Coherent Minds:

Empowering Adults and Business for Digital Responsibility

EDUCATION PROGRAM

IMPRESSUM

PROJECT:
Fighting Fake News and Enhancing Critical Thinking Skills for Business Opportunities of Unemployed Citizens 2023-1-DE02-KA210-ADU-000157649

AUTHORS:
Croatia:
Bruno Bokulić
Josip Brozović
Slavica Štefanac

Portugal:
Prof. Luis Cunha
Prof. Miguel Real Mendes

Germany:
Nedim Micijevic
Amar Hamzic

Publisher:
Youth Power Germany e.V.

June, 2024

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01.

DESCRIPTION:

Project FOCUS is dedicated to combating the pervasive spread of fake news and disinformation, with a special focus on the vulnerable populations of unemployed citizens and small business owners grappling with the complexities of the digital age. At its core, project revolves around empowering these groups through a holistic blend of education and technology. The project started with a detailed assessment of the specific needs and challenges faced by target audience. To achieve goal, new and unique non-formal curriculum that specifically target unemployed citizens and small business will be created. This program will be designed to improve digital readiness, resilience, and capacity to use digital tools and resources effectively. Also, key component of project is the development of a user-friendly digital tool. This tool is designed to help users identify fake news and verify information, serving as a practical application of the skills learned in the program. Continuous monitoring and evaluation ensure that the program remains effective and responsive to participants' needs.

02.

OBJECTIVES:
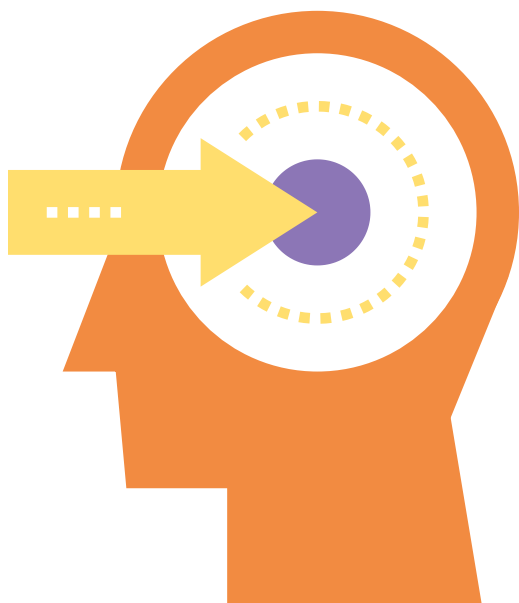
1. Building a network of local organisations and institutions in Germany (DE), Croatia (HR), and Portugal (PT) with similar scope to achieve the international dimension of their work, resulting in increased collaboration, enhanced knowledge sharing, and strengthened capacity to engage in international projects and initiatives.

2. Establishing new and unique non-formal education programs focusing on critical thinking about fake news and social media content for adults, particularly targeting unemployed citizens and small business owners with lower basic digital skills. This initiative aims to increase awareness, enhance critical thinking skills, and create replicable education programs.

3. Empowering organisations with limited experience in international projects and non-formal educational programs to recognize the impact of fake news on adult business decisions and respond constructively. This objective also aims to empower adult educators in entrepreneurship development, resulting in increased awareness, enhanced organisational capacity, new partnerships, and improved knowledge management.
4. Developing a new digital tool to improve the quality of training for adults and enhance the organisational and intellectual capacities of participating organisations from three EU countries in addressing the influence of fake news on the business opportunities of unemployed adults.

03.

RESULTS:

1. Increased collaboration among participating organisations and institutions, fostering enhanced knowledge sharing and exchange of good practices.
2. Strengthened capacity of organisations to engage in international projects and initiatives, leading to increased awareness among adults about the impact of fake news on business decisions.
3. Enhanced critical thinking skills of participants and improved media literacy, resulting in the creation of new and unique non-formal education programs replicable in other contexts.
4. Empowered organisations with limited international experience to recognize the impact of fake news on adult business opportunities, fostering new partnerships and collaborations while improving knowledge management.
5. Increased access to high-quality training materials for adults through the development of a new digital tool (eLearning platform), improving the quality and effectiveness of organisations' work with adults.
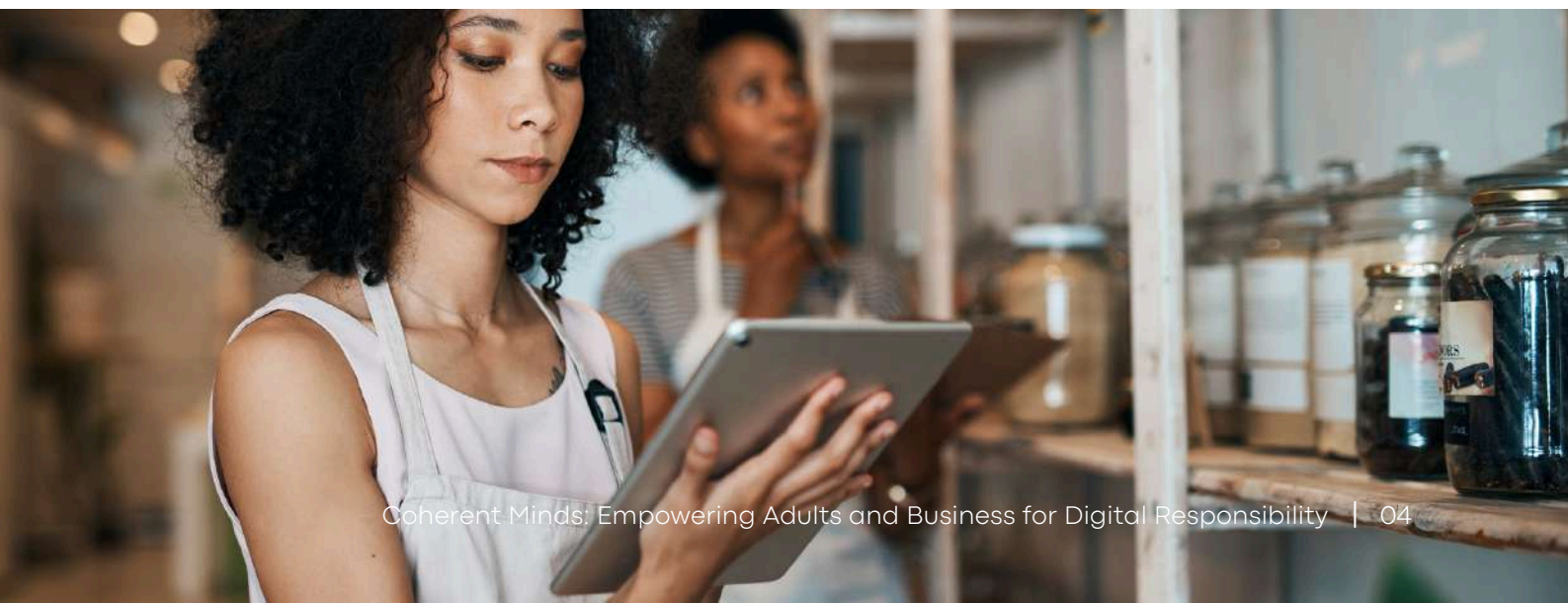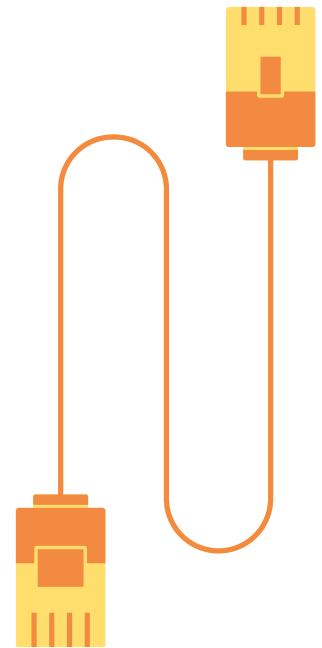
01 INTRODUCTION

In the digital age, the rapid dissemination of information has fundamentally transformed how we communicate, learn, and make decisions. However, this unprecedented access to information also brings significant challenges, particularly the spread of misinformation and disinformation. These phenomena can distort public perception, influence decision-making, and affect the stability of businesses and societies. As we navigate this complex information landscape, it becomes crucial to develop the skills necessary to critically evaluate the credibility of the content we encounter and to understand the broader implications of fake news.

This educational material is designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of misinformation and disinformation, their impact on various sectors, and effective strategies to counteract them. The material aims to:

01. **Raise Awareness:** Highlight the significance of misinformation and disinformation and their potential consequences on business, politics, and everyday life.

02. **Develop Critical Thinking:** Equip individuals with the skills to critically analyze information, recognize biases, and differentiate between credible and non-credible sources.

03. **Promote Media Literacy:** Foster a deeper understanding of media literacy, enabling participants to navigate the digital world more effectively and responsibly.

04. **Implement Practical Solutions:** Provide actionable strategies and tools to identify, combat, and mitigate the impact of fake news and disinformation.

Throughout this material, learners will engage with theoretical concepts, practical exercises, and real-world case studies to build a robust foundation in media literacy and critical thinking. By the end of this training, learners will be better prepared to make informed decisions, safeguard their professional and personal integrity, and contribute to a more informed and resilient society.

02 MISINFORMATION AND DISINFORMATION

The digital age has revolutionized how information is disseminated and consumed, with unprecedented speed and reach. However, this rapid flow of data also comes with challenges, particularly the spread of misinformation and disinformation. These phenomena have become significant concerns as they can influence public opinion, shape political landscapes, impact social and economic behaviours, and critically affect business decisions. Misinformation and disinformation can lead businesses to make poor strategic choices, affectingo everything from day-to-day operations to long-term planning. Understanding the nuances between misinformation and disinformation is crucial for developing strategies to counter their effects, preserve the integrity of information shared across platforms, and safeguard business decisions. Here, we explore the definitions, differences, and implications of misinformation and disinformation in today's interconnected world.

MISINFORMATION AND DISINFORMATION

2.1

MISINFORMATION

Misinformation refers to false or inaccurate information that is spread without malicious intent. The people sharing misinformation may believe it to be true and are not intending to deceive others. Misinformation can arise from misunderstandings, errors in data, or incorrect conclusions. It spreads rapidly on social media platforms where users may share compelling stories without verifying their accuracy. The pervasive nature of misinformation is largely due to the ease of sharing information online and the tendency for sensational content to become viral, regardless of its truthfulness (Lewandowsky, Ecker, & Cook, 2017).

2.2

DISINFORMATION

Disinformation, on the other hand, is false information that is deliberately spread with the intent to deceive or manipulate. It is often used as a tool by state actors, organisations, or individuals to achieve political, financial, or social objectives. Disinformation campaigns are typically well-organised and may involve the creation of fake news articles, manipulated images or videos, and the use of bots to amplify the reach of the false information. The intent behind disinformation is what sets it apart from misinformation—there is a clear and purposeful attempt to mislead and cause harm (Wardle & Derakhshan, 2017).

2.3

THE IMPACT ON BUSINESS DECISIONS

The influence of misinformation and disinformation on business decisions can be profound. False information can lead to misguided strategic choices, impacting everything from daily operations to long-term planning. For instance, a business might make investment decisions based on incorrect data about market conditions or consumer behaviour influenced by fake news. Furthermore, misinformation can damage a company's reputation, leading to loss of consumer trust and decreased sales. In some cases, businesses may face legal challenges if false information leads to significant financial losses for stakeholders.

2.4

IMPACT OF FAKE NEWS AND SOCIAL MEDIA ON BUSINESS DECISIONS AND CHOICES

In today's digital age, the rapid spread of information via social media significantly impacts business operations and decision-making processes. The proliferation of fake news, consisting of misinformation and disinformation, can influence public perception and behaviour, thereby affecting businesses across various sectors (Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017).

This essay explores the impact of fake news on social media on business decisions and consumer choices, highlighting the consequences and strategies for mitigation. Businesses heavily rely on their reputations, which can be swiftly damaged by fake news; for example, a false rumour about unethical practices can lead to immediate consumer backlash, affecting sales and partnerships (Lazer et al., 2018).

Consequently, companies must invest in monitoring social media and implementing robust public relations strategies to manage their reputations and counteract misinformation.

Additionally, fake news can cause significant fluctuations in the stock market as misleading reports about a company's financial health or management changes can lead to panic among investors, affecting stock prices and overall market stability (Chou, Oh, & Klein, 2018).

The uncertainty introduced by fake news compels businesses to be more cautious, often considering the potential impacts of misinformation when planning strategic moves, which can lead to delays or suboptimal choices under pressure to counteract or pre-empt false narratives.

On the consumer side, fake news related to product benefits, health impacts, or ethical standards can mislead consumers, altering their purchasing decisions either by deterring them from a product based on false claims or by convincing them to choose one product over another due to fabricated advantages (Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017).

The brand's image is highly susceptible to social media narratives, and false allegations or endorsements can lead consumers to develop misguided beliefs about a brand, affecting their long-term loyalty and trust; for instance, a concocted story about a food product causing health issues could lead to significant, albeit unwarranted, consumer aversion (Lazer et al., 2018). To mitigate the impact of fake news, companies need to establish dedicated teams to monitor social media for potential fake news and swiftly respond to misinformation by clarifying facts and engaging with customers transparently to maintain trust.

Business can play a proactive role in educating their consumers about the prevalence of fake news and encouraging critical thinking and fact-checking before accepting information as true (Chou, Oh, & Klein, 2018). Collaborating closely with social media platforms to identify and reduce the spread of fake news can also help mitigate its impact, as platforms have increasingly employed algorithms and human oversight to flag false information, but cooperation with businesses is crucial to refine these efforts.

2.5

CONSEQUENCES OF FAKE NEWS ON BUSINESS OUTCOMES

The following section on the consequences of fake news on business outcomes is based on the detailed research and findings presented in the research report "RATING OF FAKE NEWS INFLUENCE ON THE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OF AN INDIVIDUAL." This document, a key component of the FOCUS project, provides an in-depth analysis of the impacts of misinformation on business decisions and operations, drawing from the project's extensive research and external scholarly sources. The consequences of fake news on business outcomes are significant, as outlined in the document. Although most respondents did not report direct financial losses due to fake news, over twenty percent observed a moderate impact on their business operations. This reveals that while the immediate financial damage may be minimal, the broader effects on strategic decisions and company reputation are considerable and warrant attention.

Fake news can erode trust between businesses and their stakeholders, including customers, investors, and partners, leading to potentially severe reputational harm. For instance, misinformation about a company's practices or financial health can quickly spread through social media and other digital platforms, affecting public perception and investor confidence. This can result in stock price fluctuations and a loss of consumer trust, which are difficult and often costly to repair.

Moreover, the decision-making process within businesses is heavily impacted by fake news. The survey highlights that professionals tend to delay decisions and seek additional verification when encountering news, indicating an atmosphere of uncertainty and caution. This cautious approach, while protective, can also lead to missed opportunities and slower response times in a fast-paced business environment.

The reliance on fact-checking websites and authoritative sources as highlighted in the responses suggests that businesses are increasingly investing in mechanisms to ensure the accuracy of the information on which they base their decisions. This not only involves additional resources but also indicates a shift in operational strategies to include more rigorous verification processes.

The Indirect consequences of fake news—such as damaged reputations, disrupted stakeholder trust, and altered decision-making processes—pose substantial risks to businesses. These effects underscore the need for robust information management strategies to mitigate the impact of misinformation and maintain the integrity of business operations.

2.6

MIGRATING MISINFORMATION IN BUSINESS DECISION-MAKING

The swift spread of misinformation through digital channels such as social media can significantly hinder effective decision-making and distort market perceptions. It is crucial for businesses to quickly identify and neutralize the effects of such misinformation to safeguard their operational integrity and strategic success. Employing advanced data analytics and machine learning algorithms allows businesses to detect misinformation by analysing information spread patterns and checking for inconsistencies with known facts (Lazer et al., 2018). Additionally, fostering a culture of verification and training employees to critically assess information helps prevent misinformation from influencing crucial business decisions. Misinformation can severely impact a company's reputation and financial standing; for instance, false rumours about financial instability can lead to rapid declines in stock prices (Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017).

Developing robust internal communication strategies and forming dedicated crisis communication teams are effective mitigation tactics. These teams are crucial for managing and correcting misinformation through official channels promptly (Chou, Oh, & Klein, 2018). For a long-term approach, partnerships with technology providers and collaborations with social media platforms can enhance a company's capability to tackle misinformation. Moreover, businesses can play a proactive role in educating the public about misinformation, thus building a more informed consumer base and reducing the spread of false information. Key strategies might include leveraging social media to share accurate information, collaborating with fact-checking organisations, and conducting workshops that educate employees and consumers on recognizing and countering misinformation. This proactive public education helps in fortifying the community's trust and resilience against misinformation.

Additional key strategies might include:

- regularly publishing transparency reports to update stakeholders on the measures taken to combat misinformation and their effectiveness.
- implementing real-time fact-checking tools into social media feeds and company communications to help identify and counteract false information before it spreads widely.
- creating a dedicated fact-checking hub where consumers and employees can verify the authenticity of information related to the company and its products and offer resources on identifying fake news.
- partnering with academic institutions to study misinformation trends and develop new technologies or methodologies for detecting and countering false information.
- working with influencers and key industry stakeholders to spread accurate information and educate their followers on the importance of verifying facts before sharing content.
- enhancing digital literacy among employees and consumers through regular training sessions and workshops focused on discerning reliable sources from unreliable ones and understanding the motives behind misinformation campaigns.

2.7

STRENGTHENING MECHANISMS TO COUNTER FAKE NEWS

The rapid spread of fake news poses significant challenges for businesses, necessitating robust mechanisms to counter misinformation and disinformation effectively. One of the primary strategies involves the implementation of advanced data analytics and machine learning algorithms. These technologies can analyse vast amounts of information quickly, identifying patterns and discrepancies that indicate the presence of false information. By cross-referencing data with verified sources, businesses can detect and neutralise misinformation before it causes substantial damage (Lazer et al., 2018).

Another critical component is fostering a culture of verification within organisations. This involves training employees to critically assess the information they encounter, promoting a systematic approach to evaluating sources and content. Such training can include workshops on media literacy, critical thinking, and the use of fact-checking tools. By enhancing the ability of employees to discern reliable information from falsehoods, organisations can reduce the internal spread of misinformation and improve decision-making processes.

In addition to internal strategies, businesses should form dedicated crisis communication teams. These teams are responsible for managing and correcting misinformation through official channels, ensuring that accurate information is disseminated promptly.

Crisis communication teams can work closely with public relations departments to address false claims and rebuild public trust quickly. Transparency and timely responses are crucial in mitigating the reputational damage caused by fake news (Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017).

Establishing partnerships with external fact-checking organisations and collaborating with social media platforms can enhance a business's capacity to combat misinformation. Social media platforms have increasingly employed algorithms and human oversight to flag false information, but cooperation with businesses is crucial to refine these efforts and ensure that accurate information reaches the public.

2.8

UTILISING DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

The effective use of digital technologies is a cornerstone of strategies to combat fake news. One of the most promising approaches is the development and deployment of real-time fact-checking tools. These tools can be integrated into social media platforms and business communication channels to identify and flag false information before it spreads widely. By providing users with immediate feedback on the credibility of the content they encounter, these tools can help prevent the dissemination of fake news (Wardle & Derakhshan, 2017).

Businesses should also invest in creating dedicated fact-checking hubs. These hubs can serve as centralized resources where employees and consumers can verify information related to the company and its products. By offering a repository of verified information and guidelines on identifying fake news, these hubs can enhance the overall digital literacy of the organisation and its stakeholders.

Machine learning algorithms and artificial intelligence (AI) are also pivotal in combating fake news. These technologies can analyse vast amounts of data to detect patterns that are indicative of misinformation. For example, AI can identify coordinated disinformation campaigns by analysing the behaviour of social media accounts and the spread of content. By detecting these campaigns early, businesses can take proactive measures to counteract their effects and protect their reputation.

Another thing, businesses should leverage their digital presence to promote accurate information actively. This involves using official social media accounts and websites to share verified content and counteract false narratives.

Engaging with audiences directly and transparently can help build trust and reduce the impact of fake news. Collaborations with social media influencers and industry stakeholders can also amplify the reach of accurate information, helping to educate broader audiences about the importance of verification and critical thinking (Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017).

The combination of advanced technologies, comprehensive education programs, and proactive communication strategies forms a robust framework for businesses to counter fake news effectively. By implementing these measures, organisations can safeguard their operations, enhance decision-making processes, and maintain the trust of their stakeholders in an increasingly complex information landscape.

03 CONCLUSION OF THE FIRST PART

At the end of this first part of the manual, we have comprehensively explored the pervasive impact of fake news on business decisions in the digital age, where misinformation and disinformation present significant challenges that can lead to poor strategic choices, tarnish reputations, and disrupt market stability. Understanding the nuances between misinformation and disinformation is crucial for businesses aiming to develop effective strategies to mitigate these risks. Our research findings highlight the high level of awareness about fake news among business professionals and their varied reactions to encountering false information, emphasizing the importance of additional verification before making decisions and the reliance on specialized fact-checking platforms to ensure accuracy. We outlined essential strategies for combating the influence of fake news, including implementing advanced data analytics, fostering a culture of verification, leveraging digital technologies, and promoting media literacy and critical thinking within organisations. Transparent and accountable communication practices, collaboration with external fact-checking organisations, and social media platforms were also emphasized as key components. By adopting these strategies, businesses can safeguard their operations, enhance decision-making processes, and maintain stakeholder trust. The fight against fake news requires a multifaceted approach that addresses various aspects of information management and dissemination, ensuring equal access to accurate information, promoting social justice and equality, providing safe and inclusive environments, and creating opportunities for personal growth and resilience. Prioritizing these actions fosters a society that values and promotes the well-being of all its members, leading to healthier and more inclusive business environments.

04 TRAINING SESSION

In an era where digital interactions shape much of our personal and professional lives, possessing the skills to navigate this landscape responsibly is more critical than ever. This program is specifically tailored for adults with lower basic digital skills, including unemployed individuals, small business owners, entrepreneurs, and professionals who rely heavily on digital channels for marketing or communication.

The rapid proliferation of information in the digital age brings about both opportunities and challenges. Among the most significant challenges are the prevalence of fake news and the need for robust media literacy and critical thinking skills. The impact of misinformation, particularly on social media, can have profound implications for business decisions and personal choices. Recognizing this, this program focuses on equipping participants with the tools to critically assess and navigate the digital information landscape.

Main goal is to empower users with the knowledge and skills needed to thrive in a digitally connected world. By the end of this training program, users will be better equipped to make informed decisions, protect themselves and their business from the pitfalls of misinformation, and engage with digital media responsibly and effectively.

4.1

WORKING DAY 1: "GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER AND TEAMBUILDING"

First day of the program consists of two sessions, in total duration of 3 hours. Sessions are dedicated to meeting each other, learning about the program of the training and objectives of the program, aligning personal expectations from the program with the content of the program. Second session of the Day 1 is dedicated to building the feeling of working and functioning in the group – which will be needed in the next days of the program.

Session 1

Expectations / Fears / Contributions

DURATION

120 minutes

REQUIRED MATERIALS

A4 coloured papers, pens and pencils, printed objectives of the training, flipchart papers, markers, A3 paper, A4 white papers, 20m of rope

OBJECTIVES

- To get to know each other and the team of the training
- To present basic information about the logistics of the event
- To provide an opportunity for participants to meet each other, learn about common interests in the topics of the event, and have joint discussion topics (their interests)
- To learn about the program and the objectives of the training
- To share and understand everybody's expectations and how participants will contribute to achieving the objectives of the training
- To provide space and opportunity for participants to better meet each other

THE FLOW OF THE SESSION:

- **Introduction of staff and the project – 5 min**

Trainers introduce themselves and logistic staff, give background information about the project and why we are here.

- **Round of names and where we're coming from – 10 min**

Participants go in round presenting themselves – their names, where they're coming from, and what is their motivation for participating in this training.

- **Our Facebook profiles – 20 min**

Participants are given 1 piece of A4 coloured paper per participant. On the paper, they need to draw their profile picture and put some key information about themselves, in a format similar to the one presented on their Facebook profiles (date of birth, place of living, work experiences, educational experiences). Participants are reminded that the information regarding their work and educational background should reflect their connection to the topic of the training.

After the profiles are developed, participants are invited to walk around the room and talk to each other – while sharing the key information from the Facebook profiles.
At the end of the exercise, the Facebook profiles are posted on the wall and will serve as conversation starters in the upcoming days of the event.

- **My name is, and I like to – 15 min**

Everyone in the group stands in a circle.
The first person starts by saying: "My name is and I like to __ (insert hobby and act out a motion from that hobby.)

The rest of the group then says, "(Person's Name) likes to (hobby) and acts out motion. For example, "My name is Stefan and I like fishing (action outcasting a reel).

The next person repeats the process of introducing themselves. Group, this time, repeats the names, hobbies and movements of both the first and second person – and this is done after every new contribution to presenting the names, hobbies and movements. This continues until the last person has a chance to share, at which point the entire group calls out the last person's info moves along through the whole group and repeats everyone's info, also can be played with a name and adverb starting with the first letter of its name. (I am Strong Stefan - Starke Stefan, Snažni Stefan, Salgado Stefan etc)

- **Presenting the event's objectives and the agenda – 15 min**

The trainer presents the objectives of the training event, printed on bigger-sized paper, and posts them on the wall. Each objective is defined and discussed with the group.

After that, the trainer moves to presenting the agenda and together with the group goes into the basics of each of the upcoming sessions. Participants are invited to ask questions or give suggestions for the parts of the program.

- **Fear, contributions, expectations – 45 min**

Participants are divided into 4 smaller groups. Each group receives 1 A3 paper with a task to draw a boat; with a sail (contributions), surrounded by the sea (fears). Participants need to contribute to the drawing by writing down their expectations from the event, contributions to the program and possible fears they might have about the programme and the group. Groups are given 30 minutes for work.
After the groups finalise their boats, they present them in plenary.

- **Conclusion – 10 min**

The session concluded with the following questions:
1. What did we find out about the program and objectives we didn't know or were not sure about before the start of the training?
2. What are some of the common expectations we have towards the program?
3. How can we address concerns that we have as a group?

OUTCOMES

- Participants met each other, learned about specific backgrounds of others, and know the names of everyone in the group.
- Participants gained understanding of the event, objectives and agenda of the event and the overall content of the specific sessions within the training's program.
- Participants analysed personal and group expectations, contributions and fears regarding the program, and have aligned their personal expectations of the program with the content of the program to be implemented in the upcoming days.

LITERATURE

No topic-based literature is needed for this session.

The trainer/facilitator in charge of the session can adjust the icebreaker exercises. Suggestions of the materials to be used:

- https://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/toolbox_tool_download-file-3267/TOOLKIT%20-%20all%20the%20tools%20CEJ.pdf
- https://www.ruralyoutheurope.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Learning_Platform_ENERGIZERS.pdf
- https://www.sessionlab.com/blog/icebreaker-games/
- https://www.youthworkresource.com/youth-work/games/ice-breakers/
- https://youthgroupgames.com.au/category/icebreakers/

Teambuilding

⏱ DURATION

70 minutes

🎯 OBJECTIVES

- To provide space and opportunity for participants to better meet each other
- To develop the sense of belonging to a team, and jointly working as a team

⚙ THE FLOW OF THE SESSION:

- **Crocodile river game – 40 min**

For this exercise an outdoor space (preferably grass) is needed. It measures about 15-25 meters long depending on the number of participants (about 1-1.5 meters per participant) and about 6-8 meters wide.

Trainer prepares the challenge by putting out the ropes marking the banks of the river. The wooden planks are pilled on one of the banks. There are as many planks as participants, minus one.

Step 1:

Trainer assembles all participants on the bank where the planks are. He tells them that they may not yet touch the planks. Trainer explains that they are about to undertake a challenge and must listen closely to the instructions.

Step 2:

Trainer gives the following instructions: "For this challenge, you need your problem-solving and collaboration skills. You are a team on an expedition deep in the jungle when suddenly there is a big forest fire. Trying to escape the fire, you reach a wide river that you must cross with the whole team in order to survive. In the river, there are very aggressive crocodiles. Get too close and you're finished. But fortunately, you discover a set of magic stones laying on the bank. This is the only support you can use in order to cross from one side to the other. The magic stones float on the water as long as there is constant body contact. As soon as body contact is lost, when a stone is in the water, it sinks and disappears. If someone puts a hand in the water, the crocodiles immediately bite it off – the same with feet."

Trainer demonstrates by putting a stone in the water and puts their fingers on the stone and puts their foot on the stone and then take away the fingers. Trainer shows that when a stone has no body contact, it sinks. Trainer shows that if a hand or foot touches the ground, it gets bitten off and must be held behind the back.

"If someone falls in the water the person is eaten and the challenge is over." If this happens quite early in the challenge trainer can ask the group if they want another try. "Your task is solved successfully when everyone is on the other side of the river alive. Any questions before you start?"

This is final chance for participants to get clarification. Trainer ensures that the rules are clear but do not answer any questions about how the challenge should be solved. Once the explanation is over, the trainer(s) become the crocodiles. They move around the space watching the group closely. When a stone is left without body contact, trainer removes it from play (it has "sunk.") When participants accidentally touch the ground with hands or feet, trainer tells them that the limb has been "bitten off" and that they must continue without using it.

Step 3:
The group will somehow establish a plan and then begin moving across the river. Different groups take different approaches ranging from highly structured to extremely chaotic.

If the group seems to be succeeding at the challenge relatively easily, trainer can consider introducing the "oxygen mask" Trainer tells the group that the big fire is getting closer and there is a lack of oxygen. All participants both in the water and standing on the bank need to breathe through the "oxygen mask" (a roll of tape) at least every minute. Thus, they must pass the mask constantly, ensuring that each member gets it. This pushes the group include everyone and get out on the water as a full team. It can also be used as a mechanism to raise the stress level in the group.

Step 4:
Trainer lets the group continue until they succeed in getting all members to the other side If a member falls into the water, then the group fails and must start over from the beginning.

Step 5:
Once the group has succeeded at the challenge, trainer debriefs by reflecting on how the group worked together. Following questions can be used:
1. What happened during the task?
2. How did we work as a group?
3. How did the experience make me feel?
4. How did I behave/respond/react?
5. What did I learn about myself?
6. What did I learn about groups?
7. How can I apply insights from this activity?

- **Blind Square – Rope game – 30 min**

Before the exercise begins, trainer ties a length of rope (about 20m) into a circle. Also, blindfolds for everyone are provided, or participants are asked to bring extra t-shirts to be used as blindfolds.

Instructions to Participants
1. To complete this activity, all the team has to do is to form the rope into the shape of a perfect square.
2. You will have 15 minutes planning time, during which no one may touch the rope.
3. At the end of this time, everyone will be blindfolded and the rope will be placed in your hands.
4. You will have 10 minutes to form the square.
5. All the team members must be holding the rope.
6. Once you think that the square is complete, lay the rope on the floor.

Debriefing

Trainers asks questions to draw out responses that focus on any of these types of topics:
1. Attention to detail
2. Collaboration
3. Communication
4. Creating a square
5. Evaluation
6. Planning
7. Problem solving
8. Variations
9. Don't tie the rope into a circle at the start.

OUTCOMES
- Participants have bonded more as a group, discovered the ways on how to function together and are ready to dive into the learning processes that will take place in the next days of the program.

LITERATURE

No topic-based literature is needed for this session.

The trainer/facilitator in charge of the session can select some other teambuilding exercises for the session. Suggestions of the materials to be used:
- https://www.sessionlab.com/blog/team-building-activities/
- https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/toolbox/tool/interactive-group-building.1045/

4.2

WORKING DAY 2: "UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF FAKE NEWS AND SOCIAL MEDIA ON BUSINESS DECISIONS AND CHOICES"

The second day of the program consists of two sessions, in a total duration of 6 hours. Sessions are dedicated to exploring fake news, introducing the most important terms related to fake news in the digital environment, and providing participants with knowledge on how to spot fake news circulating around and influencing their businesses. Participants will receive both theoretical knowledge about the topic of fake news but also get a chance to practically work on the development of policies making their businesses less likely to be negatively influenced by fake news.

Session 1

Understanding fake news

DURATION
210 minutes

REQUIRED MATERIALS
A3 and A4 papers, pens and pencils, scissors, glue, prepared real and fake news articles (3 of each)

OBJECTIVES
- To introduce participants with important terms related to fake news
- To develop critical thinking skills by understanding of criteria for evaluating news credibility
- To develop understanding of argumentation models and techniques.

⚙ THE FLOW OF THE SESSION:

- **Energiser: Chair swap – 20 min**

For this game you will need enough chairs for everyone, except for one person, to have a chair. Arrange the chairs in a circle and have everyone sit down except for the remaining person, who starts off in the middle of the circle. Pick a random starting point somewhere on the circle and have everyone count off (starting with one) until everyone in the circle has a number. To play the game, have the person in the centre call out two numbers. The people who have been assigned those two numbers must quickly switch seats. Meanwhile, the person in the centre's task is to get to one of the empty seats first. Whoever is left without a seat starts the game off again in the centre, and the players who switched seats assume the number of their new seat. For safety reasons, tell participants that running/diving for a seat, pushing and shoving are not allowed.

- **Glossary of important terms – 40 min**

Participants are divided into pairs or smaller groups of up to maximum 3 people. Each group will get a definition of one important term related to the topic of fake news with short description and explanation. Then, each group has a task to prepare educational posters by using A3 papers in order to present the given term to the rest of the group. Groups get up to 20 minutes for their work, and up to 3 minutes to present it to the others. Participants are encouraged to use their smartphones/laptops to get additional information. Terms given to the groups are the following:

- Clickbait
- Conspiracy theory
- Deepfake
- Disinformation
- Fake news
- Malinformation
- Misinformation

- **Real news vs fake news – 60 min**

In this activity, participants are divided into equal groups and given three real and three fake news articles. Then, participants should read the news, think for 20 minutes and come up with an answer and count on how many real and fake news articles there are. After the groups have decided on real and fake news articles, a discussion follows with all the groups. The facilitator writes on a flipchart paper each group's reasoning behind their choices, and leads debriefing through the following questions:

1. Was it hard to believe what you are reading is real or, on the contrary, fake?
2. Did you have fierce discussions with your group members concerning the credibility of each news article you read?
3. Did you use any mechanisms to evaluate the credibility and truthfulness of the articles you read?
4. Did you apply any of the learned in practice?

- **Fake it until you expose it – 90 min**

In the first of the exercise, participants are introduced to the 6-Sentence Argument Model, as an important tool for entrepreneurs willing to additionally develop their critical thinking skills.

After the model has been introduced, participants are asked to write an existing conspiracy theory on paper. Randomly, everybody will select one (5 minutes). Participants practice writing an article about that conspiracy theory, following the model and creating arguments for the picked fake news (20 minutes). Peer reviews are done in pairs; participants read each other's articles and evaluate them according to the evaluation grid that will be provided in form of a handout (15 minutes). At the end, there is debriefing in plenary and discussion on the evaluation criteria (20 minutes). After analysing the evaluation criteria, the same pairs will write a debunking article to combat the fake news of each other with engagement techniques (20 minutes).

Trainers are using the following questions for debriefing:
Mid-debriefing:
- How was the process of creating fake news?
- How did the model help you in the process?
- Which one was the biggest challenge?
- Which mechanism did you notice while making fake news?
- Which similarities did you notice between your articles, and the fake news you read on social media?
- How can you relate to society?

Final debriefing:
- How was the process of debunking fake news?
- Which elements did you tackle in the article you debunked?
- Which techniques to engage the reader did you use?
- How can you relate this process to citizen journalism?
- What can we do from now on to raise awareness of it?
- How can we use what we learned in this session for our daily activities in our existing businesses and generally in using digital channels and platforms?

OUTCOMES
- Participants acquired a deeper understanding of key terms related to fake news.
- Participants developed a critical understanding of the characteristics of real and fake news, enabling them to evaluate news sources more effectively.
- Participants improved critical thinking skills as they analyse and assess the credibility of news articles.
- Participants developed advanced argumentation skills by constructing persuasive arguments and debunking fake news.

LITERATURE
- Fake News (and how to fight it): Glossary:
  https://libraryguides.mdc.edu/FakeNews/Glossary
- 6-Sentence Argument Model explained https://fargoinc.com/the-6sa-framework-crafting-an-argument-in-120-words-or-less/

Impact of fake news on business decisions and choices

⏱ DURATION
150 minutes

🎯 OBJECTIVES
- To develop participants' analytical skills by analysing case studies to understand how fake news contributed to business crises.
- To encourage participants to critically evaluate the mistakes made by companies involved in each case study and identify key factors contributing to the crises
- To help participants understand the purpose, scope, and components of a social media policy for combating fake news.

⚙ REQUIRED MATERIALS
- A3 and A4 papers, pens and pencils, scissors, glue

⚙ THE FLOW OF THE SESSION:
- **Energiser: Human machine – 15 min**

All participants stand in a large circle. Trainers explain to the group that their task is to build a human machine. Each individual will become one moving part of the machine. Then, one person enters the circle and begins making a repeating sound and a physical movement (e.g. a "whoop whoop whoop" sound while flapping one arm.) After 5 seconds, another person enters the circle and connects to the first person, also making a sound and a movement. Continue building the machine until everyone is connected, everyone making their movements and sounds throughout. If the group is smaller than 20, you can also deconstruct the machine one person at a time.

- **Case studies: Examples of business crises caused by fake news – 60 min**

Participants are divided into three smaller groups. Each group is given one of the following case study examples:
1. Chipotle E. coli outbreak
2. Tesla self-driving car accident
3. Galena Biopharma

They are given 15 minutes to read and analyse the following case studies and then in next 25 minutes to answer on the following questions:
1. How did fake news contribute to the crisis in each case study?
2. What were the key mistakes made by the companies involved?
3. What strategies did the companies use to mitigate the damage, and how effective were they?

At the end, all groups are presenting their cases to rest of the participants and trainers and facilitating discussions in plenary.

- **Drafting a social media policy for a hypothetical company – 60 min**

The main goal of this part of the workshop is to help participants understand and learn how to create strategies for businesses to manage the impact of fake news. In order to avoid situations from the previous exercise happening to their businesses, participants should develop social media policy for combating fake news through the following steps:

1. **Introduction:** purpose and scope of the policy
2. **Important definitions and terms:** fake news, misinformation, disinformation…
3. **Guidelines for identifying fake news:** red flags and verification techniques
4. **Crisis management:** incident report plan and communication strategy
5. **Training and education:** ongoing training and development of important competences
6. **Review and updates:** collecting feedback mechanisms

- **Debriefing – 15 min**

Session is concluded in plenary, with use of the following questions:

1. What did we know from before, on the impact of fake news on business decisions and choices?
2. What did we learn in this session?
3. Why is it important to be aware of fake news and be able to recognise fake news; when it comes to making business decisions and choices?

OUTCOMES

- Participants developed critical thinking skills by analysing case studies to understand the impact of fake news on businesses.
- Participants gained insights into strategic decision-making and crisis management strategies employed by companies facing fake news-related crises.
- Participants gained an understanding of the purpose, scope, and components of a social media policy for combating fake news.
- Participants developed practical skills in drafting a social media policy, including guidelines for identifying fake news, crisis management strategies, and training and education initiatives.

LITERATURE

- Chipotle E.coli outbreak
  https://www.theguardian.com/business/2016/jan/09/chipotle-norovirus-outbreak-profit-plummet
- Tesla self-driving car accident
  https://electronics360.globalspec.com/article/13323/ces-2019-the-day-a-self-driving-car-killed-a-robot
- Galena Biopharma: https://trace.tennessee.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3363&context=utk_chanhonoproj

4.2.1

HANDOUT: EVALUATION GRID FOR 6-SENTENCE ARGUMENT MODEL ARTICLES

Please rate each criterion on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is poor and 5 is excellent. Provide comments to justify your ratings and offer constructive feedback.

1. Clarity of the main claim (1-5)

Score: _____

Comments:
- Is the main claim or thesis of the article clearly stated?
- Is it easy to understand what the article is arguing?

2. Evidence and support (1-5)

Score: _____

Comments:
- Does the article provide adequate evidence to support the main claim?
- Are the sources of evidence credible and relevant, even within the context of the conspiracy theory?

3. Coherence and logical flow (1-5)

Score: _____

Comments:
- Are the arguments presented in a logical order?
- Do the transitions between sentences and paragraphs enhance the flow of the article?

4. Use of the 6-sentence argument model (1-5)

Score: _____

Comments:
- Does the article follow the structure of the 6-Sentence argument model?
- Are all six sentences present and used effectively? (Introduction, Explanation, Evidence, Example, Implication, Conclusion)

5. Creativity and Persuasiveness (1-5)

Score: _____

Comments:
- Is the article engaging and persuasive?
- Does it creatively present the conspiracy theory in a way that might convince a reader?

6. Grammar and Style (1-5)

Score: _____

Comments:
- Is the article free of grammatical errors and typos?
- Is the writing style appropriate for the intended audience?

Total Score: _____ / 30

WORKING DAY 3: "DEVELOPING CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS TO EVALUATE THE CREDIBILITY OF ONLINE CONTENT"

During the third day, participants engage in a series of interactive exercises aimed at enhancing critical thinking skills, fostering collaboration, and promoting practical application of knowledge. They will have a chance to learn about credible sources online and what are the easiest ways to recognize them, but also define skills, knowledge and attitudes they need to develop in critical thinking in order to be able to evaluate the credibility of any online content.

Session 1

Fake news and fact checking
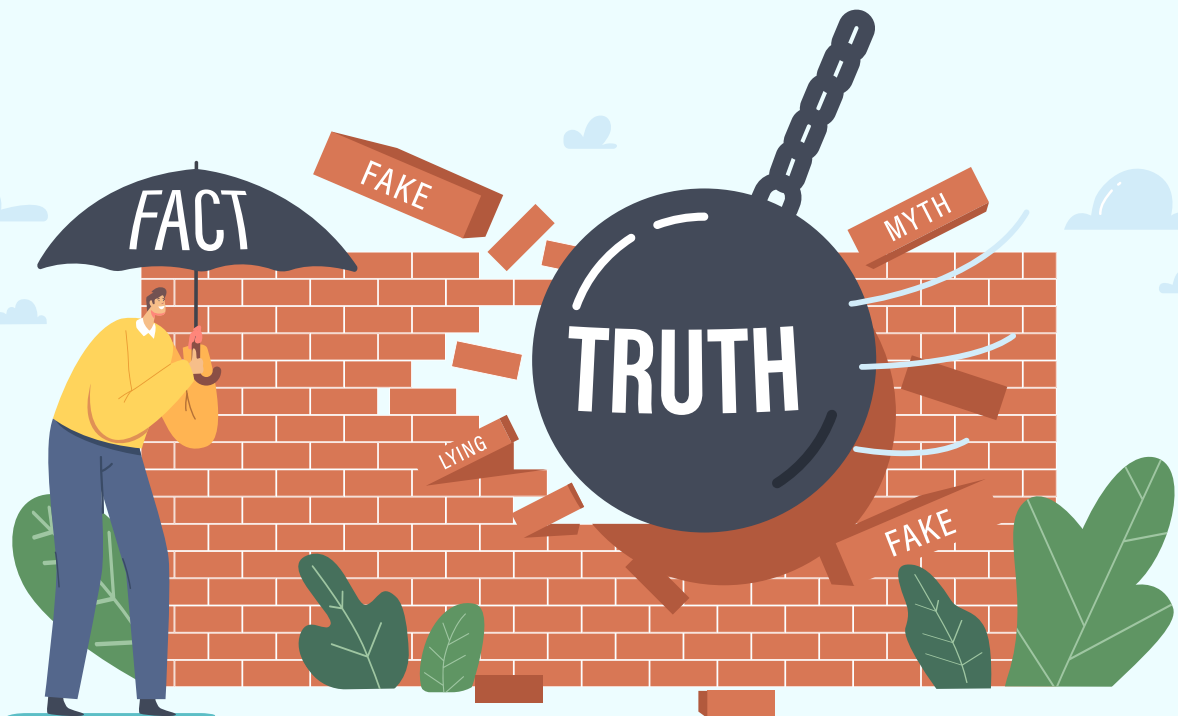
DURATION

180 minutes

REQUIRED MATERIALS

A3 and A4 papers, pens and pencils, scissors, glue, printed handouts

OBJECTIVES

- To help participants identify their strengths and areas for improvement in content evaluation
- To provide a structured framework for assessing the credibility of online information
- To give participants hands-on experience in applying the CRAPP model to a real-world example
- To facilitate in-depth discussions on personal experiences and broader implications of misinformation

THE FLOW OF THE SESSION:

- **Energiser: Killer wink– 15 min**

Before the game starts, ask someone to be the 'the killer' and ask them to keep their identity a secret. Explain that one person among the group is the killer and they can kill people by winking at them.

Everyone then walks around the room in different directions, keeping eye contact with everyone they pass. If the killer winks at you, you have to play dead. Everyone has to try and guess who the killer is.

- **Self-assessment quiz: Evaluating content online – 25 min**

All participants are conducting self-assessment quiz prepared by the trainers on the following questions (full quiz with multiple choice questions and answers is available as a handout):

1. What is the first thing you should check when evaluating the credibility of an online article? (correct answer: **b**)
2. Why is it important to verify the publication date of an online source? (correct answer: **b**)
3. Which of the following domains is generally considered more credible for academic or factual information? (correct answer: **d**)
4. When encountering an unfamiliar website, what should you do first? (correct answer: **b**)
5. How can you verify the authenticity of a photo in an online article? (correct answer: **b**)
6. What role do references and citations play in evaluating online content? (correct answer: **b**)
7. Why is it important to consider the potential bias of an online source? (correct answer: **b**)
8. Which of the following is a red flag when evaluating the credibility of an online source? (correct answer: **c**)
9. What is the benefit of cross-referencing information from multiple sources? (correct answer: **b**)
10. Which tool can help you determine if a piece of online content has been fact-checked? (correct answer: **b**)

After all participants answer the questions, trainers on the screen show the correct answers and give 10 minutes to participants to discuss their answers in pairs or smaller groups.

- **CRAAP Model of evaluating online content – theoretical introduction – 20 min**

Trainers provide theoretical input about the CRAAP model. Before using any information found or consumed online, it is important to determine if it is accurate and reliable. The CRAAP Test is a list of questions to help young people determine if their information is reliable. It is important to remember that the following list of questions is not static or complete, and different criteria will be more or less important depending on your situation or need.

Currency: The timeliness of the information.
1. When was the information published or posted?
2. Has the information been revised or updated?
3. Is the information current or out-of-date for your topic?
4. Are the links functional?

Relevance: The importance of the information for your needs.
1. Does the information relate to your topic or answer your question?
2. Who is the intended audience?
3. Is the information appropriate (i.e. not too elementary or advanced for your needs)?
4. Would you be comfortable using this source for a research paper?

Authority: The source of the information.
1. Who is the author/publisher/source/sponsor?
2. Are the author's credentials or organisational affiliations given?
3. What are the author's qualifications for writing on the topic?
4. Is there contact information, such as a publisher or email address?
5. Does the URL reveal anything about the author or source? (examples: .com .edu .gov .org .net)

Accuracy: The reliability, truthfulness, and correctness of the informational content.
1. Where does the information come from?
2. Does evidence support the information?
3. Has the information been reviewed or refereed?
4. Can you verify any of the information from another source or personal knowledge?
5. Does the language or tone seem biased, or is it free of emotion?
6. Are there spelling, grammar, or other typographical errors?

Purpose: The reason the information exists.
1. What is the purpose of the information? To inform? Teach? Sell? Entertain? Persuade?
2. Do the authors/sponsors make their intentions or purpose clear?
3. Is the information fact? Opinion? Propaganda?
4. Does the point of view appear objective and impartial?
5. Are there political, ideological, cultural, religious, institutional, or personal biases?

- **CRAAP Model – practical exercise – 40 min**

After theoretical input about the CRAAP model and specific questions used, participants will individually practice using the CRAAP model on the following website: https://zapatopi.net/treeoctopus/faq.html

- **CRAAP Model – debriefing – 20 min**

Trainers use the following guiding questions:
1. How was the process for you?
2. Which was the easiest, and which one was the more challenging part to analyse?
3. How can we use this tool in real life and youth work?
4. How can this kind of analysis be used to raise awareness on the topic?

- **Walk and talk exercise – 60 min**

Participants are asked to create pairs. They will walk around the room with the pair and discuss the questions trainers give.

After 15 minutes, the trainer will give a sign to the group, and each participant will create a new pair and get a new question to discuss. The discussion questions are the following:
1. Can you share an instance where you believed a piece of information that turned out to be false? What impact did it have on your perception or decisions?
2. Can you describe a time when you used fact-checking tools to verify a piece of information? What was the outcome?
3. How can fake news impact your business decisions and operations?
4. How can companies build trust with their audience in the age of misinformation?

Tip: As a game to find a pair, the trainer can prepare a set of papers with keywords (critical/thinking/fake etc), cut in half, so each person needs to get up and find its pair.

OUTCOMES

- Participants gained insights into their current strengths and weaknesses in evaluating the credibility of online content.
- Participants understand the components of the CRAAP model and how each component is used to evaluate online content.
- Participants developed practical skills in identifying credible sources and recognizing unreliable or biased content.
- Participants developed a better understanding of the real-life implications of misinformation and the importance of critical thinking in everyday decisions.

LITERATURE

- Evaluating Information: Applying the CRAAP TESThttps://www.pfw.edu/offices/learning-support/documents/evaluating-information-crapp-test.pdf

Critical thinking skills

⏱ DURATION

180 minutes

🔧 REQUIRED MATERIALS

- A3 and A4 papers, pens and pencils, scissors, glue

🎯 OBJECTIVES

- To help participants to identify specific critical thinking skills they possess and those they need to develop further
- To learn about key aspects of critical thinking, including identification of biases, research, open-mindedness, analysis, and problem-solving
- To enhance collaboration skills by working in diverse groups to identify activities that promote critical thinking

🔧 THE FLOW OF THE SESSION:

- **Energiser: Dancing on paper– 15 min**

Trainers prepare equal sized sheets of newspaper or cloth. Participants split into pairs. Each pair is given either a piece of newspaper or cloth. They dance while the facilitator plays music or claps. When the music or clapping stops, each pair must stand on their sheet of newspaper or cloth. The next time the music or clapping stops, the pair has to fold their paper or cloth in half before standing on it. After several rounds, the paper or cloth becomes very small by being folded again and again. It is increasingly difficult for two people to stand on. Pairs that have any part of their body on the floor are 'out' of the game. The game continues until there is a winning pair.

- **Critical thinking skills: Barometer exercise – 30 min**

The trainer has set in the working room a scale from 1 to 10 where 1 stands for the least relatable statement and 10 for the most relatable statement. The participants are invited to stand in a line, and instructions are that based on the statements the trainer gives, they have to position themselves in the corresponding number (from 1 to 10), according to how relatable is that statement for their personalities.

After reading each statement, the trainer asks one or two participants to share on the chosen scale. The statements read are the following:

- I regularly question the information I come across, no matter the source
- I seek out multiple perspectives before forming an opinion
- I analyse the evidence before making a decision or drawing a conclusion
- I am comfortable discussing complex issues that don't have clear answers
- I recognize my own biases and try to minimize their impact on my thinking
- I am sceptical of information that aligns too perfectly with my beliefs
- I take the time to understand the context of information before accepting it as true
- I enjoy solving complex problems that require critical thinking.
- I can effectively distinguish between facts, opinions, and assumptions
- I am open to changing my mind when presented with new evidence

After finishing with statements, the trainer invites everyone to share which were the most relatable statements to their personalities (the ones where they positioned themselves 8,9, or 10).

When everyone shares, the trainer mentions that the statements are related to the domains of critical thinking and the purpose of this exercise is to reflect on which domains everyone is more developed, and which ones are still needed to be developed.

- **Theoretical input: Aspects of critical thinking skills – 25 min**

Critical thinking skills differ from individual to individual and are utilized in various ways. Examples of common critical thinking skills include:

Identification of biases: Identifying biases means knowing there are certain people or things that may have an unfair prejudice or influence on the situation at hand. Pointing out these biases helps to remove them from contention when it comes to solving the problem and allows you to see things from a different perspective.

Research: Researching details and facts allows you to be prepared when presenting your information to people. You'll know exactly what you're talking about due to the time you've spent with the subject material, and you'll be well-spoken and know what questions to ask to gain more knowledge. When researching, always use credible sources and factual information.

Open-mindedness: Being open-minded when having a conversation or participating in a group activity is crucial to success. Dismissing someone else's ideas before you've heard them will inhibit you from progressing to a solution, and will often create animosity. If you truly want to solve a problem, you need to be willing to hear everyone's opinions and ideas if you want them to hear yours.

Analysis: Analysing your research will lead to you having a better understanding of the things you've heard and read. As a true critical thinker, you'll want to seek out the truth and get to the source of issues. It's important to avoid taking things at face value and always dig deeper.

Problem-solving: Problem-solving is perhaps the most important skill that critical thinkers can possess. The ability to solve issues and bounce back from conflict is what helps you succeed, be a leader, and effect change. One way to properly solve problems is to first recognize there's a problem that needs solving. By determining the issue at hand, you can then analyse it and come up with several potential solutions.

- **Critical thinking skills and our daily activities – 50 min**

After getting theoretical input from the trainer on the critical thinking core domains, participants are invited to work in smaller groups for the next task. In this part of the session, they will have to reflect on their daily activities with the local community and identify how/if those activities are related and/or contribute to development of critical thinking skills with the focus on the core domains. The groups are mixed from participants with different backgrounds so that they can find five activities (at least one activity corresponding to one core domain), and they are given 50 minutes to conduct this task. Then, each group has to present their activities in a form of exhibition for the others.

- **Presentations – 40 min**

The trainer invites all groups to stick their papers on the wall, or tables. They have 10 minutes to prepare their place to exhibit their activities that promote the core domains of entrepreneurial mind-set. Then, the trainer gives the sign for starting the exhibition which lasts approximately 30 minutes. All participants can visit each other's exhibits while one person has to remain all the time next to each exhibit in order to give further explanations or clarifications if needed.

- **Debriefing – 20 min**

The groups and trainers join the plenary for a short debriefing on the session with a focus on the last activity. The debriefing is facilitated by the trainer where questions related to the process of defining the activities and reflecting whether they are connected to critical thinking skills development take place. Trainer also asks them whether they found interesting activities to consider for implementing in their existing businesses or entrepreneurial initiatives, and which of these activities were impressive for them.

OUTCOMES

- Participants are able to identify which critical thinking skills they are strong in and which they need to develop further.
- Participants are able to describe how to apply critical thinking skills in various scenarios and contexts.
- Participants demonstrate the ability to apply theoretical knowledge of critical thinking to practical, everyday activities.

LITERATURE

- What Are Critical Thinking Skills and Why Are They Important?
  https://www.coursera.org/articles/critical-thinking-skills#

4.3.1

HANDOUT: SELF-ASSESSMENT QUIZ

1.What is the first thing you should check when evaluating the credibility of an online article?
a) The length of the article
b) The author's credentials and background
c) The number of images in the article
d) The website's colour scheme

2. Why is it important to verify the publication date of an online source?
a) To ensure the website is still active
b) To determine if the information is current and relevant
c) To find out how many people have viewed the article
d) To check if the article has been shared on social media

3. Which of the following domains is generally considered more credible for academic or factual information?
a) .com
b) .net
c) .org
d) .edu

4. When encountering an unfamiliar website, what should you do first?
a) Read the first paragraph
b) Check the About Us page to learn more about the organisation
c) Count the number of advertisements on the page
d) Look for a comment section

5. How can you verify the authenticity of a photo in an online article?
a) By checking if it looks professional
b) By using reverse image search tools
c) By seeing if it has been liked or shared on social media
d) By comparing it to other photos on the same website

6. What role do references and citations play in evaluating online content?
a) They show the author's attention to detail
b) They provide a way to verify the information presented
c) They make the article longer
d) They indicate the article is written for an academic audience

7. Why is it important to consider the potential bias of an online source?
a) To ensure the website is user-friendly
b) To understand the perspective and purpose behind the content
c) To find out if the website is popular
d) To see if the website has an About Us page

8. Which of the following is a red flag when evaluating the credibility of an online source?
a) The website has a clean, professional design
b) The article includes links to other reputable sources
c) The author's name is not provided
d) The content is updated regularly

9. What is the benefit of cross-referencing information from multiple sources?
a) It helps improve your memory
b) It increases the likelihood that the information is accurate
c) It makes the information more entertaining
d) It saves time when researching

10. Which tool can help you determine if a piece of online content has been fact-checked?
a) Google Maps
b) A fact-checking website
c) Social-media platforms
d) An online dictionary

4.4

WORKING DAY 4: "IMPROVING MEDIA LITERACY SKILLS TO BETTER NAVIGATE THE DIGITAL LANDSCAPE"

Fourth day of the training is dedicated to understanding media literacy and how media influences individuals and society in general. Participants will put in connection the previous working day and topic of fake news, with the topic of media literacy. By the end of the first session participants will reflect on 7 steps of media literacy, and using the 7 steps approach for their regular activities in the digital environment. In the second session of the day, participants will critically reflect on personal media consumption as a source of information, and will also reflect on how media influence is a relevant topic for business owners and entrepreneurs nowadays.

Session 1

What is media literacy

DURATION
180 minutes

REQUIRED MATERIALS
A4 white and coloured papers, pens, markers, flipchart papers, laptop and projector, printed Handouts

OBJECTIVES
- To discuss, define, and develop participants' understanding of media literacy
- To further develop knowledge of participants about fake news and media literacy, and connections between the twos
- To develop knowledge and skills of participants about media literacy and 7 steps of media literacy by Herbert Meyer

THE FLOW OF THE SESSION:

- **Energiser: Bang – 15 min**

Session starts with an energiser. The group stands in a circle. One person stands in the middle as the sheriff. Trainer can ask for a volunteer to be in the role of the sheriff, or can themselves be in the role.

The sheriff quickly spins around and then points straight at one person in the circle and says "bang!"

The pointed-at person crouches as quickly as possible. The two people standing next to the pointed-at person must quickly point at each other, shouting each other's names. The person who is last to shout the name of the other is out of the game. Unless, the pointed-at person in the middle of those two does not crouch in time. In that case, that person is eliminated.

When there are only two people left, they stand with their backs to each other in the middle of the room. The sheriff calls out random numbers. On every uneven number the pair takes a step away from each other. On the first even number they draw, quickly spinning around and then shooting. The quickest draw is the winner.

- **Defining media literacy with snowball method – 35 min**

Each participant receives a piece of A4 paper and a pen. The trainer gives them task to think about, and without use of their smartphones, define what media literacy would be. The definitions need to be written on the paper by the end of this step.

In the next step, participants are paired up, share the definitions in pairs, and receive another piece of paper to write a joint definition of the media literacy in the pairs.
In the next step, pairs are put together in smaller groups.

The activity continues until everyone meets again in the whole group. At that point there are two definitions that the group needs to put together into one.

After the last step, the definition is read out loud and the paper with the definition is put on the wall.

Trainer now presents different definitions of the media literacy (from below), and asks participants to compare them with the one they agreed upon as a group.

By the end of this step, participants need to have clear understanding what media literacy is.
- Media literacy is the ability to decode media messages (including the systems in which they exist), assess the influence of those messages on thoughts, feelings, and behaviours; and create media thoughtfully and conscientiously.
- Media literacy is an expanded conceptualization of literacy that includes the ability to access and analyse media messages as well as create, reflect and take action, using the power of information and communication to make a difference in the world.

- Media literacy includes everything from the ability to enjoy a television series on a video streaming platform; to using social media to build and maintain positive relationships; to recognising misleading advertising during political campaigns; to identifying misinformation on digital platforms.
- Media literacy is the practice of critically evaluating, creating, and or using media. To be media literate, one must be aware of the influence media has on them and apply this knowledge by taking an active stance towards consuming and creating media.
- Media literacy is the knowledge and skills necessary to understand and use the codes and conventions of a wide variety of media forms and genres appropriately, healthily, effectively and ethically. Media literacy also aims to provide people with the ability to create and distribute their own media products.

- **Input on media literacy – 10 min**

Trainer, after jointly defining the media literacy with the group, proceeds to providing more inputs on media literacy.

Media literacy implies the ability of citizens/audiences for quality access, analysis, evaluation, creation and participation in society based on messages in different forms - from printed and video to online. Media literacy makes it possible to understand the role of the media in the society and gives citizens basic skills for questioning messages but also for self-expression through them.

Important keywords in this context are education (which implies that media literacy is learned); understanding media (which implies their social role and the need for understanding ways in which they are integrated into society); questioning (which implies critical attitude of users) and self-expression (which implies the participation of citizens in the communication community, not just their passive role in receiving media messages).

Media literacy is, in fact, a upgrade of general literacy, as the concept of media mastery (traditional media, and new media, i.e. the Internet) was "introduced" into the definition of literacy. Therefore, we would conclude that literacy in the 21st century is multidimensional, that is organised on several levels:
- **first –** traditional level, which includes general reading skills and writing;
- **second –** media level, which implies the skills of a successful critic media use;
- **third –** new media level, which implies the skills of a successful critical use of new media, primarily the Internet.

- **Media literacy and fake news – video and discussion – 25 min**

In the beginning of this step, trainer plays the video on projector. This video puts in context previous working day when participants were learning about fake news, and today's working day – when participants are talking about media literacy.

Why Do Our Brains Love Fake News? - video
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dNmwvntMF5A

After the video, trainer leads the discussion with use of the following questions:
- What do you think about the video?
- Which terms and topics were familiar for you and which were new?
- Do you think these topics are part of media literacy?
- Do you see some new connections between the topics of fake news and media literacy?
- What are other terms/concepts that you see around yourself that media literacy education should address?

- **Media Literacy: An Analysis of the Media-Mediated information – 55 min**

Participants are divided into 4 smaller groups.

Each group needs to narrate the video according to the media type/outlet they are representing. 35 minutes are given for this part of the assignment.
- Group 1: Right-wing TV station that has strong views on immigrants
- Group 2: Business TV channel that is focused on the economy, financial topics, GDP, euro, inflation...
- Group 3: Nature programme - TV channel that is focused on nature, animals, pollution, climate change, etc.
- Group 4: Small TV network that is led by and for national/religious minorities in a country

At the end of the exercise participants present their work, group by group while the rest of the groups guess what kind of channel made this news clip. 20 minutes are given for presentations and discussion.

Link to the video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tk_B4AQ5oko

- **7 steps of media literacy by Herbert Meyer (presentation input) – 25 min**

Participants are divided into 7 smaller groups, each getting specific step, with task to prepare and share with the rest of the group short presentation on the given step.

Steps are explained in the Handout for this step of the session.

By the end of exercise, group has better understanding of 7 steps of media literacy.

- **Debriefing – 15 min**

Trainer concludes the session with discussion in plenary, led with use of the following questions:
1. What did you know about media literacy before this session?
2. What did you learn during this session?
3. How can the gained knowledge and skills from this session be useful for our day-to-day work?

OUTCOMES

- Participants discussed different points of views within the group when it comes to defining media literacy, and have further improved their personal understanding of what media literacy is.
- Participants have further developed their understanding of connection between the fake news and media literacy, and have developed knowledge and skills about media literacy and 7 steps of media literacy by Herbert Meyer.

LITERATURE

- HANDBOOK: Media Literacy in light of Political Participation and engagement in Democratic processes

https://yp-de.org/resources/handbook-media-literacy-in-light-of-political-participation-and-engagement-in-democratic-processes/

- Media literacy definitionshttps://respectfulconversation.charlotte.edu/media-literacy-definitions/ https://www.nfsa.gov.au/latest/media-literacy-definitions-histories-and-practices https://medialiteracynow.org/challenge/what-is-media-literacy/

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Media_literacy

- How To Analyze Information by Herbert E Meyer

https://www.scribd.com/doc/135847816/33286156-How-to-Analyze-Information-by-Herbert-E-Meyer

How media influence us

⏰ DURATION
180 minutes

⚙️ REQUIRED MATERIALS
A4 white and coloured papers, pens, markers, scissors, glue, Wi-Fi, smartphones, laptop and projector, flipchart papers, post-it notes. Trainers, before the session, need to prepare a timeline with years/centuries to use as the visual aid for the session.

🎯 OBJECTIVES
- To explore the history of media
- To discuss and connect how specific events influenced media landscape today
- To critically reflect on personal media consumption as a source of information
- To reflect on how media influence is relevant topic for business owners and entrepreneurs

⚙️ THE FLOW OF THE SESSION:
- **Energiser: Flamingo and penguins – 15 min**

Session starts with an energiser. Participants are invited to stand up. Trainer explains that a Flamingo hunts Penguins and they turn into Flamingos as a consequence. Then trainers proceed to show how a Flamingo – one arm is raised to imitate the Flamingo's head – lifts its knee with slow, swinging movements, while a Penguin is walking with waddling, fast, small steps. Trainers ask for one participant to volunteer to be the first Flamingo, and then tell all Penguins to run. With a peck on the head of the Penguin, the Flamingo transforms Penguins into freshly-created Flamingos that now hunt remaining Penguins.

- **History of media – video and discussion – 20 min**

Trainer plays the video on the topic of media and globalisation, link available below.

Media and globalisation: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2p0NRBaQ4Ic

After watching the video, trainer discuss the content of the video with the group, addressing the key points from the video.

- **History of media – exercise – 85 min**

Trainer divides the whole group into 8 smaller groups and gives one topic to each group, with task to do the research and create infographic:

1. The invention of Johannes Gutenberg
2. Facebook-Cambridge Analytica scandal
3. Penny papers
4. Watergate
5. Franklin D. Roosevelt & famous speeches on the radio
6. The invention of the radio & its impact on mass consumption
7. Information revolution
8. Napoleon & propaganda (which media he used?)

Participants are given 45 minutes for the group work. In the second part of this step, each group presents their infographic, and the infographics are placed on the floor or on the wall, as part of the timeline with years/centuries that trainers prepared before the session.

Trainer concludes the step with the following discussion questions:

1. Which of these events were familiar to you?
2. Which of these events were not familiar to you?
3. Do you think any of these events impacted our media landscape and reality? If yes, what was the impact?
4. Would you add some other event when talking about the history of the media?

- **Online services and apps we use – 40 min**

Trainer puts, on the ground, 2 flipcharts with titles: **Media I am using as a source of information**, and **Media I am not using as a source of information**.

Participants are invited to look at their smartphones and check all apps they've been using in the last month. They need to write down, on post-it notes (1 post-it per app) the apps they used as a source of information, and apps they used for other purposes (i.e., games).

After participants write down all the apps, they need to put them on one or the other flipchart paper on the ground. All the answers are read out loud to the group.

Participants then **reflect on which apps they paid for and which were free**. Trainer proceeds asking questions:

1. What do they think is why they are free?
2. How do these apps make money?

Participants also reflect on **the time they spend on their smartphones** and the applications they are mostly using.

As last part of the exercise, trainer invites participants to **reflect on positive and negative sides** of the top 5 or 6 media discussed in the previous step:
1. How do they or how can they impact our lives in a positive way?
2. How do they or how can they impact our lives in a negative way?

- **Debriefing and conclusions – 20 min**

Trainer concludes the session with discussion in plenary, led with the following questions:
1. Can you summarize the key activities and discussions we had during the session?
2. How did the various activities and discussions make you feel about the influence of media?
3. What parts of the session did you find most impactful or enlightening? Were there any parts that you found less effective?
4. How do you think your understanding of media influence has changed as a result of this session?
5. What are the main takeaways from this session regarding the impact of media on our lives?
6. How can you apply what you learned today to critically evaluate media content in your daily life or work?

OUTCOMES

- Participants have gained a comprehensive understanding of key historical events that have shaped the media landscape that we have today.
- Participants reflected on their own media consumption habits, recognising the sources they rely on for information and entertainment, and understanding the impact of these choices.
- Participants have raised their awareness about the pervasive influence of media in everyday life and its relevance to running businesses and using digital platforms

LITERATURE

- HANDBOOK: Media Literacy in light of Political Participation and engagement in Democratic processes
https://yp-de.org/resources/handbook-media-literacy-in-light-of-political-participation-and-engagement-in-democratic-processes/
- Media and globalisation:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2p0NRBaQ4Ic
- Resources to use as part of the History of media, as a starting resources for the smaller groups (divided by topics):
- The invention of Johannes Gutenberghttps://www.britannica.com/biography/Johannes-Gutenberg
- Facebook-Cambridge Analytica scandalhttps://bipartisanpolicy.org/blog/cambridge-analytica-controversy/

- Penny papershttps://www.thoughtco.com/penny-press-definition-1773293https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Penny_press
- Watergatehttps://www.britannica.com/event/Watergate-Scandalhttps://www.fbi.gov/history/famous-cases/watergate
- Franklin D. Roosevelt & famous speeches on the radiohttps://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/president-franklin-roosevelts-radio-addresshttps://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fireside_chatshttps://teachingamericanhistory.org/document/radio-address-delivered-by-president-roosevelt-from-washington/
- The invention of the radio and its impact on mass consumptionhttps://open.lib.umn.edu/mediaandculture/chapter/7-4-radios-impact-on-culture/ https://www.elon.edu/u/imagining/time-capsule/150-years/back-1890-1930/
- Information revolutionhttps://study.com/academy/lesson/the-information-revolution-the-rise-of-the-global-economy.html
- Napoleon & propagandahttps://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/napoleon/art-and-design/propaganda.htmlhttps://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Napoleonic_propaganda

4.4.1

HANDOUT: 7 STEPS OF MEDIA LITERACY BY HERBERT MEYER

01. Figure Out Where you Are

You cannot make sense of information unless you know where you are when you look at it. To use a simple example, imagine that you are driving toward San Francisco, where you plan to spend the night at a hotel. You hear a "beep," glance down at the dashboard and see a yellow light on the fuel gauge signalling that there's very little gas left in the tank. If your hotel is at 55 Fourth Street, and you see that you're just now passing 27 Fourth Street - you can keep going to the hotel and need only remember to buy gas tomorrow. But if you're on the highway when you hear that "beep," and the last sign you remember seeing said that San Francisco is 200 miles ahead - you'd better find a gas station.

Now, you may not know precisely whether the hotel is three blocks ahead or four blocks - or 190 miles or 170 miles. But in either case you ought to have a general idea of how far you have yet to go, and know whether finding a gas station is something you need to do immediately or can leave to the next day.

Sometimes, figuring out "where you are" isn't a question of geography. Let's say you're a senior in high school starting to send in applications to colleges. If you're a straight-A student, editor of the high school's newspaper and captain of its tennis team, it makes sense to apply for admission to the most prestigious universities, such as Stanford and Princeton. At this point, you don't know which of the dozen or so leading universities would be best for you - or which are most likely to admit you - but you know the category of university to aim for.

On the other hand, if you've got a C-minus average, failed algebra twice and passed on your third attempt only because your parents hired a private tutor, and have never participated in any extra-curricular activities - applying to the most prestigious and difficult-to-enter universities makes no sense. You should aim for admission to one of the local colleges in your state (some of which are excellent, by the way) and try to get a fresh start there.

In either of these cases, you still don't have the detailed information you will need to proceed with college applications. But by figuring out "where you are" - in this case, academically and personally, rather than geographically - you are able to find your way forward.

Until you know "where you are" you cannot make good use of the available information. That's because you cannot know what specific information, you'll need next, or what the information you'll be looking at when you get it will mean. So, take the time to figure out "where you are" - literally or metaphorically -- before moving on to the next step.

02. Be Sure You're Seeing Clearly

It's obvious that seeing clearly is important. But when you're dealing with information, "clearly" has a special meaning that isn't so obvious.

Let's say you're attending a seminar, and a colleague who isn't able to attend has asked you to provide her not only with a summary but also with a physical description of the speaker. In fact, the speaker is a middle-aged, average-sized, blond-haired man wearing a dark suit, a white shirt and a red tie. But after you've taken your seat, someone places a prism in front of you - one of those long, triangular bars of glass. Now, since a prism refracts and disperses light your view of the speaker will be distorted. The speaker's hair might appear to be green, and his tie purple. He might look very thin and tall. You might not even be able to tell if it's a man or a woman. In short, you will get everything wrong.

When we deal with information, we sometimes see through prisms - not real ones, made of glass, but "intellectual" prisms, in our minds. In other words, we approach an issue with a distorted view of it. For instance, if you believe that your best friend is honest, while everyone else knows that your best friend is a crook, you won't see all the evidence of his dishonesty that's obvious to everyone else - at least not until it's too late. Or, if you're driving toward San Francisco and you have it in your head that this large and vibrant city is a tiny village of just 1,500 residents - boy, are you in for a surprise. When you reach its outskirts, you will be utterly disoriented and confused by what you see before you. If you think that India is a poor, backward country with no technology and an uneducated population - you are seeing India through a prism, and you will be blindsided by its economic power, its technological achievements, and its rapid emergence as one of this century's most important nations.

In politics, the word for these intellectual prisms is "ideology." During the Cold War years, people living in the West who thought the Soviet Union's leaders were a decent, peace-loving group of men and women were always caught off-guard by the Kremlin's vicious and aggressive military actions. Likewise, members of the Soviet Union's ruling Politburo -- who believed that the US was always on the verge of economic collapse due to the so-called "inherent contradictions of capitalism" -- were always astonished by the strength and resilience of the US economy. Today, Americans who believe that all Republicans are stupid, or who believe that all Democrats are evil, are also seeing through ideological prisms. And so they are always surprised by sensible Republican policies or decent Democratic initiatives; sometimes they cannot even see the obvious merits of these policies and initiatives because they are so sure they couldn't possibly be there.

The key to seeing information clearly is to make certain there isn't a prism between you and whatever you are looking at. You may not know whether the population of San Francisco is 500,000 or one million - it's about 740,000 - but you ought to know it's a big city. You shouldn't think your best friend is a saint if he's a crook, and you don't need to be an expert in world economics who can reel off India's current economic growth rate - it's about 9 percent - to know that the image of India as a hopelessly backward sub-continent is long since outdated. And if you're dealing with political issues, never let yourself be blinded by ideology.

Seeing information clearly, just as knowing where you are, means you need to have a generally accurate idea of whatever person, place, organisation, situation, or issue that you're looking at.

Because these first two steps of the analytic process are "invisible" most people aren't even aware that they need to be taken before moving on to the next, "visible" steps in the process. So they skip these first two steps and start with the third. It isn't provable with statistics, but I'm convinced that the cause of most bad decisions lies in the failure to recognize that Steps One and Two exist and must be taken. So, take all the time you need to figure out where you are and to be sure you aren't seeing through a prism. Then, and only then, are you ready to move forward to the "visible" steps of analyzing information.

03. Decide What You Need to Decide

My seventh-grade history teacher in New York, Mrs. Naomi Jacobs, never let a day go by without hammering into our heads a sentence that is so insightful it ought to be painted onto the walls of every classroom and office in the world: "The question is more important than the answer." She was right; it is. If you don't ask the right question, you cannot possibly get the right answer.

Decide what it is you need to decide. If you're driving to San Francisco and the light on your fuel gauge is flashing, you must decide whether to stop for gas or to keep driving to your destination. Or, you must decide that the question to which you need an answer is, "To which universities ought I apply?" If you're a business executive, the question may be whether your company should open a sales office in New Delhi or Sao Paulo. As a voter, you'll need to decide which candidate to support in the upcoming election.

Most of the time, deciding what you need to decide isn't hard. The answer is obvious, and it takes just a moment's thought to get it right. But sometimes, deciding what you need to decide can take some effort. For example, if you're a high-school senior who hasn't done well academically and who doesn't have a clue what to do with your life after graduation, the decision you need to make isn't "To which universities ought I apply." The decision is, "Should I go to college after graduation, or should I find a job and think about college in a year or two?" In business, the decision may not be whether to open a new sales office for your company in New Delhi or Sao Paulo, but whether to try and increase sales of your company's products by pushing harder in your domestic market or by going overseas. Only after you've decided that going overseas would be best are you ready to decide whether it would make more sense to open a sales office in New Delhi or in Sao Paulo.

In other words, sometimes you must pause for a moment to be sure you're asking the right question. If all your friends are talking about the colleges they hope to attend, it's easy to get caught up in their enthusiasm and to start doing the same thing yourself, instead of stopping to realize that going to college may not be right for you. And if everyone in your office is debating whether the market for your company's products would be larger in India or Brazil, it can take a huge effort to slam on the brakes by asking whether expanding overseas makes more sense than expanding in your company's domestic market.

The question really is more important than the answer - thank you, Mrs. Jacobs -- so be sure you make an effort to get it right.

04. Determine What You Need to Know

Let's say that you've invited friends to your home for dinner. You've decided what you want to cook for them - meat-potatoes-vegetable, or a curry, or lasagna. Your next step will be to make a list of the ingredients you'll need to cook whatever you're planning to serve.

What ingredients are to a meal, information is to a decision. Once you've decided what you're going to decide, the next step is to make a list of the information you'll need to make that decision.

For instance, if you've decided to apply for admission to the country's most prestigious universities, make a list of these universities, then add to this list the specific questions to which you'll need answers such as the location of each university, the various courses they offer, the annual cost of tuition and the kinds of scholarships each university makes available to its students. If you've decided to open a sales office for your company in either New Delhi or Sao Paulo, you'll want to know the potential size of the market for your company's products in India versus Brazil, the competitors you'll be facing in each market, and the costs of renting office space in these two cities.

Sometimes the list of information you need is so short that writing it out would be silly. If the warning light on your fuel gauge comes on, all you need to know is whether this means you have two gallons of gas left in the tank or four. (So, just pull over to the side of the road, stop, take the operator's manual out of the car's glove compartment and look in its index for the appropriate page. You'll have the answer in ten seconds.) But sometimes the list of information you'll need is long, and writing it out really is necessary. If you're trying to decide in which foreign country to open a new sales office, you'll want information about markets, demographics, competitors, taxes, import-export regulations, labor laws and other issues that are complex, and too important to risk forgetting.

Take as much time as you need to make the most complete list you can of the "ingredients" - the information - you're going to need. Of course it's always possible that you'll leave something out, just as experienced cooks sometimes leave an item off their shopping lists. And when this happens, you'll do what the cooks do; you'll run back to the store to get what you've belatedly realized you need. Just do the best you can to make your list of necessary information and if you do leave an item off your list - well, you can get it later.

05. Collect Your Information

The first thing you need to figure out is the most reliable source for each piece of information you need:

If you want to know what time your flight to London will arrive at Heathrow airport, don't ask a friend who took that same flight last month; your friend could remember incorrectly, or it's possible that the schedule itself has changed. Check with the airline itself to be sure you've got the correct arrival time. If you're trying to decide whether to seek admission to a certain university, your best source for information about its courses, tuition, and scholarships is the university itself, for instance from its official catalogue and website. But if you want to get a feel for what life on campus would be like, the best source for this information will be students and former students.

You'll want to talk with some of them directly - in person, or by telephone or email. Likewise, if you're trying to get information about tax rates, labor laws and import-export regulations for New Delhi and Sao Paulo, these cities' governments will be the most reliable sources. But if you want information about the costs of renting office space in these cities, you'd be smart to check with local property agents rather than with government officials; the property agents are more likely to have up-to-date numbers - and they are more likely than government officials to tell you the truth about the office rental markets in their cities.

You've already made a list of the information you're going to need. Now, next to each item, write down the most reliable source for it - a government agency, a university or another organisation such as a business or an industry association, or specific individuals.

Now it's time to figure out the best way to collect the information from the sources you've identified:

Remember, collecting the information you'll need to make a decision is the equivalent of shopping for the ingredients you'll need to cook a meal. As every experienced cook knows, sometimes you can find all the ingredients you need at the supermarket, so you can get your shopping done quickly and easily; other times, you start at the supermarket and then go on to the specialty shops for those ingredients the supermarket doesn't carry.

These days, we have "information supermarkets" like Google that make the chore of information-shopping quick and easy -- and free. The range and breadth of information available online today is simply astounding, and it's a trickle compared with the torrent of information that will be available online tomorrow and, in the years, and decades that lie ahead. But just as even the largest supermarkets don't carry every imaginable ingredient, not all information is available online. There will always be some information you'll need that you won't be able to get at the "information supermarkets" - or, for that matter, just by sitting at your desk.

Give yourself as much time as possible to collect all the information you need. If you're lucky, the "information supermarkets" will supply everything through the websites to which they link. If you're not so lucky, you'll start with the "information supermarkets" and then go on to look up information in books, magazines, and by talking with people in person, on the telephone, or by email. Sometimes you will be able to do all this without ever leaving your chair. Other times you'll need to visit a library, meet with someone in person, or even travel to another city or country. As a general rule, you'll discover that there is always one source - one website, for instance, or one person - where the correct answer to your question can be found. Keep going until you find this source.

Since time is always limited, use your best judgment about how much effort to spend for each item on your list. Keep in mind that, just as all the ingredients to a recipe aren't equally important, not all items of information for a decision are equally important. After all, if necessary, you can bake a lasagna without oregano; but you cannot bake a lasagna without pasta. As you "shop" for the information you need, try to separate out the various items into two categories: those which are necessary, and those which are merely desirable. If you're deciding whether to seek admission to a certain university, it's necessary to know the cost of tuition; knowing whether this university provides television sets in every dormitory is merely desirable. If you're deciding whether to build a factory in, say, Shanghai, you must know the local tax rates and labor laws; you may also want to know if there's a golf course nearby, but you really don't need to know this.

As you go about the business of collecting information, start by seeking answers to the necessary questions. If your time permits, then go on to search for answers to the desirable questions.

06. Turn the Information into Knowledge
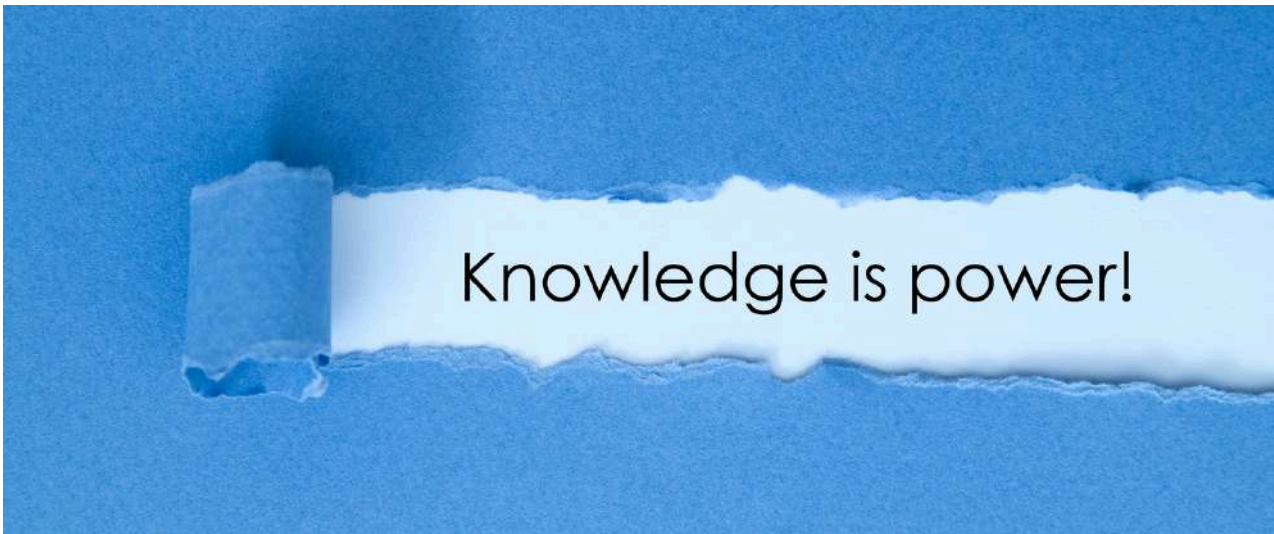
When you've invited friends to your home for dinner, you don't put all the ingredients you've gathered onto the table and expect your friends to imagine what you planned to serve. Before they arrive, you cook the ingredients into whatever it is you've decided to serve - meat-potatoes-vegetable, curry, or lasagna - and then put the finished meal on the table for your friends to enjoy.

Likewise, you've got to "cook" the information you've collected into a finished product so that you can use it to make a decision. Unlike cooking the ingredients you've gathered into a meal - which is mostly a physical process -- reaching inside the information you've gathered to grasp the knowledge it contains is an intellectual process. Your objective is to understand what the information means to you in light of the specific decision you're facing.

As you study the information you've collected, the first thing to look for is facts.

How much fuel is left in your tank, and what's the distance from where you are to your hotel? How much does Princeton charge for tuition, versus how much for tuition at Stanford University? What is the corporate tax rate in India, and what's the comparable rate in Brazil? What time does my flight land at Heathrow airport? If the sources from which you've gotten the information are reliable - the owner's manual for your car, the universities' official websites, the governments of India and Brazil, the airline - then you may be confident that the information you've collected is accurate. But if you get conflicting facts - for example, one source reports that tuition at Princeton is $30,000 annually, while another source reports that Princeton charges $35,000 per year - you've got to resolve the inconsistency. The chances are that one source is right while the other is wrong. When this happens, you must decide which of the two sources is most reliable. But it's possible that both sources are accurate, for instance if one source is including the cost of room-and-board while the other isn't. Take the time to sort it out.

As you continue to study the information you've collected, you must also keep an eye out for patterns.

Seeing patterns is part of what it means to be human; it's how we make sense of the world. For example, we learn that the sun always rises in the east and sets in the west; that men tend to be bigger and physically stronger than women; that people who are kind tend to have more friends than people who are cruel. More importantly, by seeing patterns we can use our experience to predict the future. And by predicting the future, we can change the future before it happens.

For example, we learn from experience that winters are colder than summers. So rather than freeze to death when winter comes, in late autumn we prepare by purchasing fuel to heat our homes. We learn from experience that traffic is heavier during rush hour than at other times of the day. So, when we must drive somewhere during rush hour, we leave our home or office a few minutes early, to make sure that even if we do get stuck in a traffic jam we won't be late for our appointment.

Some patterns are so obvious that we see them without even being aware of it. For example, we cannot help but notice that cities are noisy and crowded, while country villages are quiet and sparsely populated. But some patterns aren't so obvious, and it takes experts - qualified people who've done serious research -- to point them out. Economists tell us that people who live in countries with free-market economies tend to be more prosperous than people who live in countries whose economies are controlled by their governments. Cardiologists report that the incidence of heart disease among people who are overweight is higher than the incidence of heart disease among people who eat sensibly and get a lot of exercise.

As you study the information you've collected, make a conscious effort to look for patterns. This is how you will make sense of the information. For instance, you'll see that tuition at all the prestigious private universities in the US is higher than tuition at all the public universities. Or that labor costs in developing countries tend to be lower than labor costs in Europe. Moreover, by consciously looking for patterns you will be able to spot exceptions to the patterns. For instance, if you're comparing tuition fees at prestigious American universities you will see that all of them are expensive to attend - but by consciously noticing this you may also see that at one of these universities' tuition fees are markedly lower than at the others.

If you aren't wealthy, you may want more information about this high-prestige, more affordable university. If you're trying to decide in which of six developing countries to build a factory, you may find that labor costs are lower in all six countries than in Europe -- but quite a bit higher in the sixth developing country than in the other five. You'll probably want to scratch Country Number-Six off your list of potential factory sites.

By studying the information you've collected until you have determined the facts and seen the patterns it contains, you have turned raw material into a finished product. You have turned information into knowledge.

07. Add the Final Ingredient

Before actually making your decision, there is one final ingredient you will add whether you want to or not: your own judgment.

Judgment is the sum total of who we are - the combined product of our character, our personality, our instincts and our knowledge. Because judgment involves more than knowledge, it isn't the same thing as education. You cannot learn judgment by taking a course, or by reading a book. This is why some of the most highly educated people in the world have terrible judgment, and why some people who dropped out of school at the age of sixteen have superb judgment. After all, the most visible pattern in the world is that different people respond to the same circumstances in different ways. Some people are naturally sensible, while others are naturally foolish. Some people enjoy taking risks, while others tend to be cautious. Some people are congenital optimists, while others are always pessimistic. Some people just seem to have good instincts, for instance about other people, or about technical issues such as whether the price of crude oil will rise or fall in the coming months. Other people's instincts always seem to lead them astray.

Now you can understand why two people, facing the same decision and armed with precisely the same information, will make different choices. As you reach your decision, you will be combining the knowledge you've gained from the information you've collected with your own character, your own personality, and your own instincts. You cannot help but do this, because you are a human being and not a machine.

At least in the short term, there is little you can do to change your judgment. It's who you are. But if you are aware of who you are - and if you have worked hard to collect information and then to turn this information into knowledge -- you will be more likely to make the decision that's right for you. And this, of course, is what analysing information is all about.
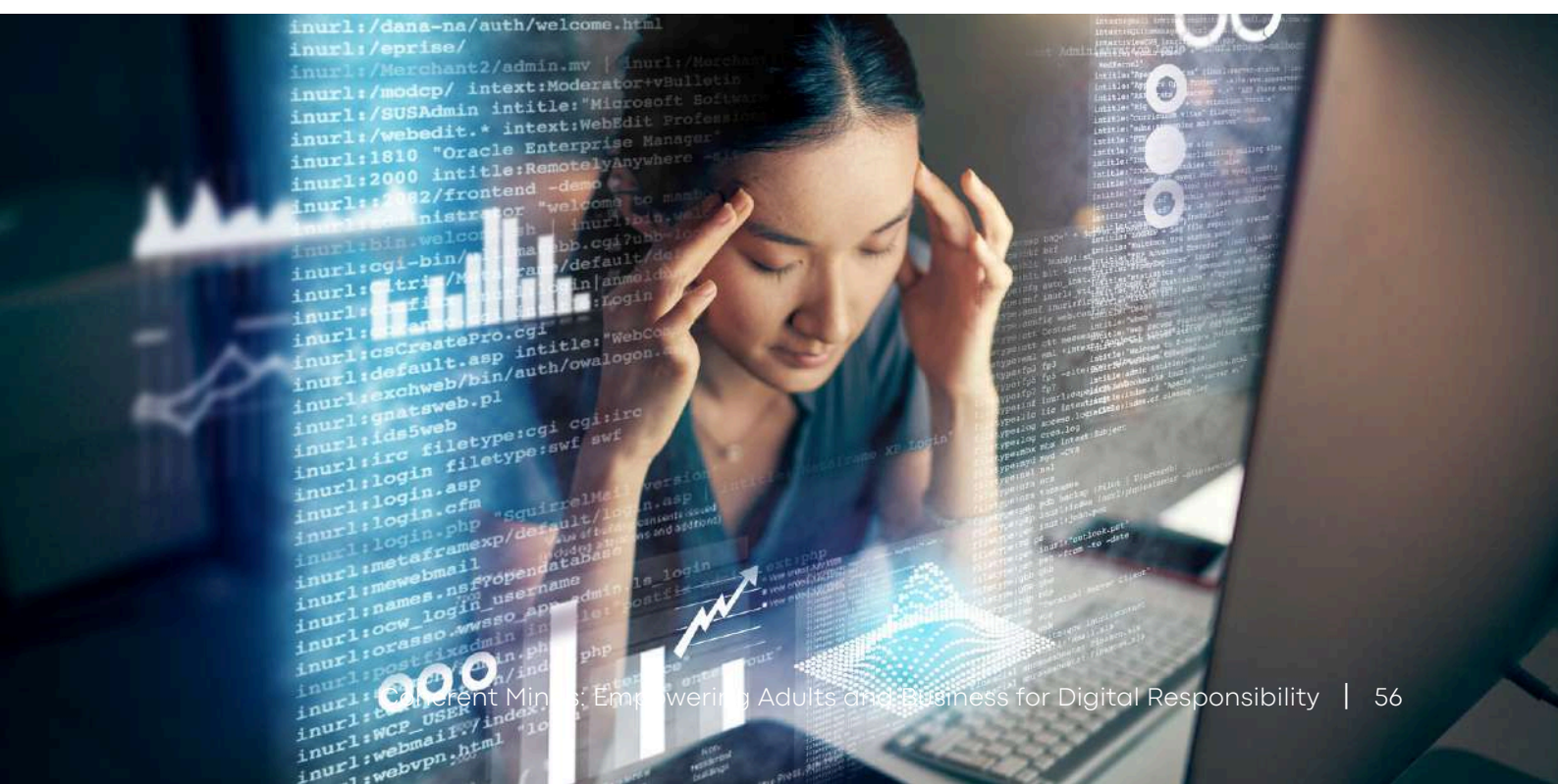
4.5

WORKING DAY 5: "EVALUATION OF THE EVENT"

The last day of the program is dedicated to the evaluation and certificates ceremony; as a conclusion of the overall learning process that took place throughout the training activity. In the last part of the day, participants will be supported by the trainers and other staff members, in developing concrete plans of organising follow-up activities and thus practically making use of the new knowledge and skills they got from the event.

Session 1

- **Evaluation of the event**
- **Certificates ceremony**
- **Market of ideas for follow-up activities in local communities**

DURATION
180 minutes

REQUIRED MATERIALS
A3 and A4 papers, pens and pencils, scissors, glue, prepared real and fake news articles (3 of each)

OBJECTIVES
- To introduce participants with important terms related to fake news
- To develop critical thinking skills by understanding of criteria for evaluating news credibility
- To develop understanding of argumentation models and techniques.

THE FLOW OF THE SESSION:

- **Walk through the program – 20 min**

Session is opened with an interactive walk of participants, together with the trainers' team, around the working room. During the walk, group goes visiting each of the flipchart papers and other visual materials developed as part of the sessions – from the first till the last day. As part of the walk, everyone reminds themselves on how the flow of the activities went – from arriving at the venue and meeting each other on the first day, until the current session. Also – fears, expectations and contributions discussed in smaller groups on the first day of the training, are analysed and participants answer the questions: "Did any of these come true? How?". At the end of the activity, trainers invite participants to take a seat back in the circle.

- **Dixit cards exercise – How do I feel about the experience of participating in this event – 30 min**

After participants had a chance to remind themselves of the program and flow of the activities during the training, trainers play some relaxing music in the background. They take Dixit cards and arrange them on the floor. Participants are invited to, in silence, stand up and walk around the room while looking at the different Dixit cards arranged on the floor.

Trainer asks participants to each choose one card that reflects their personal experience of the training. After each participant has a card in their hand, they are invited to take a seat in the circle again.

Trainers then ask for participants to, voluntarily, stand up and share with the group the card they have each chosen and share how that card reflects their experience of this event.

Activity is concluded once each participant has a chance to share their card.

- **Written evaluation in Google forms – 30 min**

Participants are invited to fill out an evaluation form, using their devices. They are given space and time to individually reflect on the training, and fill out the online evaluation form.

- **Sinking ship messages – 30 min**

Since the training was opened with a metaphor where the event is presented in the form of a trip in which the boat is our expectations, sails are our contributions, and sea is our fears; the official program is closed with an exercise "Sinking ship". Name of each participant and organisational team member is written on a flipchart paper, in preparation for the session. Everyone is invited to write farewell messages to each other.

At the end of the exercise participants cut out parts of the flipchart paper with the messages left for them, as something they can bring back home after leaving the event.

- **Market of ideas for info sessions follow-up activities in local communities – 40 min**

Last 40 minutes are left for participants to discuss the ideas for follow-up info sessions they can implement in their local communities with other adults, business owners and entrepreneurs. During these 40 minutes, participants have a chance to group around the different ideas and initiatives they have in mind, and based on their interests to discuss planning follow-up info sessions or events. The process of market of ideas is supported by the trainers, providing advice and information to participants when and where needed – within the smaller groups formed around the specific topics/ideas.

By the end of this step, participants should oblige themselves on implementing specific follow-up activity, individually or in pairs/smaller groups; in format of either info sessions or a longer educational event.

OUTCOMES

- Participants reflected on the overall program and their learning outcomes, and are fully aware of the new information, knowledge and skills gained during the 5-days event.
- Participants are prepared to organise follow-up activities as part of their work, and have developed concrete plans and steps for organising follow-up activities.

LITERATURE

No topic-based literature is needed for this session.

Trainer(s) can use the literature from the previous days of the program to reflect on the learning process, and share the literature with participants for their future work in the field.

05 CULTIVATING CRITICAL MEDIA LITERACY SKILLS IN INDIVIDUALS

The digital media landscape demands new skills to reflect upon the different narratives that we are exposed to. Understanding disinformation phenomenon requires a cross-sectional approach, in terms of expertise, social spaces, territorial geographies, as well as involved agents and stakeholders. It is a valuable approach to address it through multi- ple types of actions, including governmental, legal, technological, and educational ones (Foà et al., 2023).

Cultivating media literacy is an ever-evolving task given the fast pace with which the media environment continues to evolve and change. To keep up with these dynamic changes, interventions to strengthen people's media literacy skills need to be implemented by a variety of sectors and incorporated into individuals' daily lives. The main purpose of these interventions should be to equip individuals with cognitive, technical, and social skills that would enable them to critically evaluate the information they consume and responsibly produce content (Petković, et al., 2019). The latter may lead to a higher degree of perspective taking, empathy, and cooperation skills, importance of which is highlighted in the SCORE data that also identifies the crucial role that critical media literacy can play in mitigating the risk of adopting ethnonationalist ideologies (Asimovic & Scheerder, 2022).

Building these skills can come in many forms. Within the education sector, this should include incorporating media literacy lessons into school curricula or, in the vein of existing efforts, training teachers to create an environment that empowers dialogue processes and reflective reading (Asimovic & Scheerder, 2022).

Cultivating critical media literacy through existing community structures and figures (e.g., religious leaders, social workers, the youth) could improve the effectiveness of training and programs. The UK's Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport launched an "Online Media Literacy Strategy" which capitalizes on community structures and trains community leaders in media literacy and media landscape awareness (Crown, 2021). In the Baltics, IREX (2021) teaches the youth to become leaders in media literacy enabling them to provide training to people in their surroundings (Asimovic & Scheerder, 2022).

Besides affecting intergroup relations and attitudes, critical media literacy contributes to citizens' positive civic behavior.As already mentioned, high levels of information consumption are associated with less inclusive civic attitudes but more active civic behavior and stronger feelings of responsibility for social change in the country (Asimovic & Scheerder, 2022).

One of the main goals of this research is to encourage a more productive and positive media literacy.

06 EFFECTIVE CORRECTION TO BIASES

Lewandowsky et al. (2017) argue that corrections to biases are generally only effective when at least two conditions are met:

1. Correcting disinformation must not directly challenge people's core worldviews, as it can evoke a defensive emotional reaction and risks being unethical. Affirming the self-worth of audiences can be an important ingredient to any campaign to address disinformation; challenging a person's core belief system can counterproductively lead people to fortify their belief systems.

2. When providing corrective evidence, an explanation of why the disinformation was disseminated in the first place, and a more credible explanation, must alsobe provided.

07 THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF-REGULATION IN CRITICAL THINKING
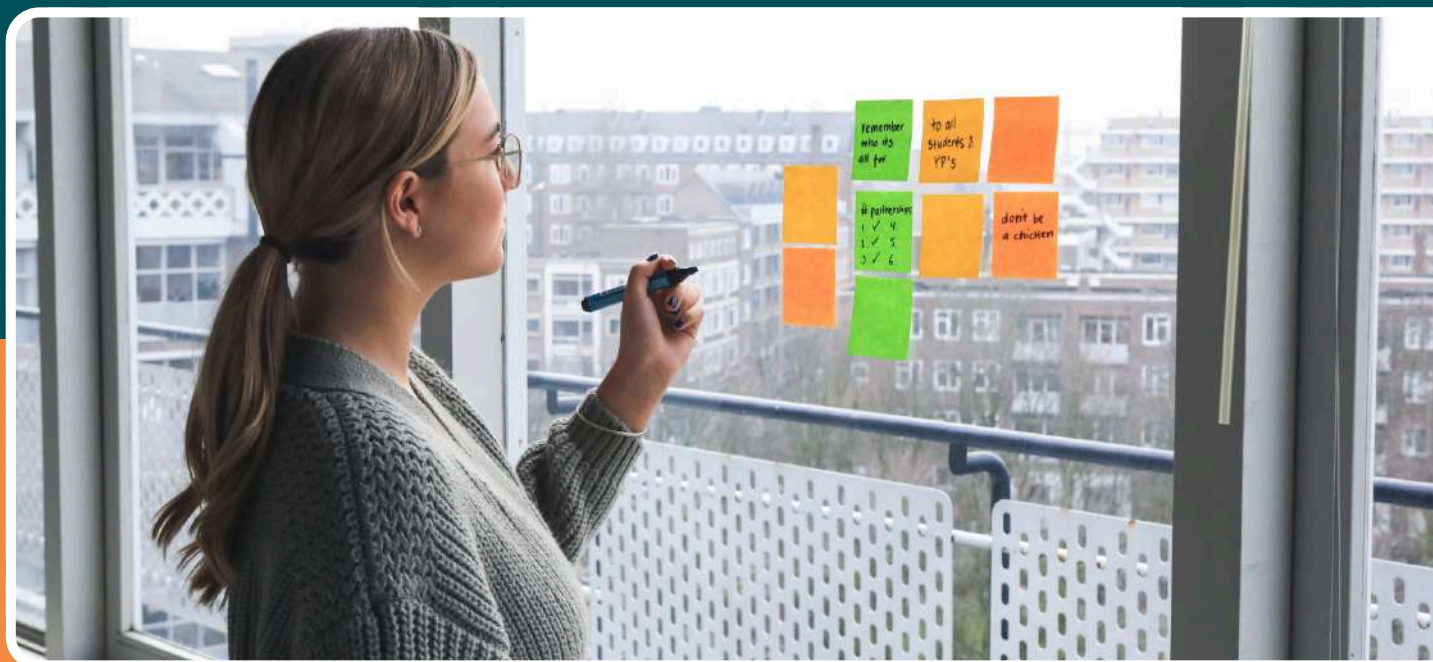
Besides the need to acquire digital literacy in digital learning, acquiring self- regulative abilities is also a must in digital learning. Self-regulative abilities are the skills of learners to utilise self-regulated learning strategies in managing their learning progression.

Examples of self-regulated learning strategies include effort regulation, critical thinking, peer learning, task value beliefs, and help-seeking strategy. Self-regulated learning strategies are key in developing digital literacy skills (Anthonysamy, Koo & Hew, 2020).

Nevertheless, some researchers reported that there is little evidence on the impact of self-regulated learning strategies towards digital literacy and how to promote the level of digital literacy in students warrants further investigation since there is no one specific strategy or set of strategies to achieve online success (Anthonysamy, Koo & Hew, 2020).

08 GUIDANCE ON FACT-CHECKING AND AVOID MISINFORMATION ONLINE

Although a source may seem well-informed, and what they may appear very real, they can still spread misinformation. Taking the following steps when you see political, health-related, or other types of information on social media can help you ensure its rooted in fact (Jedfoundation.org).

Check the credibility of the source: Ask yourself questions like: Is this person an expert on the subject? What kind of schooling or training do they have on this topic? What are their motivations for sharing this information?

Look for citations: People sharing ideas online should also share what's informing them. Reliable sources include government sites, studies from peer-reviewed journals, and research papers.

Opt for neutrality: People who present extremes may be pushing a political agenda or looking to marginalize others. Stick to neutral sources who state the facts and contribute information in a nonjudgmental tone.

Check for bias: You can use a media bias chart to see where a news outlet leans politically. This can inform the kind of reporting they do, the sources they consult, and the way they present information.

In addition to these advices, you can also:

Pay attention to how the information makes you feel: If a post doesn't sit right with you, it may be a sign that something's up, maybe the person or source is only painting half the picture or has a motive they haven't shared. Take your gut feeling as a sign to fact-check the information.

Recognize the effect of your echo chamber: Many of us live within an echo chamber, where all of the opinions and ideas we come across on social media align with our own. It can be troubling when something you see online doesn't align with your political beliefs, but that doesn't always mean it's false.

Ask a person you trust for guidance: Processing everything you read and watch on social media can be *a lot*. You can make it easier by talking to a person you trust who can help you make sense of it all. It could be a parent or relative, librarian, teacher, tutor, coach, or someone else in your life who you can rely on.

09 HOW TO FIND CREDIBLE SOURCES

Also relevant to avoid misinformation, is to find good sources of information. For that, Jedfoundation.org also has some advices on how analyse suitable website/media.

01. **Verify the account/website:** Just because an account is verified on social platforms doesn't mean you should trust it. Sometimes it can be a way to know if an account is authentic (meaning that person or entity is who they say they are and not a fake profile). But a blue check mark doesn't always mean the account is a reliable source that shares research- or science-backed information.

02. **Identify Relevant Degrees:** Certain degrees and certifications make a person an expert in the field and give them the ability to speak with authority on a given subject.

For example, a person with an advanced degree in psychology, such as a master's degree or PhD, has the expertise to give mental health advice and weigh in on issues within the healthcare system. However, if the person has a PhD, but it's in engineering, they probably aren't the best person to trust for information about emotional health.

03. **Look Into Their Experience:** A person doesn't always need an advanced degree to be qualified to speak on a subject, so it is recommended to not only look through the degree of expertise of the person, but also their experience.

04. **Use Reputable Websites**
To get accurate information on websites:
- Use federal and state government websites. You can check the facts on new and existing policies and rights in your state by going straight to its .gov website.
- Look to .org and .edu sites. They are generally more reputable than .com or .net websites.
- Bookmark or save fact-check websites. Politifact analyses social media posts and statements from politicians and shares how truthful they are. FactCheck.org offers evidence to prove or disprove political statements and allows you to submit questions when a political post goes viral or an influencer shares a view on a policy.
- Pay attention to fact-checking labels. Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and X (formerly Twitter) often label posts they have deemed misleading, altered, or false.

# 10 EXAMPLES OF BEST PRACTICES THROUGH EUROPE

The European Commission has pointed to the importance of collaboration between civil society and educational institutions to combat disinformation online and so there are multiple initiatives across Europe that aim to tackle disinformation in education.

Worth mentioning is the German and Belgium-based organisation Lie Detectors, which aims to "turn schoolchildren in Europe aged 10-15 into powerful lie detectors and critical thinkers in a world increasingly populated by propaganda and distorted facts online, empowering them to understand news media, make informed choices and resist peer pressure as they assemble their worldview. Also initiated in Belgium, the site 'Forbidden facts was set up in 2017 to debunk fake news and teach about the mechanisms behind it. Several websites have also appeared, with lesson plans for teachers to address disinformation and 'fake news (McDougall et al., 2018).

Another approach in media education that that appears to be effective is 'Inoculation Theory' (Compton, 2013 *cited in* McDougall et al., 2018).). The basic idea is that, like an inoculation for a virus, students are exposed to a "weakened" form of the disinformation. When exposed to the disinformation at a later date, the inoculation will provide them with the necessary counter-arguments to dismiss the disinformation (Ibid.). In other words, based on critical thinking, the core principle is to prepare students for exposure to potential disinformation by introducing them to the logical fallacies that are commonplace in disinformation. The aim is also to encourage students, especially at secondary education level, to move beyond superficial processing of information and engage in a more critical, deeper analysis of the information they are presented with (McDougall et al., 2018).

Inoculation programmes tend to consist of two main elements: (1) they contain an explicit warning of an impending threat; and (2) there is a refutation of an anticipated argument. The refutation exposes and counters the imminent fallacy

Multiple digital initiatives are being implemented to inoculate youth against 'fake news'. For instance, an online game in the UK and the Netherlands claims to provide a 'fake news vaccination'. The simulation game puts players in the shoes of an aspiring propagandist, and they create their own 'fake news'. In the game, youth manipulate digital news and social media. A pilot study shows that the game has some success in building resistance to 'fake news' among teenagers (Lewandowsky et al., 2017).
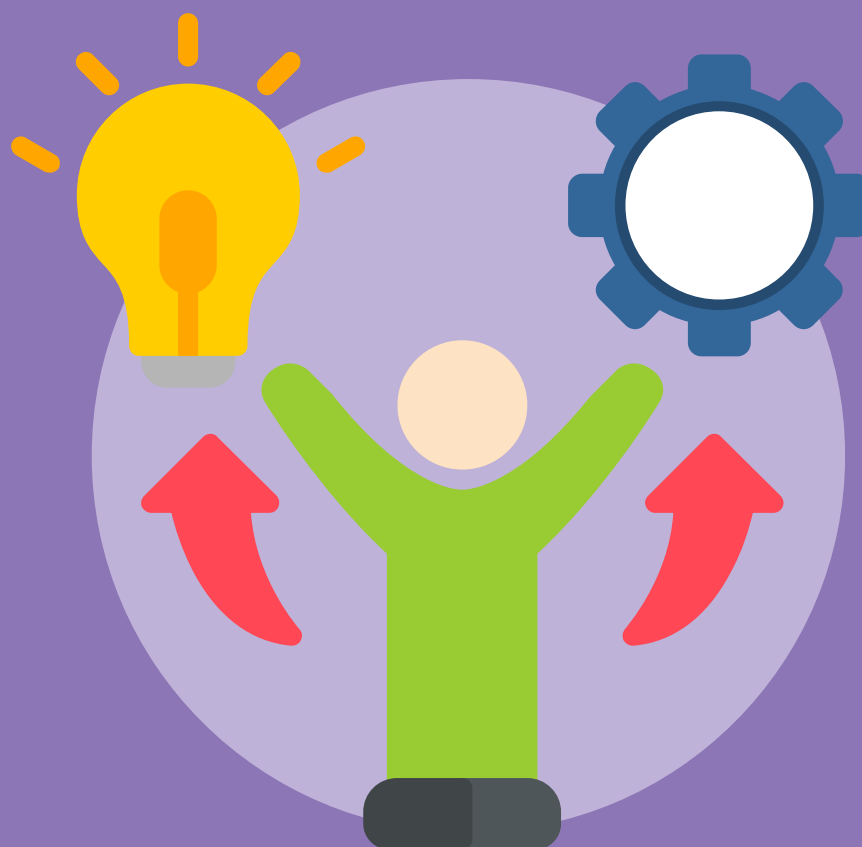
EXAMPLE OF COMBATING MISINFORMATION THROUGH NATIONAL TELEVISION
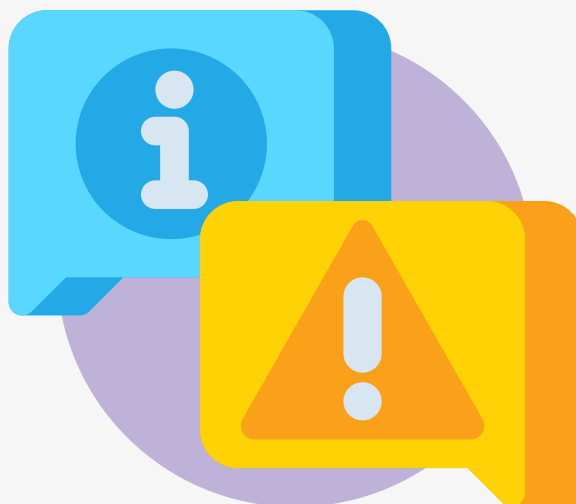
One of the best examples of actively combating fake news in Portugal is the newspaper Polígrafo. On November 6, 2018, Fernando Esteves, mentor of the digital project, journalist and former editor of "Sábado" magazine, presented the initiative at the Web Summit and launched it on the online platform the same day (Pinheiro, 2020).

In April 2019, Polígrafo achieved accreditation by the "International Fast-Checking Network", an organisation that operates alongside the Poynter Institute and brings together the best fast-checking projects in the world. (Esteves 2019) In order to belong to this organisation, they have committed themselves to complying with its Code of Principles: a commitment to non-partisanship and fairness, i.e. they undertake to be impartial and to use the same method of fact-checking; a commitment to transparency of sources, i.e. they must provide information on all sources except in cases where this could compromise them; a commitment to transparency of funding, in that they guarantee that funders have no influence on the conclusions they reach in their articles; the commitment to transparency in methodology, which as the name implies, the signatories have to be transparent about the methodology they use to select, research, write, edit, publish and correct the fast-checks; the commitment to open and honest corrections, i.e. they openly publish their correction policies, and this has to be clear and transparent (Pinheiro, 2020).

Turning now to the evaluation scale used by Polygraph, we see that it has five levels of fast checking. The first category is "true" and this level is used when the statement is completely true. Next, "true, but" refers to when the statement is true but lacks framing or context. The third category is "inaccurate" and is assigned when it contains elements that distort, even slightly, the truth. Moving on to the fourth category, namely "false", this appears when the statement is demonstrably wrong. Last but not least, there is the "pepper on the tongue" classification, which is characterized by being the highest degree of falsehood, where the news is scandalously false or is a satire, published in a satirical space (Pinheiro, 2020).

10.2

OTHER RELEVANT EXAMPLES OF COMBATING MISINFORMATION IN PRACTICE

Observador Fact Check - Created in 2019, it has a partnership with Facebook, joining an International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN). It later joined TVI, which culminated in the program "Time for True".

Within Polygraph, the Generation V project was created, financed by the Porticus Foundation, which consists of Fact-checking by young people aged between 15 and 22.

In Germany, two friends developed an idea of combating disinformation aiming to give people new tools to combat disinformation, at the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic, and after that with the success they had, this resulted in a new website for fact checking for a wider audience. This small project turned now into a social startup and since then, the two women want to continue expanding the platform, introducing new formats on Instagram and TikTok. (https://www.deutschland.de/en/topic/culture/social-media-fact-check-facts-for-friends-startup)

In 2007 in Croatia, was developed the website Faktograf.hr as a joint project of democracy watchdog Gong and Croatian Journalists' Association and it is verified by International Fact

Checking Network since 2017. In this website you can find 4 different sections:
-In Focus for deep dive reporting and analysis
-Exposed for debunking social networks
-Accuracy Check for fact-checks of politician's statements
-You asked for answering readers' requests
(https://www.disinfo.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/07_Day1_DisinfoacrossEU_Presentation2_Jelena.pdf)

Education and Media Literacy - are fundamental in the digital age to enable individuals to discern between true and false information. By teaching how to access, analyse and evaluate media content, citizens become more critical and responsible, contributing to a society less vulnerable to fake news.

This type of education includes teaching how to find reliable sources and developing skills to assess the credibility of information, analysing contexts and identifying possible biases. Fact-checking using multiple sources and fact- checking tools is essential. In addition, the creation of own content responsibly and ethically is encouraged, promoting clear and accurate communication. Promoting civic engagement and informed participation in public discussions is vital. This highlights the impact of fake news on society and the importance of sharing only verified information. By empowering citizens with these critical skills, the spread of fake news is reduced and a healthy democracy is strengthened. In Portugal, initiatives such as OberCom's promote media education through reports and surveys on Portuguese media consumption and literacy. Educational programmes and workshops are organised for different age groups, creating a solid base of individuals capable of navigating today's complex information ecosystem.

Fact Check - similar to the Polygraph, this initiative analyses the veracity of information by categorizing it on a scale. It is part of the IFCN and EDMO.

Community notes (Twitter/X) - The Twitter/X application has a feature to prevent and correct fake news. As this application is a well-known social network, any person or entity can share posts with information or news, often false, so, to combat this problem, community notes have been developed, where only certain people chosen by the application itself can add notes to these posts, informing all the other people who see that post that it is false information or news.

In Germany has passed the Network Enforcement Act, which requires social media platforms to remove illegal content, including hate speech and fake news, within a specified timeframe. This regulation aims to combat the spread of disinformation online and hold platforms accountable for their content. At European Union level, the European Commission established the EU Code of Practice on Disinformation, a self-regulatory framework for online platforms and tech companies to address fake news and disinformation. Signatories to the code commit to taking measures to improve the transparency of political advertising and reduce the visibility of false information.

These examples demonstrate practical measures taken by various EU countries and institutions to address the challenges posed by fake news and disinformation, highlighting the importance of collaboration between governments, tech companies, and civil society in combating misinformation.

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