

TRAINING COURSE FOR 21ST CENTURY SOFT SKILLS

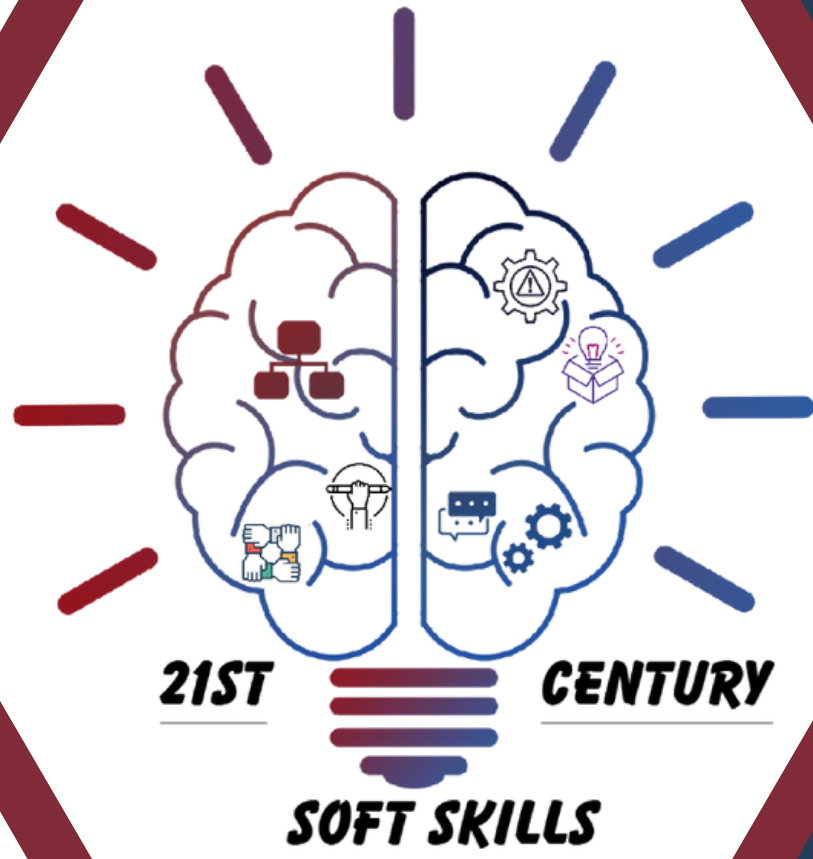
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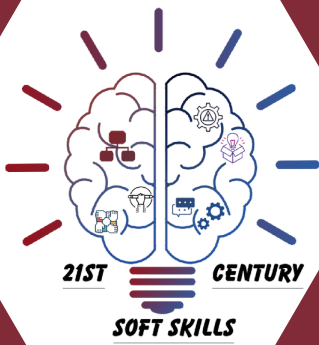


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Initiative

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Initiative Introduction

Teaching 'initiative' to your students as a teacher may be a challenge. Even companies struggle with it. When new employees arrive from work-based learning programs, employers say “initiative” is a major concern.

There are many questions that need to be considered before teaching initiative:

- Which students respond well to initiative?
- How do you assist those in need?
- How can you tell if students dare to show initiative in the workplace?
- What are some ways to motivate students to take action in the classroom and the workplace?

With a world market that is changing exponentially, 21st Century Skills have become essential. And in one way or another, they are all related.

The ability to implement and adapt to change.

Because any industry can change at a moment's notice.

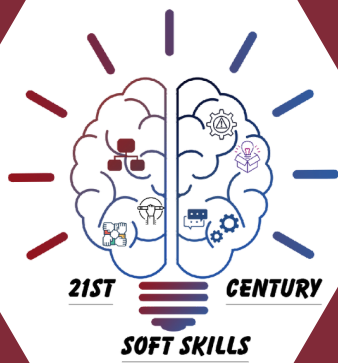
New methodologies and ideas are disrupting industries every day. We live in a day and age when there is no guarantee of anything. Thus, students need to learn how to navigate the changes they will face in life. If nothing else, they ought to learn how to react to it. If they don't, they might be left behind.

In today's world, the only constant is change.

That is why many teachers like you incorporate the 21st Century Skills Assessment into their career readiness courses. Students who have 21st Century skills will be able to adapt to a constantly changing business environment.

Now is the time to teach your student's career readiness skills!

What are the best ways for vocational teachers to teach initiative?



Initiative

What is initiative

This 21st Century skill relates to employees starting projects, developing plans, and executing strategies on their own. In other words, showing initiative is the *ability to think on your feet and be creative while working without constant direction*. In order to succeed, you must be resilient and determined. Initiators demonstrate their ability to think independently and to act when necessary. You need to use your head and be driven to succeed.

Young Professionals should learn self-management skills, and initiative is one of those skills.

Using your initiative means taking on responsibilities that may not have been assigned to you, finding solutions to problems that others may have overlooked, and planning ahead to keep learning. If necessary, you do additional research, ask questions, and get help if you need it.

This is why employers love initiative-driven employees. Staff members with these skills are a great asset, and they can be promoted to middle management or executive teams.

The initiative, however, doesn't always come naturally. This is why you must teach your students initiative!

Example: on-the-job education

A on-the-job course, also known as hybride learning, is the form of education where the student learns skills directly in the working field. Ideal is the situation where the educator has both ways of education, a regular course (in class) and an on the job course. In this way students have the option, to choose one of two choices, whatever suites best with their way of learning.

This is one of the biggest advantages for the students: some students have difficulties in following the regular classes, where they sit down and listen and work in class. But some students prefer this 'old' system where they have to present themselves at 9 am at school. Instead of learning on the job where shifts may start already at 7 am.

On the job is always in collaboration between a school and a business. Advantage for the companies who start this partnership is that they link the student, or the upcoming potential new collaborator, already in an early stage to their company





Activity 1. Playing business

Description: Through this activity, students will gain a better understanding of the corporate structure and how they can advance in their careers. As a teacher, you might assume the role of CEO or President, and your students may hold managerial or worker titles, giving them valuable titles. This activity can go the whole school year.

Note: You can also find business simulation games online. Check out [this website.](#)

<https://www.moneyprodigy.com/best-business-simulation-games-kids/>

1. Work together with your class to determine the purpose of your “business” and the roles everyone will play within it. Roles can be created based on the jobs your students have (for instance, hotel roles: starting with managers, cleaning staff, etc.). Give them tasks that are relevant to their roles and give them room to show initiative and to develop their job and chores. To imitate the working life, give them points or some kind of “payment.” You may also be able to get them to show initiative with this.
2. Come together every 3 – 4 weeks to evaluate how it is going and to present what has been accomplished. The goal is to motivate them.
3. Come together for a big meeting where everyone gets their “payment” and summarizes their achievements.

Objective:

- The meaningful roles help to spark initiative and the students can practice the working life
- Students learn that taking on extra matters in or outside their role yields may lead to rewarding and appreciation
- Extra rewarding and/or appreciation and taking initiative link to the 'real world'.



Activity 2. Envelope task

created by Tina Seelig at Stanford University

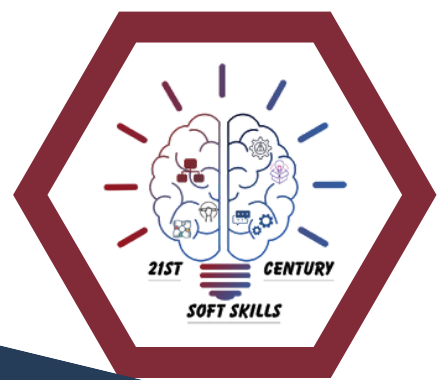


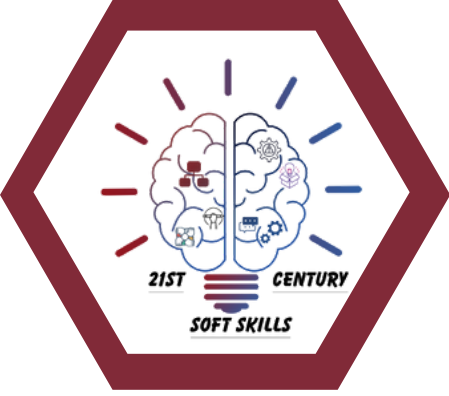
Resources: Envelope with small amount of money (2€)

Description: The students are supposed to increase the current, unknown amount in the envelope in two hours.

- 1.** Prepare the envelope with a small amount of money (no more than 2 Euros are fine). Give them the envelope and tell them to come up with some kind of way to increase the money.
- 2.** Give them two hours of time to be creative. You might want to give them some kind of rules about what is allowed and what is not. (For instance: sometimes students come up with ways such as trading for objects which are more valuable or by explaining their task and finding “investors”).
- 3.** Come together and evaluate how it worked and what they tried in order to increase the money. Usually, students always find some kind of way to increase the money and realize how easy it can be to be successful if you are creative and show initiative.

Objective: When students show initiative, they are able to realize how easy it is for them to earn money.





Activity 3. Inspire with Entrepreneurs

Resources: YOUTUBE (www.youtube.com)

Description: Youtube is a good source for all kinds of motivating videos. The purpose of this “exercise” is to get students interested and motivated in order to show initiative.

Steps: 1. Compile videos showing entrepreneurial success stories and how they got there. Most of the time, they talk about demonstrating initiative and hard work in order to succeed.

For instance: The Science of Taking Action | Steve Garguilo | TEDxCarthage

2. From now to then, show a few of those videos. You will see that your students will get inspired, and perhaps even you. Give your students a chance to talk about their observations and impressions.

Objective: Spark inspiration and the will of the students to show initiative

You Tube You Tube You Tube

2005 - 2011

2011 - 2013

2013 - 2015

You Tube YouTube

2015 - 2017

2017 - now

Activity 4. Including initiative in all your Groupwork

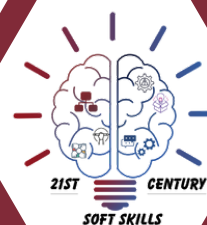
Materials: Evaluation rubric for example:

Skills	4 Advanced - exceeds expectations	3 Competent - meets expectations	2 Progressing - does not fully meet expectations	1 Beginning - does not meet expectations
Contributions & Attitude				
Cooperation with Others				
Cooperation with Others				
Focus, Commitments				
Team Role Fulfillment				
Ability to communicate				
Accuracy				
Total Points				
Notes & Comments				

Source: <https://teaching.cornell.edu/resource/how-evaluate-group-work>

Description: Group work can promote critical thinking and teamwork in small groups, but in order to inspire initiative, more than just having students work in groups is necessary. However, since most group work can be done by one or two students, while others sit back and agree, this doesn't work so well for large groups.

The process works better if you give students a chance to rate how helpful their teammates were in accomplishing the tasks.



Steps:

1. Have your students rate their teammates after the groupwork based on how useful they were to the group and how good their teamwork was.

By being up-front about this process, students will be more likely to take the initiative to avoid disappointing their class and also you. You may also discover participation issues you wouldn't otherwise be aware of.

2. Create an evaluation rubric for the students, discuss it with them, and share it with them. Decide what criteria should be used for final evaluations. Several categories could be prepared, and then the students could rate and comment on these categories.

3. Allow them to do their Groupwork and watch for students who seem quiet and maybe encourage them by asking why and what they have to say.

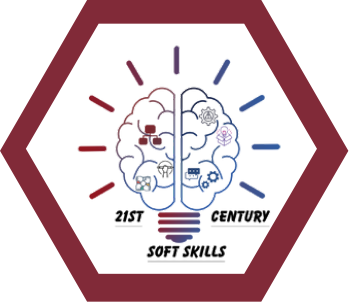
Their involvement may increase as a result. This will probably encourage them to give more input. Encourage the team members to encourage one another as well.

Evaluating early on in the project allows groups to assess how they can improve. Provide regular feedback to group members so they can assess their progress both collectively and individually.

4. Discuss with the group what can be done better and what has already been done well. Depending upon peer evaluations, you may want to adjust your grade.

Objective: By creating this kind of pressure, students are motivated to improve and avoid being viewed as “weak links” in the team.





Project information

Erasmus+ KA2 strategic partnership project "21st century soft skills for vocational education teachers" No. 2020-1-LV01-KA202-077561

Today, the European economy is driven by globalization, the development of information and communication technologies (ICT) and the diversity of values in society. The future is becoming more and more unpredictable in a wide variety of areas. Students who are currently studying in schools should learn to live in a world that is constantly changing, and in the future, they should be prepared for an unprecedented economic, political, social and cultural environment.

Teachers work in a fast-paced environment that can best be described by a quote that has been widely circulated on social media; it states that teachers are "currently preparing students for jobs and technologies that don't yet exist to solve problems we don't even know are problems yet." To face the unknown, it identifies that certain skills must be developed in the educational process. But what is required of teachers? How can they contribute to the development of skills that they themselves learn only from methodological materials?

The goal of the project **"21st century soft skills for teachers in VET"** is to train and educate teachers in vocational education and practical training institutions, to prepare staff so that they are ready to work with the now needed 21st century soft skills in lessons together with students.

The partners involved in the project work on the development of training courses for vocational education teachers based on research conducted among teachers, students and employers on the key skills to be learned today.

The activities of the project include the professional development of pedagogues of professional educational institutions, thus promoting the effective acquisition of soft skills or human skills of the 21st century.

Partners

