

TECH SENIOR

TECHNOLOGY FOR ASSISTING SENIORS

Module 1: How to teach older people to use digital technology



Learning outcomes

The learner;

- Is able to identify what works to aid learner retention and apply the necessary pedagogical tools to enable older people to learn IT technology
- Understands the different learning processes of older people
- Is able to apply a positive and empathic attitude to training
- Is able to provide knowledge of ethics of digital security to protect the older person

Content

- **Psychological aspect**
 - Knowledge of ageing regarding retention and cognitive abilities
 - Motivation
 - Active listening
 - Positive feedback
 - Empathetic approach
 - Patience/speed
- **Technical aspect**
 - Teacher understands different learning processes
 - Memory retention
 - Repeating
 - Simple steps
 - Avoiding IT-slang
- **Ethics of privacy**
 - Setting boundaries
 - Ethics
 - Privacy protection

Psychological aspect

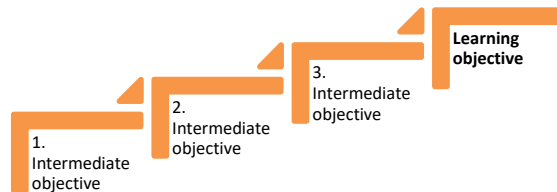
Knowledge of ageing regarding retention and cognitive abilities

- The demand for basic IT skills has evolved following the rising number of official digital solutions in many countries
- There is an obstacle to learning in a mature age:
 - natural deterioration of brain function
 - weakening of concentration
 - weakening of memory and mental flexibility
- The brain is plastic in all stages of life
 - it is possible to maintain the functionality of the brain to learn, even in old age if older people engage their brain in new challenging tasks; e.g. learning IT

Psychological aspect

Motivation

- During teaching and training it is important to keep up and promote the motivation of elders:



Example:

Learning objective: Send an e-mail

Intermediate objectives:

1. Set up an e-mail account by:
 - Creating a user name
 - Creating a secure password
2. Log in to e-mail account
3. Write an e-mail
4. Send the e-mail

- To keep up the motivation of the elders, the teacher must set intermediate objectives
- Give positive feedback whenever the elder reach the intermediate objective

Psychological aspect

Active listening

- The teacher needs to be interested in the needs and problems of the learners
- The teacher needs to adapt a situational approach and not a theoretical approach
- The learning effort enhances, when oriented towards experiences connected to real life, useful in daily practice

Psychological aspect

Positive feedback

- Positive feedback during learning is essential for the learning experience and learning progress
- Positive feedback can improve the mental abilities of elders, making the learning process easier
- The learner confidence can increase because of a successful experience

Psychological aspect

Empathetic approach

- It is important to connect the course content to personal needs and motives of the learner
- The teacher must meet the learners with an empathetic approach in order to keep up the motivation, attention and curiosity of the learners
- The teacher needs to take a real interest in the needs, competences and requirements of the learner

Psychological aspect

Patience/speed

- The cognitive functions, including learning, are slower with age, due to the natural deterioration of brain function
- The course design must allow the elders to progress in a slow speed
- Patience of the teacher is important, encouraging the elders to move forward step by step in their own speed

Psychological aspect

Teacher understands different learning processes (1:2)

- To be able to plan a learning process, the teacher needs to be aware of competencies connected to different teaching roles
- The learning conditions of the learner is an important aspect, regarding understanding different learning processes
- A didactic theory relates the six most important aspects when planning a course or learning process – see next slide

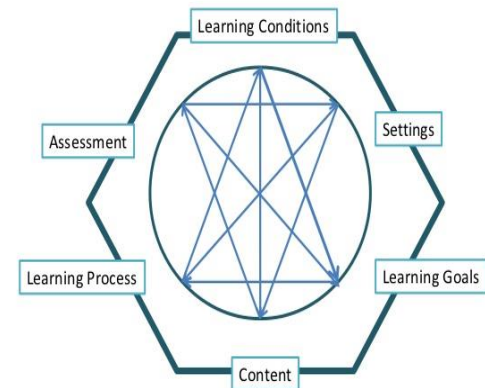
Psychological aspect

Teacher understands different learning processes (2:2)

Questions to ask about the learning conditions of the learner include:

- What professional or other relevant skills does the learner have?
- What communication skills does the learner have?
- What collaborative skills does the learner have?
- Is the learner motivated to pursue the subject?
- Does the learner have any special problems or need for resources related to the course?
- How does the learner learn?

The Didactic Relationship Model



The Didactical Relationship Model (Hiim & Hippe, 1998)

Psychological aspect

Memory retention

- With age follows a natural deterioration of brain function, causing a progressive weakening of concentration, memory and mental flexibility
- Planning a course the teacher needs to take the above factors into consideration
- Regarding memory retention, following aspects are important:
 - Pace
 - Repetition
 - Simple steps

Psychological aspect

Repeating

- Developing a certain technical skill may require several attempts of practice
- Therefore repeating different steps in the learning process is essential, when teaching older people
- The teacher needs to consider the best way to provide instruction and feedback, allowing time for the learner's repetition

Psychological aspect

Simple steps

- Teaching older people the teacher may find the KISS rule (*Keep It Simple, Stupid*) helpful, passing on basic IT knowledge
- Teachers have to meet learners at their own level; Teaching based on simple steps is therefore an important factor
- Open questions guiding the older people to simple problem solving can motivate the learner to seek more information
- This way the learner reaches for a higher level of knowledge or skill, by finding the answers themselves

Psychological aspect

Avoiding IT-slang

- The digital vocabulary is a challenge for many older people, therefore:
 - The use of IT-slang should be kept at a minimum
 - Some expressions may need to be explained or “translated”

Psychological aspect

Setting boundaries

- Setting boundaries, in terms of what kind of information is accessible or visible for the teacher or others, is important
- The boundaries should be made clear to the learners at the beginning of the course
- When it comes to digital services, it requires awareness of ethics of privacy

Psychological aspect

Ethics

- Ethics of privacy varies depending on the relation between the teacher and the learner
- Professional care workers and volunteers should be very aware of their responsibility regarding access to personal information
- Within the teaching role is a responsibility for applying good ethics in teaching
- Good ethics regarding digital services could be a helpful attitude with advice of how to create secure passwords, but NOT to gain knowledge of passwords

Psychological aspect

Privacy protection

- Care workers and volunteers have an obligation to observe secrecy in contact with the learner's private affairs
- Teaching different IT skills, the teacher get access to various information of which he or she is obliged to observe secrecy
- That means that the teacher cannot share any private information of the learner with others, nor use any private information of the learner to his or hers own gain

THANK YOU

TECHSENIOR
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EMAIL: hello@techsenior.eu

WEBSITE: <http://techsenior.eu/>



Erasmus+

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