

2020 growing/emerging mixed skills – (not every skill for everyone)

Introduction by The World Economic Forum, 2019, on the most required jobs and competencies in the nearest forthcoming years.

Work in groups and distinguish between hard and soft skills:

Analytical thinking and innovation	-vs. knowledge
Active learning and learning strategies	-vs. passive knowledge
Creativity, originality and initiative	-by problem-solving
Technology design and programming	-active technologies' user
Critical thinking and analysis	-view-point for discussions, ideas, arguments
Complex problem-solving	- context vision
Leadership and social influence	-self-management in particular areas of activities
Emotional intelligence	-clear shared attitudes, responsibility, reciprocity
Reasoning, idea-producing	-target-oriented activities, process management
Systems analysis and evaluation	-self-evaluation, target-settings

Discussion:

Why soft skills (human qualities) become as important as the hard (pragmatic, technical) ones?

Some hints on ways of acquiring competencies:

- Envolvement in activities, cooperation with school and children
- Communication – value sharing, mind-set development
- The most effective way to do it is learning together every-time, any-where
- Technologies and digital learning, high connectivity

What can parents do in favour of their children and young generation?

What are the parents' roles? Do they change in the age of technologies?

Parenting Science

Activity 2.

Discussion on parents' roles

Participants should be able to

- identify the various aspects of parent role
- agree a set of the generic role aspects of parenting
- reflect upon conceptualisations of parenting from a European perspective (participants' countries)

By developing a critical awareness through discussions of the various aspects of the parent roles, participants will be encouraged to adopt a differentiated approach in endeavouring to respond to the individual needs of parents and adult learners at various stages of their professional development.

Needs' analysis for the program development – to meet the parents' roles and features of adult learners

1. With reference to your own experience, consider the following roles.
2. Then identify those **five roles** you consider to be the most important aspects in parenting and place them in rank order. **Comment your choice**

When selecting each role, please, register the questions which you put forward here:

3. Discard any roles you deem of little importance or irrelevant and add any roles that you consider essential, but have not been cited on the cards. Please give reasons for your choices.
4. Share your thoughts with the members in your group and agree a list of parent roles, which you consider to be 'essential' or 'less important'. Add any roles that were not included in the original list on the blank cards provided.

5. In the plenary, **share your group's decisions** with all participants.

Suggested list of parent roles:

Adviser	manager	initiator	assessor
Coach	care-taker	companion	coordinator
Assistant	enabler	evaluator	facilitator
Guide	leader	listener	story-teller
Mediator	instructor	model	partner
Protector	supporter	teacher	trainer

Parenting Science
Activity 3. Adult learners
ERASMUS, April, 8-11. Rēzekne, Latvia

Please, find below some most important features of adult learners. Read them and discuss in groups what you have to take into consideration when preparing and delivering classes for parents (they are adult learners).

Please, discuss in groups what you should spot out as the dominating features. Mention the ways you can meet the adult learners' features

Each group takes one cluster:

1. Adults have a need to know why they need to learn something before they undertake learning it. They look for the practicality of content. Traditionally adult learners tend to take courses without questioning why the course is important to their education. Usually they do not choose unnecessary courses.

2. Adults have a need to be responsible for their own decisions and to be treated as capable of self-direction. (School learners, on the other hand, often have a need for direction to be provided by teachers.

3. Adult learners have a variety of life experiences which are their richest resources for learning. This is in contrast to traditional learners who rely heavily on the teacher's knowledge. Why parents often experience problems with their children? What are the dominating problems?

4. Adults are motivated to learn things that they perceive will help them cope with real-life tasks or problems. They are also motivated by a sense of self-esteem. Traditionally school learners are more subject-oriented and they seek to successfully complete courses regardless of how the content is related to their own goals.

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Activity 4. Collaboration: perception – understanding - doing

1. Video on attention and perception.

<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/06/why-people-with-creative-personalities-see-the-world-differently>

1. Please, pay attention to the instruction of the video.
2. After watching the video, please, speak out what you have noticed/perceived
3. If you have to make a decision, what is your perception (how many cases did you notice to base on for your decision?)
4. What else did you notice to make your conclusion?

Your conclusion on the video and decision-making:

Your ideas for cooperation with this group? What activities can you initiate with this group?

2. Cooperation, collaboration

(You can enter the web-site and test your collaboration skill. **Test:** English: Online Collaboration Skills Barometer <http://dev.ecdl.it/project/online4edu/index.php?lang=en>)

What is Collaboration?

*Collaboration is a working practice whereby individuals **work together and enable themselves to a common purpose to achieve the desired benefit.***

Synergy – additional possibility which is not available when working individually

Discussion: what you consider to be the most important components of collaboration at the conceptual level? What components should be improved:

- Awareness – We become part of a working entity with a shared purpose
- Motivation – We drive to gain consensus in problem solving or development
- Self-synchronization – We decide as individuals when things need to happen
- Participation – We participate in collaboration and we expect others to participate
- Mediation – We negotiate and we collaborate together and find a middle point
- Reciprocity – We share and we expect sharing in return through reciprocity
- Reflection – We think and we consider alternatives
- Engagement – We proactively engage rather than wait and see

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Activity 5. Collaboration and communication.
Questionnaire: Interpersonal Communication

The following confidence statements have the aim to help parents (also other partners) to conduct effective communication by reflexing about skills for interpersonal communication. For our current session we accentuate collaboration and communication:

- a) **with children**
- b) with colleagues
- c) with acquaintances
- d) with ...

	Not Confident 1	2	3	4	Very Confident 5
1. I understand the importance of collaboration and interpersonal communication with ...					
2. I understand that the communication process depends on many factors					
3. I know that I can manage some of the factors that enable (mention them) Communication: Collaboration:					
4. I know that some other of these factors do not depend on me or on what I want (<i>mention them</i>)					
5. I understand that my verbal and non-verbal behavior interferes with communication 7 collaboration					
6. I know that for an effective communication the verbal signs I use must be clear					
7. I know that non-verbal signs, body language (facial expressions, gestures) are sometimes more significant for communication than language itself.					
8. I am aware that, if verbal signs and non-verbal signs do not coincide, the communication partner(s) will be confused and collaboration damaged (<i>please, think of a situation for a group discussion</i>)					
9. I understand that the way I perceive reality differs from that of my children (other persons)					
10. I know that the way I perceive reality is a result of my socialization					
11. I know that I perceive reality through a “filter” consisting of my experiences, my thoughts, my values (<i>think of cases to be discussed</i>)					

12. I know that the same ‘filter’ applies for children (any other person) involved in communication and collaboration					
13. I understand that I have to distance myself from this “filter” and think of the children’s (partner’s) experiences in order to be “open-minded” for successful communication and collaboration					
<i>Think of situations when current context interfered with communication and successful collaboration, prepare it for the group discussion</i>					
14. I understand that every communication process takes place within a communication context and is reflected in collaboration					
15. I know that this context consists of: time, place, situation, and everything else that has preceded between the communication partners					
16. I know that all messages of the communication partners have to be “heard” at two levels: the information-level and the relationship-level (<i>please, be prepared for a discussion</i>)					
17. I know that at the information-level the message includes opinions, emotions, experiences, values etc. of the collaboration partners					
18. I understand that at the relationship-level the messages might be strongly influenced by emotional tension between the partners					
19. I can hold back my emotions, so that I can communicate and collaborate in a rational manner					
20. I can simplify my language, so that my partner can understand more easily what I mean					
21. I understand that communication/collaboration requires certain abilities like the following (<i>mention some of them and suggest for discussion</i>):					
22. I can listen actively to what my partner (children) say, e.g. I can put myself in his/her position					
23. I have a high self-estimation that allows me to communicate with others in an honest way					
24. I understand the importance of the meta-communicative competence (e.g. understanding principles of communication)					

Group discussion: use the answers to analyze what (a) collaboration and (b) communication skills parents have, and which ones still need improvements? What, therefore, should be of special attention in the program which you are going to offer the parents?

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Activity 6. Strategies for effective parenting: children and adult behaviour problems, avoiding physical or/and mental violence/misbehaviour

Please, think of some examples!

<i>reasons</i>	<i>and</i>	<i>some hints for the possible program</i>
<p>Children and even adults feel <i>frustrated by a problem that is too big for them.</i></p> <p>They <i>haven't yet learned how to control their impulses</i>, or avoiding conflicts in socially acceptable ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - kids don't process emotions and information the way adults do; - hostile attributions keep the hot the very problem they want to solve or even create new ones 		<p>Assistance in developing experience of reasonable behaviour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss the problem to spot out reasons (aims and desires; means or tools chosen to solve the problem; finding common desires and negotiating on differences - Discuss possible solutions, let children,/adults themselves make a decision
<p><i>Special difficulties</i> - like stressful life events, emotional regulation problems, attention deficits, autistic symptoms, or quite often - hyperactivity</p>		<p>Theories and practice of special pedagogy</p>
<p>Behaviour depends on <i>how people perceive the world</i></p> <p><i>it is shaped by the social environment</i></p> <p>and <i>how people evaluate</i> the influences of the world agents (according to individual <i>meaningful criteria</i>)</p>		<p>Family <i>culture</i> and its cultural contexts</p> <p>Behaviour, parents as <i>behaviour models</i></p> <p>Discussion on events, literature, theatre etc. in families – <i>creating emotional culture and values</i></p>
<p>Family members <i>can have a powerful influence</i></p>		<p><i>Moral support</i> and <i>practical training</i> of socially acceptable behaviour - developing experiences</p>

Parenting Science

An extra activity: solving conflict situations

A Component of Parenting Science: Some pedagogical hints to solve conflicts

Do not...	Do... / parents need assistance:
Do not address <i>the whole person</i> – this destroys chances to change (like: you are a bad child); people might perceive a situation differently	Address his/her behaviour (like: this your reaction / behaviour is not the best way you can do it... Just think of it)
Do not make <i>immediate</i> decisions and evaluations – people (especially children) might need more time to process verbal instructions, require more practice	First try to understand the reasons, come to realistic expectations (this might take time for considerations); re-shaping demands
Do not lose a focus on feeling protected in family - emotionally dis-balanced people and kids are less likely to learn on their own	Get realistic expectations about the development of empathy, kindness, attitudes, relations; Support their <i>sense</i> of being protected
Do not loose focus on maintaining a <i>positive relationship</i> ; ... do not keep listing misbehaviours	The first step is <i>reorganizing one's priorities</i>
Do not sacrifice one's own emotional well-being, <i>do not complain</i> about bad relations, misbehaviour etc. Stress shades thinking and damages relationships	Learn how to manage stress, how to maintain good relationships

Let us self-evaluate our communication skills. Why communication is important?

Let us self-evaluate our collaborating (cooperation, team work) skills. Why collaboration is important?

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Activity 7. **Let us design a course for parents!**

The project course on „Parenting science: theories and practices“.

1. The aim: to assist parents (adult learners) in developing parent and children engagement skills, provide parents opportunities for acquiring the basis of the *Parenting Science* to enable them self-conduct the improvements of their parents' competence.

2. The achievements: knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, ... experiences etc. – the *focus of the program*. Will you, please, reflect on what you have learned during this session to create the theoretical background of the program:

3. The content – items/components of *Parenting Science* which the program covers to offer the parents a possibility to gain the planned achievements. Please, consider the suggested content and add yours to make the content match the theory, aims and possible achievements. Here is to start with:

- Knowledge and understanding their children (psychology, anatomy, health, careing...): cognitive abilities, emotional balance etc.
- Educational possibilities and functions of a family: *role models, engagement, communication, cooperation, sharing partnership and values...*
- **Cooperation and communication** – basis of family engagement; **why** it matters to the success of children and schools
- Exploring the impact of **family engagement** to better educational outcomes and learner developmental success
- **Exploring** effective parental practices
- Helping parents to achieve understanding of the most often reasons and preferable **responses to children misbehaviour**
- **Health care, Special needs, Special activities** (e.g. sports, technical...) – depends on the desired focus of the program
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4. Group discussions on Tools/ technologies you will suggest: Please, consider tools of successful collaboration and spot out those which you consider (make three clusters): (a) decisive, (b) very important, (c) important. Add some detailed collaboration and communication skills to each of the three groups to illustrate possible involvement, collaboration, communication.

Tools of Successful Collaboration

The idea of collaboration seems easy enough – just work together. But there's more to it than that.:

- Clear definitions and agreements on the roles of partners in the collaborative process.
- Open communication within teams to share the information necessary to carry out tasks.
- Consensus about goals and methods for completing projects or tasks.
- Don't move forward until all members are in agreement.
- Recognition of, and respect for, the contribution of all collaborators. It's important to give credit where credit is due.
- Identification of obstacles and addressing problems cooperatively as they occur.
- Teamwork is essential at all times.
- Group goals are placed above personal satisfaction and/or recognition. It's crucial to put the desired project/program/course results at the forefront – this isn't about the individual goals.
- Willingness to apologize for missteps and ability to forgive others for mistakes.
- Holding a grudge or sabotaging the efforts of other team members just can't happen.

Examples of Detailed Collaboration and Communication Skills:

- Active listening to the concerns of team members
- Agreeing on roles that capitalize on individual strengths
- Analyzing problems without assigning blame
- Assessing the strengths and weaknesses of partners
- Brainstorming solutions to problems
- Building consensus about goals and processes for group projects
- Compromising when necessary to move the group forward
- Defining mutually acceptable roles
- Delegating tasks with open discussion
- Displaying a willingness to find solutions to problems

- Drawing consensus around goals and processes
- Eliciting the views of reluctant group members
- Facilitating group discussion
- Following through with commitments in a reliable manner

- Forgiving others when they come up short
- Giving credit to others for contributions
- Interviewing clients to determine their needs and preferences
- Identifying obstacles to success
- Investing the required time and energy to complete tasks
- Taking a leadership role
- Listening to the concerns of team members
- Maintaining a sense of humor whenever possible

- Making sure the perspective of quieter collaborators is heard
- Meeting deadlines for individual contributions
- Recognizing the contributions of other collaborators
- Recognizing the strengths and weaknesses of collaborators
- Selecting compatible partners to carry out projects
- Sharing feelings of frustration or dissatisfaction as they occur
- Speaking respectfully with team members
- Taking responsibility for mistakes

- Updating collaborators on developments with the project
- Working hard to fulfill obligations to the team
- *Add the missing ones...*

5. Criteria for program/course Self-evaluation and evaluation of the outcomes/ participants' individual achievements:

- each of the components, the whole course/program based on investigated needs' analysis;
- clear aim and objectives leading to the participants' achievements;
- reliable theoretical background;
- clearly defined achievements – knowledge, skills, abilities, attitude;
- adequate tools and program design;
- involvement of participants in designing the program, the process and its evaluation.

(For possible ideas: *International School of Latvia. Student and Parent Handbook*
https://www.isl.edu.lv/images/meta/parent-and-student-handbook-2018-2019_thumb.pdf)