

SOFTSKILLS FRAMEWORK (TEMPLATE)



SoftSkills4EU: Promote your Soft Skills with Open Badges

Partner organization: PAR

Date: May 16, 2019

FRAMEWORK

INFORMATION ABOUT OUTPUT

OUTPUT:

IO1 COMPETENCE FRAMEWORK

ACTIVITY:

IO1 A1: NEEDS ASSESSMENT

PROJECT INFORMATION

PROJECT:

SoftSkills4EU: Promote your Soft Skills with Open Badges

PROJECT TITLE:

Promote your soft skills with open badges

ACRONYM:

SoftSkills4eu

PROJECT NO.:

2018-1-SI01-KA204-047088

PROJECT COORDINATOR:

Development and Education Centre Novo mesto (RIC Novo mesto), Slovenia

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INTRODUCTION

GENERAL INFORMATION REGARDING THE NEEDS ANALYSES

To become and remain competitive in today's changing business environment, it is crucial to employ highly skilled and motivated workforce. It is widely accepted and acknowledged the importance of hard skills among potential and existing employees, but it is becoming more and more recognized the importance of soft skills, as they were too often undervalued and there were no training or similar educations for soft skill learning.

The main aim of the SoftSkills4UE project is to identify the key soft skills within the competencies defined in the Europass Tool and then develop a standardized soft skills reference framework, which would be useful as a validation tool for those soft skills competences. It will bring an added value and more credibility to the already widely used Europass and can also be a starting point for a direct improvement of Europass. The impact will be visible for both, job seekers to credibly show their competencies; for employers (employing organizations) simplifying the selecting procedure or helping to more efficiently distribute already employed people to workplaces; for career counsellors to better and easier recognize the competencies thus, making counselling more efficient.

During the project SoftSkills4EU, two surveys were conducted, with the aim to understand and recognise the need for soft skills among job seekers and employers, or human resource departments. Each of the five partners conducted two surveys, including at least 70 participants, with the total of at least 350 respondents for the project. Based on the survey results, the soft skills competence framework were defines as follows.

SOFTSKILLS FRAMEWORK

SPOCC FRAMEWORK

Soft skills identified as important and crucial based on the project survey results are: social skills, personal skills, organisational skills, cooperation skills, and creativity skills. The soft skills framework abbreviation is SPOCC Framework.

The framework consists of five modules, which includes five topics, with the description of each topic, aligned with the appropriate level of knowledge, and the learning outcome for each level. Levels are defined as Sufficient (A), Good (B) and Excellent (C). For each module, participants undertake a questionnaire with 50 questions, with the possibility to gain a soft skills badge for the module - scored as Sufficient, Good or Excellent level. If the participants gain five badges for all five modules, they have the possibility to receive the Full Soft Skills Badge - Sufficient, Good or Excellent level.



Level description:

- **Sufficient (A):** To have sufficient knowledge/skills regarding creative problem solving, analytical thinking, innovativeness, imagination and open mindedness in working environment. I am not able to use this knowledge/skills to reach/collect sufficient results/resources.
- **Good (B):** To have good knowledge/skills regarding creative problem solving, analytical thinking, innovativeness, imagination and open mindedness in working environment. I am able to use this knowledge/skills to reach/collect good results/resources.
- **Excellent (C):** To have excellent knowledge regarding creative problem solving, analytical thinking, innovativeness, imagination and open mindedness in working environment. I am able to use this knowledge/skills to reach/collect excellent results/resources.

SOFT SKILLS FRAMEWORK		
SKILL FIELD	SKILLS	TOPICS OF LEARNING OUTCOMES
SOCIAL SKILLS	Conflict management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Solving conflicts - Analysing conflicts - Predicting conflicts
	Communication skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Business etiquette - Face-to-face meetings - Web-based communication
	Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Responsibilities and roles in organization - Identification of risks - Creating positive communication atmosphere
	Inter-cultural skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social awareness - Fighting prejudices, stereotypes and negative personal beliefs - Effective communication between members of different cultures
	Public presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-confidence - Face-to-face rhetoric - Audience engaging web-based presentations
PERSONAL SKILLS	Handling stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resilience - Coping with difficult situations - Relaxation techniques in the workplace
	Self-awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Personal strengths and weaknesses awareness - Self-concept - Personal limits awareness and changing
	Personal development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vision of personal development and self-motivation

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-assessment of skills - Planning and development of new skills
	Self-management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Balance between private and professional life - Management techniques for improving personal effectiveness - Improvement of self-management skills
	Emotional intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Integrity - Self- regulation - Empathy
ORGANISATIONAL SKILLS	Strategic Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Defining long term goals and indicators - Making decisions - Problem-solving (with SWOT analysis)
	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Task delegation - Responsibility and Risk-taking - Negotiation
	Customer Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning activities - Task division - Responsible decision making
	Critical thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Objective analysis - Issue evaluation - Logical reasoning
	Time management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Goal setting - Prioritization - Keeping a To-Do List
COOPERATIVE SKILLS	Teamwork management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creating teams based on their skills - Adequate task division between members of team and creating action plan - Monitoring of teamwork
	Team building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Team building importance - Team building techniques - Fostering positive working atmosphere (trust building)
	Flexibility and adaptability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Respectfulness in teamwork - Reliability in teamwork, support and helping others - Adjusting to changes
	Working styles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assessment of working styles



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tasks adjustment to working styles - Creating action plan
	Collaboration and networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Efficient communication with partners - Efficient internal communication - Networking importance in company development
CREATIVE THINKING SKILLS	Innovativeness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Producing new ideas and Brainstorming - Convergent and Divergent Thinking - Phases of creative thinking
	Constant improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Importance of quality in creative thinking - Implementing Deming circle (PCDA) at work – action plan - Willingness to gain new skills
	Analytical thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data, information gathering - Analysis of information using critical thinking (different points of view) - use new knowledge (or new ideas) in problem-solving
	Implementing changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Awareness of importance of implementation changes - Self-initiative - Creative strategies within the process of implementing changes
	Fostering creativity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using creativity to increase competitiveness - Fostering creativity in teamwork - Fostering creativity in individual work



MODULE 1. SPOCC FRAMEWORK

SOCIAL SKILLS

General description of module:

Social skills are the skills we use to communicate and interact with each other, both direct (verbally) and indirect (non-verbally). Some people have better social skills than others and this has led to detailed investigations into the nature and function of interpersonal interaction. Developing social skills is about being aware of how we communicate with others and the messages we send. The communication can be more efficient and effective if the person changes the methods he uses.

This module will present 5 topics of social skills. Specifically, the conflict management, the communication, the inter-cultural skills, presentations and the accountability skills will be presented in detail.

MODULE 1: SOCIAL SKILLS		
Main objective of module and levels	Skills	Learning Outcomes
<p>A: To have sufficient knowledge regarding social skills in the working environment and be able to use this knowledge to reach sufficient results.</p> <p>B: To have good knowledge regarding social skills in the working environment and be able to use this knowledge to reach good results.</p> <p>C: To have excellent knowledge regarding social skills in the working environment and be able to use this knowledge to reach</p>	1.1. Conflict management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I am able to analyse and understand the key practical and theoretical concepts of managing and resolving conflicts ✓ I am able to identify the types of conflict management styles ✓ I am able to explain the importance of good communication skills; analyse the influence of gender and cultural differences, persuasion, perception and power in conflict resolution am able
	1.2. Communication skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I am able to communicate effectively orally and in writing ✓ I am able to use social media for communication purposes ✓ I am able to apply effective communication skills in a variety of public and interpersonal settings
	1.3. Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I am able to take ownership of understanding my role, my goals and responsibilities ✓ I am able to identify risks and do

excellent results.		<p>what needs to be done to mitigate or overcome roadblocks before they impact my work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I am able to use this skillset as often as possible so that others learn to expect it from me and trust me to work in this manner no matter whom I am working with
	1.4. Inter-cultural skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I am able to understand my own <i>cultural background and how that impacts my values, beliefs, and assumptions (self-awareness)</i> ✓ I am able to understand and utilize frameworks that can help make sense of cultural differences and similarities (Awareness of others) ✓ I am able to understand and analyse the process of stereotype formation and the manifestations of prejudice, discrimination, and “-isms,” such as sexism and racism
	1.5. Public presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I am able to deal with nerves and think more positively about public speaking ✓ I am able to consider ways of grabbing the listener's attention, holding their interest, and concluding strongly ✓ I am able to deliver an enthusiastic and well-practised presentation

MODULE 2. SPOCC FRAMEWORK

PERSONAL SKILLS

General description of module:

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MODULE 2: PERSONAL SKILLS		
Main objective of module and levels	Skills	Learning Outcomes
	1.1. Handling stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I am able to say no to additional responsibilities and identify and

<p>A: To have sufficient knowledge regarding personal skills in the working environment and be able to use this knowledge to reach sufficient results.</p>		<p>limit exposure to factors which induce stress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I am able to examine and reframe stressful situation and try both to anticipate stressful conflicts and to view problem in a more positive way. ✓ I am able to focus on what I can control and to choose my own reactions to stressful circumstances to grow from these experiences.
<p>B: To have good knowledge regarding personal skills in the working environment and be able to use this knowledge to reach good results.</p>	<p>1.2. Self-awareness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I am able to assess my attitude and how it helps or hinders my achievements. ✓ I am able to handle situation, not magnifying positive and minimizing the negative, seeing the reality of a situation. ✓ I am able to evaluate my own definition of success, taking into account my attitude, actions and acknowledgements.
<p>C: To have excellent knowledge regarding personal skills in the working environment and be able to use this knowledge to reach excellent results.</p>	<p>1.3. Personal development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I am able to review my goals, and make an honest assessment of my progress towards them. ✓ I am able to review what I have learned and to think about what I have done considering also what I have learned about myself, my priorities and goals. ✓ I am able to set personal development strategies based on my own attitude and working preferences.
	<p>1.4. Self-management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I am able to recognize role and responsibilities in the activities in the activities in which I am involved ✓ I am able to track my progresses in relation to my expectations and to ask for help if I need it. ✓ I am able set the priorities and the goals I have to achieve, taking into account my own attitude and working preferences. ✓



	1.5. Emotional intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I am able to identify and understand my own emotion and feelings. ✓ I am able to understand other people are feeling and recognize how I would feel in their shoes. ✓ I am able to interact socially with other people and to successfully navigate social situations.
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MODULE 3. SPOCC FRAMEWORK

ORGANISATIONAL SKILLS

General description of module:

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MODULE 3: ORGANISATIONAL SKILLS		
Main objective of module and levels	Skills	Learning Outcomes
<p>A: To have sufficient knowledge regarding organisational skills in the working environment and be able to use this knowledge to reach sufficient results.</p> <p>B: To have good knowledge regarding organisational skills in the working environment and be able to use this knowledge to reach good results.</p>	1.1. Strategic Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I am able to analyse a problem and identify which actions are needed to achieve a successful solution. ✓ I am able to analyse what is conditional for successfully executing an action, in terms of needed time, money or other factors ✓ I am able to determine in which order actions must be conducted and by whom, to achieve a successful end result.
	1.2. Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I am able to build relationships, motivate and lead a team and help team members to develop themselves ✓ I am able to manage company politics, calculate and take risks, make decisions, successfully manage change ✓ I am able to take responsibility, to show self awareness, drive and integrity and I know how to adapt

C: To have excellent knowledge regarding organisational skills in the working environment and be able to use this knowledge to reach excellent results.		to a changing environment
	1.3. Customer Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I am able to really listen to a customer, understand emotional states they can be in, and stay calm under pressure. ✓ I am able to communicate in a clear, convincing and efficient way and formulate using positive language. ✓ I am able and willing to perform the necessary actions to create customer satisfaction
	1.4. Critical thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I am able to deduct, induct or abduct conclusions from one or more premises. ✓ I am able to find and study relevant sources and analyse facts. ✓ I am able to evaluate and reflect on my thinking process.
	1.5. Time management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I am able to set priorities in the activities for which I am responsible. ✓ I am able to control the time I spend on a certain activity. ✓ I am able to reduce the time I need to complete an activity.

MODULE 4. SPOCC FRAMEWORK

COOPERATION SKILLS

General description of module:

MODULE 4: COOPERATION SKILLS		
Main objective of module and levels	Skills	Learning Outcomes
A: To have sufficient knowledge regarding	1.1. Teamwork management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I am able creating working teams based on skills of each member ✓ I am able delegate tasks between of team members adequate to their competences and

<p>teamwork management and teamwork improvement in working environment and be able to use this knowledge to reach sufficient results.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I am able to create and monitor action plan for implementation of tasks within the team
<p>B: To have good knowledge regarding teamwork management and teamwork improvement in working environment and be able to use this knowledge to reach good results.</p>	1.2. Team building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I am aware of team building importance ✓ I am able to use adequate team building techniques ✓ I am able to foster positive working atmosphere (trust building)
	1.3. Flexibility and adaptability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I am able to work with members of team in respectful way ✓ I am able to encourage support and helping others within the team thus ensuring reliability in teamwork ✓ I am able to adjusting to changes and to foster importance of adjusting to the changes within members of team
	1.4. Working styles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I am aware of my own working style ✓ I am able to assess working styles of members of team ✓ I am able to adjust tasks to working styles
<p>C: To have excellent knowledge regarding teamwork management and teamwork improvement in working environment and be able to use this knowledge to reach excellent results.</p>	1.5. Collaboration and networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I am aware of importance of networking for company development I am able to efficiently communicate with partners ✓ I am able to efficiently communicate within company (internal communication)I am able



MODULE 5. SPOCC FRAMEWORK

CREATIVE THINKING SKILLS

General description of module:

Creativity simply means being able to come up with something new. Therefore, creative thinking is the ability to consider something – a conflict between employees, a data set, a group project – in a new way. It is the very definition of “thinking outside the box.” Often, creativity in this sense involves what is called lateral thinking, or the ability to perceive patterns that are not obvious.

Creative people have the ability to devise new ways to carry out tasks, solve problems, and meet challenges. They bring a fresh, and sometimes unorthodox, perspective to their work. This way of thinking can help departments and organizations move in more productive directions. For these reasons, they are extremely valuable to a company.

You can develop creative thinking by solving riddles, being aware of (and letting go of) your assumptions, and through play. Play connotes anything unstructured and relaxing such as daydreaming.

MODULE 5: CREATIVE THINKING SKILLS		
Main objective of module and levels	Skills	Learning Outcomes
<p>A: To have sufficient knowledge/skills regarding creative problem solving, analytical thinking, innovativeness, imagination and open mindedness in working environment. I am not able to use this knowledge/skills to reach/collect sufficient results/resources.</p> <p>B: To have good knowledge/skills regarding creative problem solving, analytical thinking, innovativeness, imagination</p>	1.1 Innovativeness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I am always have a goal in mind, I can imagine what success looks like at the end, and I have willingness to consider all changes. ✓ I am constantly looking for better methods and options in order to achieve the goal, I am able to make action plans, I am getting things done in time. ✓ I am able to identify opportunities by understanding trends, patterns and future areas of growth and cultivate the mind set of curiosity or a compelling desire to learn or experience something new.
	1.2. Constant improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I am able to adapt to new environment, and am focused on goal, and changing work place is not strange thing. ✓ I am able to implement Deming circle (PCDA) at work – and accept all changes in action plan. ✓ I have willingness to gain new

<p>and open minding in working environment. I am able to use this knowledge/skills to reach/collect good results/resources</p> <p>C: To have excellent knowledge regarding creative problem solving, analytical thinking, innovativeness, imagination and open minding in working environment. I am able to use this knowledge/skills to reach/collect excellent results/resources.</p>		skills every day at the work place and in private life.
	1.3. Analytical thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I have ability to collect and analyse information, problem-solve and make decisions, quickly and effectively. ✓ I am able to gathering relevant information and identifying key issues related to this information. ✓ I am able to compare sets of data from different sources, identify possible cause and effect patterns, and draw appropriate conclusions from these datasets in order to arrive at appropriate solutions.
	1.4. Implementing changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I am aware of importance of implementation changes that happens in work environment. ✓ I am Self-initiative, I am able to produce new ideas, and I able to express my own opinion. ✓ I am able to create strategies within the process of implementing changes.
	1.5. Fostering creativity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I am able to use may creativity to increase competitiveness. ✓ I am able to foster creativity in teamwork. ✓ I am able to foster creativity in individual work.

CONCLUSION

Soft skills are defined as personal attributes, traits, social cues, and specific communication abilities needed for business success. Soft skills often characterize how a person interacts in his or her relationships with others, specially in the working environment.

Unlike hard skills that are learned, soft skills are similar to emotions or insights that allow people to “read” others. These are much harder to learn, at least in a traditional classroom. They are also much harder to measure and evaluate. Soft skills are sometimes referred to as transferable skills or professional skills. As this term implies, these are skills that are less specialised, less rooted in specific vocations, and more aligned with the general disposition and personality of a candidate.

After the SoftSkills4EU project surveys, conducted in five countries, Slovenia, Italy, The Netherlands, Cyprus and Croatia, few main soft skills modules were deducted and identified: social skills, personal skills, organisational skills, cooperation and creativity skills. Each of the identified soft skills modules consist of five topics, which were deducted after analysing the survey answers for all included countries. Based on the survey answers, soft skills topics and afterword main modules were identified, brainstormed and included in the final soft skills framework - SPOCC. The soft skill framework should be useful for future soft skills trainings, guidelines and possible pre employment testing.

