the support of strong communication skills.

3. Communication is key in leadership and management roles: Effective leaders and managers are skilled communicators. They need to be able to convey their vision, provide feedback, and motivate and inspire their team. Good communication skills enable leaders and managers to communicate clearly, empathetically, and persuasively, which can greatly impact the success of a team or organization.
4. In a globalized society, communication is crucial since people from many cultures and backgrounds frequently interact. In a worldwide world, good communication abilities aid in overcoming linguistic and cultural boundaries, fostering mutual understanding, and fostering fruitful partnerships.
5. Communication is important for personal growth and self-expression: Being able to express oneself clearly and confidently is important for personal growth and self-advocacy. Strong communication skills allow individuals to express their thoughts, emotions, and ideas effectively, leading to better self-expression and understanding of others.
6. Communication is essential for problem-solving and decision-making: Effective communication is crucial for recognizing issues, addressing them, making decisions that are well-informed, and coming up with solutions. In order to attain consensus and make informed judgments, effective communication skills are helpful in acquiring information, understanding situations, and communicating thoughts and ideas.

In summary, communication skills are important in today's world because they are fundamental for building relationships, succeeding in the workplace, leading and managing others, navigating a globalized world, expressing oneself, and solving problems. Strong communication skills can lead to better personal and professional outcomes and contribute to overall success in various aspects of life.

## 2) Communication skills in the workplace

Effective communication skills are critical in the workplace for fostering collaboration, building relationships, and achieving organizational goals. Communication is a core skill involving a wide range of “sub-skills” essential for the workplace and for the hiring process that will get you there. Here are some important aspects of communication skills in the workplace:

1. Active listening: Active listening requires paying close attention to the speaker by engaging with them to ensure you're getting the essence of the conversation. It additionally involves removing all other distractions and asking clarifying questions, thus making them feel heard. Listening attentively to colleagues, managers, and clients is essential for understanding their perspectives, needs, and concerns. It shows respect and helps build trust, which is crucial for effective communication.
2. Clarity and concision: Clear and concise communication helps avoid misunderstandings and uncertainty. Communication can be more effective and understood if it is written and spoken in plain, jargon-free language, and is structured rationally.
3. Nonverbal communication: Communication consists of much more than just speaking. It involves body language, posture, gestures, eye contact patterns, and facial expressions, among others. This type of communication often helps more in inciting

trust among your coworkers, or from clients, than verbal communication. At the same time, it makes it possible for you to see beyond what a person is saying and right into what they mean, or feel Nonverbal cues such as facial expressions, gestures, and body language convey important messages in the workplace. Being aware of and using nonverbal communication effectively can enhance understanding and build rapport with others.

4. Empathy and emotional intelligence: Having the capacity to comprehend and relate to the feelings and viewpoints of others, as well as to react with empathy, can help to foster a helpful and pleasant work atmosphere. Effective business communication requires emotional intelligence, which encompasses self-awareness, self-regulation, social awareness, and relationship management.

There are four aspects for increasing social intelligent: self-awareness, self-regulation, social awareness, and relationship management.

#### - **Self-awareness:**

Self-awareness is the ability to introspect and recognize one's own thoughts, emotions, and behaviours, and to have an understanding of how one's actions and behaviours may impact others and the environment. It involves being able to reflect on one's own actions, thoughts, and emotions, and having an objective understanding of one's own strengths, weaknesses, values, and beliefs.

Self-reflection, self-evaluation, and self-observation are ways to cultivate self-awareness. It enables people to have a deeper understanding of their own driving forces, aspirations, and behaviours, and to base their actions and choices on this understanding. Emotional intelligence includes self-awareness, which is frequently regarded as a critical element of individual development, self-improvement, and self-regulation.

Self-awareness can be cultivated through various practices, such as meditation, journaling, mindfulness, therapy, and seeking feedback from others. It involves a willingness to be honest with oneself, to acknowledge and accept both positive and negative aspects of oneself, and to strive for self-improvement and self-acceptance. Developing self-awareness can lead to increased self-confidence, better interpersonal relationships, improved decision-making, and a deeper understanding of oneself and others.

#### - **Self-regulation:**

Self-regulation refers to the ability to manage and control one's thoughts, emotions, impulses, and behaviours in order to achieve desired outcomes or goals. It involves the ability to regulate one's actions and reactions based on internal standards, values, and social norms, rather than being solely driven by immediate impulses or external circumstances.

Self-regulation involves many cognitive, emotional, and behavioural processes that help individuals monitor, manage, and control their thoughts, feelings, and behaviours. This involves the capacity to put off pleasure, avoid impulsive actions, handle stress, control emotions, keep one's attention and focus, and exercise self-control and discipline.



Self-awareness and self-regulation go together and are key components of emotional intelligence. It entails being conscious of one's feelings and urges and being able to control them in a healthy way. Goal-setting and self-motivation are also strongly related to self-regulation since both require people to align their actions with their long-term values and goals, even in the face of temptations or difficulties that may only last a short while.

Developing self-regulation skills can have numerous benefits, including improved self-control, increased resilience, better impulse control, enhanced decision-making, and greater overall emotional well-being. Self-regulation is a skill that can be developed and strengthened through practice, mindfulness, self-reflection, and self-discipline, and it plays a critical role in helping individuals navigate and adapt to various situations and challenges in their personal and professional lives.

- **Social awareness:**

Social awareness refers to the ability to perceive and understand the emotions, needs, and behaviours of others, as well as the dynamics of social situations. It involves being attuned to social cues, understanding social norms and expectations, and being empathetic towards others. Social awareness encompasses the ability to accurately interpret and respond to social cues such as body language, facial expressions, tone of voice, and social context.

Social awareness involves not only understanding others' emotions, but also being aware of social dynamics, cultural norms, and interpersonal dynamics in different social settings. It includes recognizing and understanding diversity, inclusion, and social justice issues, and being sensitive to the needs, experiences, and perspectives of people from different backgrounds and identities.

Social awareness is a key component of emotional intelligence and is closely linked to empathy, compassion, and interpersonal skills. It allows individuals to navigate social interactions effectively, build positive relationships, and respond to the emotions and needs of others in a socially appropriate and sensitive manner.

Developing social awareness requires active listening, observation, and perspective-taking. It involves being curious about others, seeking to understand their experiences, and showing empathy and compassion. It also requires self-awareness, as understanding oneself and one's own biases and perspectives is important in accurately perceiving and understanding others.

Enhancing social awareness can have numerous benefits, including improved communication skills, better interpersonal relationships, increased cultural competency, and the ability to navigate complex social situations with empathy, respect, and sensitivity. It is a valuable skill in personal, social, and professional contexts, as it promotes effective communication, collaboration, and relationship-building.

- **Relationship Management:**

Relationship management is the process of establishing, fostering, and preserving beneficial connections with people, groups, or other entities for both parties' benefit. In order to create and preserve wholesome and beneficial relationships, it entails actively controlling interactions, communication, and interactions.

Relationship management can apply to various contexts, including personal relationships, professional relationships, customer relationships, vendor relationships, and business partnerships. It involves skills such as communication, empathy, active listening, conflict resolution, and negotiation to establish and maintain positive relationships.

Relationship management frequently concentrates on establishing and sustaining connections with clients, suppliers, partners, and other stakeholders in a corporate or organizational context. To ensure favourable and mutually beneficial relationships, this can involve techniques like customer relationship management (CRM), supplier relationship management (SRM), and stakeholder engagement.

Healthy connections are essential for success in many areas of life, which makes relationship management critical. Good interactions can foster greater loyalty, trust, and teamwork, which can enhance opportunities, outcomes, and overall pleasure. Building partnerships, preventing and resolving problems, and improving communication and understanding among partners are all possible with effective relationship management.

The following are additionally important for effective communication:

1. **Adaptability:** Communication should be tailored to the audience and situation. Being able to adapt communication style, tone, and approach depending on the context, cultural differences, and the individual preferences of others can improve communication effectiveness.
2. **Feedback:** Providing and receiving feedback constructively is crucial for professional growth and development. Giving feedback in a timely, specific, and constructive manner, and being open to receiving feedback without becoming defensive, is essential for fostering a feedback-rich culture in the workplace.
3. **Written communication:** An important component of workplace communication is written communication, which includes emails, reports, and documents. Using suitable language and formatting while writing clearly, simply, and professionally is crucial for accurately and effectively presenting information.
4. **Conflict resolution:** Effective communication skills are essential for resolving disagreements in a respectful and helpful way in the workplace, where they can occur. For disagreements to be resolved and good working relationships to be maintained, active listening, empathy, and finding common ground are necessary.
5. **Collaboration and teamwork:** Effective collaboration and teamwork require strong communication abilities. Teamwork and overall success are promoted by having the ability to respectfully and inclusively share ideas, opinions, and feedback, as well as by actively taking part in group conversations and decision-making processes.

6. Professionalism: Being respectful and courteous, utilizing acceptable language, tone, and manners, as well as keeping confidentiality, when necessary, are all aspects of professionalism in the workplace. It also entails communicating effectively and professionally through platforms like SMS and email.

In conclusion, effective communication skills are essential for success in the workplace. They enable individuals to build relationships, collaborate, and achieve organizational goals. By actively listening, communicating clearly, showing empathy, adapting to different situations, providing and receiving feedback, resolving conflicts, and maintaining professionalism, employees can enhance their communication skills and contribute to a positive and productive work environment.

#### - **Communication skills for gig workers:**

Communication skills are essential for gig workers to succeed in today's gig economy. As gig workers often work remotely, independently, and with diverse clients or customers, effective communication is crucial to establish trust, manage expectations, resolve issues, and maintain professional relationships. Effective communication skills are essential for gig workers to succeed in the gig economy. Developing skills in active listening, clear and concise communication, written communication, flexibility in communication styles, timely and responsive communication, empathy and emotional intelligence, conflict resolution, professionalism, technology literacy, and networking can enhance communication effectiveness and help gig workers excel in their gigs.

Some communication skills are common between gig workers and general employees and some of are different.

#### - **Common communication skills:**

**Active Listening:** Listening attentively to clients, customers, or peers is critical to understanding their needs and expectations. It involves focusing on the speaker, avoiding interruptions, and asking clarifying questions to ensure clear comprehension.

**Clear and Concise Communication:** Gig workers should strive to communicate their ideas, instructions, or feedback clearly and concisely. Using simple and straightforward language, avoiding jargon or technical terms, and organizing information logically can help ensure effective communication.

**Written Communication:** Written communication is often the primary mode of communication for gig workers, especially when dealing with remote clients or customers. Developing skills in writing professional emails, messages, proposals, or reports is crucial to convey information accurately and professionally.

#### - **Conflict Resolution:**

Gig workers may encounter conflicts or disagreements in their work interactions. Developing skills in conflict resolution, such as active listening, assertiveness, and problem-solving, can help gig workers navigate conflicts professionally and find mutually beneficial solutions.

**Professionalism:** Maintaining a professional demeanour in all communication is essential for gig workers. This includes using appropriate language, tone, and etiquette, being respectful, and maintaining confidentiality when required.

- **Specific communication skills:**

Flexibility in Communication Styles: Gig workers may encounter diverse communication styles and preferences from different clients or customers. Being adaptable and adjusting communication style, tone, and language to match the needs of the audience can help establish rapport and build positive relationships.

- **Timely and Responsive Communication:**

In the gig economy, where responsiveness and availability are valued, timeliness is essential. Gig workers should make an effort to return messages, emails, or phone calls in a timely manner, establish clear expectations for response times, and pro-actively explain any delays or changes.

- **Empathy and Emotional Intelligence:**

Communication skills like empathy and emotional intelligence are essential for helping gig workers connect and comprehend their clients or customers on a deeper level. Long-lasting relationships can be cultivated through having empathy, an awareness of emotions, and the ability to control one's emotions in conversation.

- **Technology Literacy:**

Gig workers frequently use different digital platforms and technologies for communication. Effective communication in the gig economy requires knowing how to use communication technology including email, messaging applications, video conferencing, and project management software.

- **Networking and Relationship Building:**

Developing connections with others, clients, and clients can be advantageous for gig workers. Reaching out proactively, establishing a connection, staying in touch, and cultivating business relationships can result in recommendations, repeat business, and more opportunities.

3) Common Barriers to Effective Communication

- a) Differences in perception and viewpoint.
- b) Physical disabilities such as hearing problems or speech difficulties.
- c) Physical barriers to non-verbal communication. Not being able to see the non-verbal cues, gestures, posture and general body language can make communication less effective. Phone calls, text messages and other communication methods that rely on technology are often less effective than face-to-face communication.
- d) Language differences and the difficulty in understanding unfamiliar accents.
- e) Expectations and prejudices, which may lead to false assumptions or stereotyping. People often hear what they expect to hear rather than what is actually said and jump to incorrect conclusions.
- f) Cultural differences, the norms of social interaction vary greatly in different cultures, as do the way in which emotions are expressed. For example, the concept of personal space varies between cultures and between different social settings.

#### 4) Tips to enhance communication skills in the gig economy

- Ask for testimonials and referrals: Ask for feedback from happy customers and referrals to grow your network. Good testimonials and word-of-mouth advertising can be effective methods for enhancing your reputation and attracting new customers.
- Reliable: Dependability is essential in the gig economy. Be reliable in meeting deadlines, delivering work on time, and keeping your promises. Clients appreciate freelancers who are consistent and trustworthy.
- Building relationships: In the gig economy, developing a strong professional network is essential. Participate in online communities, networking events, and events for your industry. To increase your reach and generate recommendation chances, interact with other professionals, share ideas, and establish connections.
- Provide value: Always strive to provide value to your clients. Go above and beyond to exceed their expectations and deliver high-quality work. Satisfied clients are more likely to recommend you to others and provide repeat business.
- Set Expectations: Establish clear expectations with clients regarding project timelines, deliverables, and communication methods. Make sure both parties are on the same page to avoid any miscommunication or disappointment.
- Be Responsive: Timely communication is key in the gig economy. Respond promptly to client inquiries, messages, and emails. This shows professionalism and reliability, which can build trust with clients and encourage repeat business.

### Stress Management

A gig worker has various challenges and problems that they cause stressful conditions for gig workers. There are some general ways for a gig worker to manage him/her stress. As a gig worker, managing stress is essential for maintaining your physical and mental well-being.

#### Prioritize yourself

Taking care of yourself is crucial. Get enough sleep, eat healthy meals, and exercise regularly. Prioritize self-care activities, such as meditation, yoga, or hobbies that help you relax and unwind.

#### Set boundaries

Set up distinct boundaries between work and personal time. Do not overwork yourself or let work stress affect your personal life. Establish clear working hours and make every effort to adhere to them.

#### Time management

You may minimize stress by managing your time effectively. To prioritize activities, assign due dates, and allot time for breaks, make a schedule or to-do list. Avoid taking on more than you can handle and get more comfortable saying no.

Looking for social support Get emotional support from friends, family, or coworkers. Speaking with someone about your worries or sharing your ideas can give you a new perspective and help you relax.

## Stress reducing techniques

Practice different stress-reducing techniques that work for you. Deep breathing, mindfulness, and progressive muscle relaxation are some examples of techniques that can help you relax and manage stress.

## Financial management

The financial instability that comes with gig labour can be stressful. To reduce financial stress, set up a budget, save money, and prepare for situations. To assist you in efficiently managing your finances, think about asking a financial expert for advice.

## Expectation management

Establish reasonable goals for both you and your work. Be kind with yourself and avoid from comparing yourself to other people. Understand that working a gig may have its ups and downs and develop your ability to adjust to them.

## Professional help

Consider seeking professional help from a therapist or counsellor. They can provide you with tools and strategies to manage stress effectively.

## Stress management in communication with others

Effective communication is a two-way street, and managing stress requires effort from both parties. By practicing active listening, assertive communication, emotional regulation, setting healthy boundaries, practicing empathy, being open and honest, and taking breaks when needed, you can promote healthy communication and reduce stress in your interactions with others.

Active listening involves giving your full attention to the person speaking, without interrupting or thinking about your response. It helps you understand the other person's perspective and minimizes miscommunication or misunderstandings that can contribute to stress.

While communicating assertively, you must do it in a way that is respectful to the other person's feelings and needs and communicate your own clearly. This can assist you in avoiding hiding your feelings or acting out excessively, both of which can exacerbate communication stress.

Emotions can sometimes run high during communication, and stress can exacerbate emotional reactions. Practice emotional regulation techniques, such as deep breathing, mindfulness, or taking a short break to calm down before responding. This can help you respond more calmly and rationally during communication, reducing stress.

Being clear about your expectations and your comfort zones is the first step in setting boundaries in communication. It is critical to explain your boundaries, as well as to show respect for others' boundaries. Good boundaries can help in communication stress management and the avoidance of misunderstandings.

## 5) Stress management strategies for gig workers in communication with clients

Gig workers communicate with clients regularly; managing stress is crucial to maintain gig workers' well-being and delivering the best possible service.

Implementing stress management strategies can help you effectively manage stress and build healthy relationships with your clients as a gig worker. The following can help you in managing stress:

- a) **Define boundaries:** To manage client expectations, be sure to specify your availability, working hours, and response times. To avoid feeling overworked, avoid overcommitting yourself, and be strong when letting clients know what your boundaries are.
- b) **Effective communication:** To prevent misconceptions or miscommunications that could lead to stress, communicate with clients in a straightforward and concise manner. Be kind and professional and pay attention to your client's needs and problems so you may properly handle them.
- c) **Prioritize activities:** Set up a system to prioritize tasks and due dates and then schedule your work accordingly. To avoid anxiety, divide major activities into smaller, more manageable steps. You will be able to keep organized and focused while also feeling less stressed.
- d) **Set breaks:** Regular breaks are crucial for stress management during the working day. To recharge and relieve stress, take a break from your computer or workstation, stretch, or practice relaxation techniques like deep breathing or mindfulness.
- e) **Take care of yourself:** Ensure that you care for your physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Get enough rest, eat healthfully, and participate in enjoyable activities. Frequent exercise, meditation, and interests might assist you in relaxation and stress management.
- f) **Client's expectation:** Be transparent with your clients about what you can realistically deliver and avoid over-committing. It is better to under-promise and over-deliver rather than the other way around. Managing client expectations can reduce stress by preventing situations where you feel pressured or overwhelmed.
- g) **Support:** When you are feeling stressed, do not be afraid to ask friends, family, or colleagues for help. You can get insight and receive emotional support by talking to someone.

## References

1. Gallo, C. (2014). Talk Like TED: The 9 Public-Speaking Secrets of the World's Top Minds. St. Martin's Griffin.
2. Stone, D., Patton, B., & Heen, S. (2010). Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss What Matters Most. Penguin Books.
3. Tongue, J. R., Epps, H. R., & Forese, L. L. (2005). Communication skills. Instructional course lectures, 54, 3-9.
4. Wangare, T., Kibui, W., Gathuthi, E (2012), Communication skills vol.I, LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing.
5. <https://www.coursera.org/articles/communication-skills>
6. <https://www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/communication-skills.html>
7. <https://www.stress.org/using-key-communication-skills-to-manage-stress>



## Chapter 8 – A train the trainer’s manual

The "train the trainer" manual will be highly beneficial for gig economy participants as it will provide a framework for developing effective training programs that in the end will help gig workers to acquire the skills and competence required to succeed in the Gig economy.

The “train the trainer” chapter is directed towards trainers, and it aims to support them in the provision of a consistent level of knowledge and skills, drawing knowledge and information from the other chapters of the “Gig Up Handbook for practitioners”, which, at the same time, will improve the overall quality of the work performed by gig economy participants.

The manual will provide guidance on effective training techniques and strategies, which will help trainers to develop more effective training programs. In that regard, it seeks for developing customised training in order to meet everyone’s needs. Not only that but it includes guidelines in order to know how to follow up participant’s progress. Furthermore, it focuses on how to empower participants in their learning pathways.

Overall, the train the trainer manual will be an important tool for gig economy workers and employers alike.

### 1) Why a train the trainer manual for Gig workers

The gig economy is rapidly growing, and gig workers need support in order to succeed in this new world of work<sup>1</sup>. We are facing the challenge without any tools that could upgrade as well as support the adaptation towards a more digital society.

As a result, there is a need for trainers and practitioners to adapt their approach to meet the unique needs of this group of professionals giving them real support.

The manual aims to provide guidance on how to support and train individuals with the profile and background of gig workers, including virtual and physical training methods, self-assessment tools, and testing and evaluation of skills.

Furthermore, despite the fact that the main target group of this manual will be trainers and practitioners, indirectly, the main beneficiaries will be the gig workers.

### 2) Roles and competences of a good trainer:

#### a) *What makes a good trainer?*

A trainer is responsible for preparing, and delivering a training activity to learners by creating the right framework that will allow learners to acquire knowledge and develop skills and competences in a specific field.

In the specific case the field is how Gig economy participants can improve their professional level in a number of areas, covered in the other chapters of the Handbook.

Trainers are also responsible of creating a safe learning environment in which learners can grow, acquire knowledge and advance their professional level. Not only that but, being a good trainer involves personalised or customised training that could meet everyone’s needs.

All in all, we have detected the following features that makes a good trainer:

- **Subject matter expertise:**

Good trainers should have in-depth knowledge of the subject matter they will teach in order to communicate this knowledge effectively to their audience.

This means breaking down a complex concept and presenting it in a clear, structured and concise manner, easy for their learners to understand.

This handbook contains a plethora of knowledge relevant to the Gig economy. Concepts, theoretical explanations, procedures.

- **Positive learning environment:**

A good trainer should create a positive learning environment fostering engagement, participation, and collaboration from and between all participants.

Group collaboration and hands-on exercises can help create a positive and rewarding learning environment and this can be achieved by encouraging learners to share what they have learned and their own relevant experiences with their group.

The role of the trainer is to provide learners, at the individual and group level, with the guidance and feedback they need by being empathetic and supportive.

- **Flexibility and adaptability:**

A good trainer should be adaptable and flexible and recognize the educational and professional backgrounds of their learner and their resulting diverse training needs.

Trainers should be able to tailor their approach to different learning styles and adjust their training to meet the learning needs of the gig economy workers participating in their training.

Trainers should also follow the latest trends and developments in the field they are teaching, so that they can provide the most up-to-date and relevant learning possible.

- **“Focus on the person” approach**

It is important as well that the trainer has an approach focused on the person. That means it should take into account factors such as reconciliation, health, living conditions,

b) *Communication & Interpersonal skills:*

Another important field of competence of trainers is linked with communication and interpersonal skills. Strong communication skills will enable a trainer to communicate complex concepts clearly and effectively to their learners. It is very important when talking about the gig economy where, usually, concepts tend to be dense. Also, trainers should be able to adjust their language and tone to the level of the audience they have. Giving and receiving feedback and answering questions without passing judgement is also important.

Strong interpersonal skills will allow a trainer to establish a good rapport with their learners and create a positive learning environment. A training group that will feel comfortable with their trainer, is more likely to engage in the training, ask questions and learn.

In that very regard, the manual comprises several techniques that could improve communication and interpersonal skills with exercises and practical approach. For example, technique of “mirroring” (which implies practicing the speech within the mirror) have proved to be very effective.

c) *Tailoring content and motivation:*

As all professionals, gig economy professionals have different academic backgrounds and level of experience. Effective trainers must therefore be able to assess their learning groups and tailor their content to address the needs of each group.

Effective trainers should also be able to motivate their learning groups by making their training engaging and interactive, and creating a learning environment where trainees feel valued and supported. Below you will find different motivation techniques applied to adult learners:

- *Asking for learners' input*

In the context of adult education, it is of high importance to frequently ask for learners' input and feedback, as they will feel involved at all times in their learning process and their motivation will increase according to Knowles' theory.

- *Facilitate exploration*

Adult learners are motivated by the exploration of new knowledge and information, for this, trainers should use different types of learning materials including infographics, presentations, videos, podcasts...to facilitate an ideal learning environment.

- *Introduce Chunk Learning*

Learning in bits or in chunks makes it simpler to process and assimilate new information. As the short-term memory can only hold five to nine pieces of knowledge at once, according to Miller (1956), learning in bits can be quite beneficial, especially for adult learners who may need to juggle multiple responsibilities.

3) Soft skills

Trainers need a diverse skillset in order to be successful. In addition to the skills and knowledge in the subject matter being taught, the so-called hard skills, successful trainers also need to develop their soft skills.

According to Investopedia, “Soft skills are character traits and interpersonal skills that characterize a person’s relationships with other people. In the workplace, soft skills are considered to be a complement to hard skills, which refer to a person’s knowledge and occupational skills”ii.

Soft skills can enable trainers to organize and deliver their trainings successfully. Although soft skills are countless, we have identified the following eight for the purposes of this handbook:

a) **Presentation Skills:** The ability to prepare presentation material and deliver presentations with clarity and confidence,

- b) **Communication Skills:** The ability to communicate and influence your audience,
- c) **Public Speaking:** The ability to control your audience and address it with confidence,
- d) **Organisational Skills:** The ability to organize your time,
- e) **Time Management:** The ability to be productive and manage time by prioritizing, setting goals, and delegating,
- f) **Team Facilitation:** The ability to engage with people, and manage and direct people and teams,
- g) **Creativity:** The ability to handle unexpected situations in a creative way,
- h) **Active Listening:** The ability to understand and respond appropriately,
- i) **Lifelong learning:** Trainers should be lifelong learners themselves and engage in learning continuously in order to develop their skills and knowledge further.

The above-mentioned skills are critical for the success of a training program. With the gig economy constantly evolving, and trainers need to support their trainees to stay ahead of the curve by providing them with the latest developments and trends in their respective fields in order to be successful.

Another important aspect is that soft skills are not acquired within “usual training and educative environments”. Skills like time management, public speaking, ... usually are acquired within informal environments and activities like voluntary work, life experiences, travelling, ... so it is very important that the trainer completes its professional backgrounds with rich personal experiences.

#### 4) A Gig workers' classroom

In order to develop instructional methods and to build the gig workers perfect classroom we need, first, to start by a deeply understanding of gig work and gig workers' profile.

##### 4.1 Introduction to Gig Work:

Gig economy professionals operate in a market characterized by short-term contracts and freelance work, as opposed to permanent jobs. Examples of gig work can vary from ridesharing to food delivery, freelance writing, and graphic design.

The advantages gig workers enjoy include flexibility, the ability to work on projects align with their interests, skills and time availability, and the flexibility to work from anywhere.

At the same time, gig workers are presented with numerous challenges, such as the lack of job security, variable income, and the need to manage their taxes, social security contributions and other expenses independently.

##### 4.2 Understanding the Profile of Gig Workers:

Gig workers come from diverse backgrounds and have different motivations for pursuing gig work. Gig workers include young professionals seeking flexible work arrangements, professionals looking for extra income, or retirees seeking for a way to stay active.

The experience and expertise of gig workers also varies, ranging from entry-level to highly skilled professionals. The nature of gig work allows or pushes gig workers to work independently and remotely, which can lead to feelings of isolation and disconnectedness from work environments and other professionals.

All in all, we can summarize the following features of gig workers:

- Diversity
- Flexibility
- Different level of experience and expertise
- Independent work
- Sometimes stressful environments

#### 4.3 *Testing and Evaluation:*

In addition to training, it is important for trainers to assess and evaluate the skills gig workers have acquired. Testing and evaluation of skills can be conducted through various methods such as scenario-based assessments, portfolio reviews, peer evaluations. These methods can provide a comprehensive and multi-dimensional view of the trainees' skills and capabilities. Nonetheless, peer evaluations have proved to be the most effective one according to the studies and research.

Testing and evaluation the skills acquired through various methods, combined with constructive feedback and evaluation, are critical elements that can support continuous learning and improvement of gig economy participants.

The choice of the assessment method will depend on the content covered in the training and the learning outcomes. Trainers and practitioners should select the most appropriate assessment method based on the goals of the training and the needs of the gig workers.

For example, if we want to assess "teamwork" ability, the best evaluation method will be a peer review or peer evaluation.

##### 4.3.1 *Participatory assessment, monitoring and evaluation*

It is important to make learners a part of the evaluation process through participatory approaches. For this, we need to first establish the aims of the evaluation, some indicators and questions. The information should be gathered in a database, partially analysed and then presented to the management team or group of trainers who are implementing the training course, to take the necessary measures in the implementation.

Trainers, if working with others, should first discuss what the objectives of the training are, in this case, preparing gig workers for the labour market and the necessary skills, and outline the activities that have been implemented to meet these objectives, the training workshops in this specific case. Afterwards, trainers should focus on the knowledge that they want to acquire through this evaluation through a brainstorming session. In this session, which should be guided by one

of the trainers, who will act as a facilitator, all participants should propose questions that will be written in a blackboard, while others discuss and agree on each question based on the objectives.

It should be noted that the evaluation should be gathered within the timeframe of the training course. If trainers want to measure the knowledge acquired, they should use the ex/ante/post methodology which measures the level of knowledge before taking part in the training course, during and afterwards.

## 5) How to run a class

In person training methods include workshops, seminars, and personal coaching. These methods provide the opportunity for hands-on learning and interaction between the trainer and other professionals in the group.

Virtual training methodologies vary from online courses, webinars, podcasts, and virtual coaching sessions. Compared to in-person training, virtual training methods are always available providing learners the flexibility to access a course from anywhere and at any time. On the other hand, virtual training methods don't offer the in-person interaction between trainees and trainers.

Taking into account these pros and cons, the trainer could choose the one that fits better, and it can implement it through the following methods:

### 5.1 Virtual Instructional Methods:

a) **Webinars:** Conducting webinars can be an effective way to deliver training to gig workers. Webinars are live, interactive sessions that can be accessed from anywhere provided that the trainee has an internet connection. Webinars can include presentations, live Q&A sessions, and interactive polls in order to keep the participants engaged. But the fact is that conducting webinars could be difficult sometimes. For that very reason, it is important to first define the audience, because it could be not the best method depending on it.

Secondly, it is important to choose a good space and platform to develop the webinar, especially if you want to share presentations or use other tools.

b) **Online courses:** Online courses are self-paced and can be accessed from anyone with an internet connection at their own convenience. They are a method with high flexibility that could adapt to different circumstances and profiles. Not only that, but online courses featured by its interactivity, and they also provide for a more collaborative approach with mentorships.

c) **Podcasts:** Podcasts are a convenient way to deliver training to gig workers who prefer to learn while on-the-go. They can cover a variety of topics, such as the latest industry trends or tips for managing finances or a project as a gig worker. Podcast also introduced a note of high flexibility because they can be listened at in any moment or developing daily-life activities. Furthermore, they help to develop active listening and reinforce auditory learning.

d) **Audio lectures:** Audio lectures can be used to deliver training to gig workers who prefer to learn through auditory channels. They can be used to cover specific topics, such as

how to build a personal brand or improve time management skills. They also could help to save time.

### 5.2 Physical Instructional Methods:

- a) **Instructor-led training:** A traditional training method that involves an instructor leading a group of trainees through the use of training material. This method allows for open dialogue, and it also helps to build a learning network. Not only that, but one of the advantages of instructor-led learning compared with digital instruction methods is the fact that it is developed within a distraction-free environment.
- b) **Work-based training:** Work-based training involves learning by doing in the work environment of a company. A wide range of studies has proved that learning-by-doing approach is highly effective as a learning method and has a more intense transfer towards the real world. It helps to learn quickly.
- c) **Classroom training:** Classroom training is similar to instructor-led training but typically involves a smaller group of participants. It allows creating a more personal learning and collaborative environment.
- d) **Workshops:** Workshops are hands-on training sessions that allow gig workers to learn new skills through interactive activities.

The choice of the instructional method will depend on the profile of the gig workers. When deciding the training method for a class, trainers must carefully select the most appropriate training considering factors like the needs of the individual groups, as well as the learning style, availability, and budget of their trainees.

### 5.3 Icebreakers

Icebreakers are facilitation exercises for team building, especially in the first sessions of a training course to create a sense of belonging in the group. They are usually presented as a game to “warm up” and help learners to get to know each other. Icebreakers should be related to the subject of the workshop, if collaborative activities are going to be implemented, then the icebreaker should promote collaboration. Additionally, they should not require learners to reveal personal information or touch each other, as this may be stressful for some. Below you will find different types of icebreakers that you can use in your course:

- **Introductory icebreakers:** These help learners not only get to know each other’s names but also recognise similarities. Examples include asking participants to share their names and one thing about them.
- **Getting-to-know-you icebreakers:** These help learners become more acquainted after they first get to know each other. Examples include: Two truths and one lie, find 10 things in common or the one-word icebreaker game.
- **Team-Building icebreakers:** These are intended to help groups begin the process of forming themselves into a team. Some focus on building communication, trust or the ability to work together. Examples include Team Timeline, turning over a new leaf, fun and funny questions.

Below you will find an example of an icebreaker explained:

- For the **10 things in common** icebreaker, you should give a piece of paper to each participant where they have to write 10 facts about them. Afterwards, participants should ask each other to find what they have in common with each other. Once someone checks all the items from the list, they have to share with the group what they have in common and with whom.
- The aim of this activity is to help direct conversations and to find similarities between participants, as they will have to speak with everyone. Remember to tell participants that easy cop-outs are not allowed, such as “we both have feet”.

## 6) Conclusion

Overall, the “the Gig Up trainer’s manual” is a handbook directed towards trainers and practitioners that aim to help them to better guide gig workers within the acquisition of skills required in the new digital world. In that regard, the manual’s lessons content must enable participants to capitalise on the knowledge of the handbook and improve their knowledge regarding:

- The skills of the future,
- How to become a better professional (media presence, visibility),
- Improve project management skills,
- Improve financial management skills.

---

<sup>i</sup> Gig Economy Trends and Impact on Small and Medium Practices (2021). Available at: <https://www.ifac.org/knowledge-gateway/contributing-global-economy/discussion/gig-economy-trends-and-impact-small-and-medium-practices>.

<sup>ii</sup> Kenton, W. (2022) What Are Soft Skills? Definition, Importance, and Examples. Available at: <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/s/soft-skills.asp>.



**Disclaimer:**

The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.