



TOOLKIT FOR FACILITATOR'S TRAINING PROGRAM

SenSyn – Senior Synergy: Empowering Lifelong Learning and Healthy living through Community Events



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TRAINING CURRICULA FOR FACILITATORS



KEY WORDS: training/educational program, methodology, teaching materials, facilitator's skills

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1. GENERAL PART

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Population ageing stands as one of Europe's greatest achievements, yet it also presents a significant challenge in the 21st century. As the EU population ages rapidly, it becomes increasingly important to address the associated challenges while also embracing the opportunities this demographic shift brings.

To support older adults in navigating this stage of life, we must replace outdated perspectives on ageing—such as the “decay theory” or “theory of withdrawal” known in Denmark—with a new, science-based understanding. Rather than perceiving ageing as a process of inevitable decline, we need to equip both elderly and pre-elderly individuals with accurate knowledge, enabling them to enter this phase of life with greater awareness, empowerment, and control over their well-being.

Active ageing should not be merely about extending life expectancy but also about enhancing the quality of those years by maintaining independence and self-sufficiency for as long as possible. However, current approaches to senior activities often lack the necessary intensity to effectively support long-term health and physical resilience. Simply staying active is not enough—engagement in physical activities must be purposeful and appropriately structured.

For instance, a leisurely evening walk may provide some benefits, but without reaching at least 80% of one's maximum capacity for three to five minutes, at least three times per week, it does not contribute to sustaining long-term mobility and strength. Without this level of effort, individuals may face a decline in physical function, increasing their need for care several years earlier than necessary.

By fostering a deeper, evidence-based understanding of ageing and promoting targeted, effective physical activity, we can empower seniors to lead healthier, more autonomous lives—not just to live longer, but to live better.

1.2 TARGET GROUP

Facilitators

The role of facilitators in the SenSyn educational program is intended for skilled and competent older adults (55+), preferably those with professional experience in medical sciences, related fields, or teaching. Ideal candidates are individuals willing to participate in a structured facilitator training program and subsequently lead a 12–16 session educational course designed for older adults.

While facilitators should ideally share certain characteristics with the target group, this is not a strict requirement. The primary emphasis is on their confidence, expertise, and motivation to teach. Preference will be given to individuals with prior experience as facilitators or educators in adult learning programs.

Successful facilitators in this program should be communicative, knowledgeable, empathetic, and open-minded—embracing diversity without judgment or preconceived labels. Throughout the course, they are expected to foster an inclusive learning environment that promotes tolerance, equality, and democratic values. To support this, facilitators should possess a foundational understanding of human rights and civic education, ensuring that the principles of respect and inclusion are embedded in their teaching approach.



1.3 DURATION OF TRAINING PROGRAM

This 3 session (6 hours) educational program is designed to train senior health educators and senior health promoters, equipping them with the necessary knowledge and skills to address

key health issues affecting older adults. The curriculum focuses on promoting active and healthy ageing while empowering participants to support their peers in maintaining independence for as long as possible.

A core component of the program includes developing inclusive skills and competencies for assessing the physical well-being of older adults. Facilitators will be trained to conduct standardized evaluations of at least eight documented and defined physical parameters, essential for identifying potential risks and implementing strategies to prevent or delay the loss of independence later in life.

By completing this program, participants will gain the expertise needed to educate, assess, and guide their peers toward healthier lifestyles, ultimately fostering greater autonomy and well-being in the senior community.

1.4 TRAINING AIMS

The main goal of the training is the preparation of future facilitators (skilled and competent older adults) to become facilitators (peer facilitators) in educational program SenSyn (A SenSyn) for older adults.



1.5 GOALS AND COMPETENCES

STEERING OBJECTIVES

Future facilitators will:

- Develop a thorough understanding of the study group and educational program content.

- Learn how to design learning objectives and effectively implement them within the study group.
- Explore various strategies for engaging and motivating older adults in the educational program.
- Gain skills in selecting and delivering relevant topics for the educational sessions.
- Understand group dynamics, organization, and effective teaching methodologies for adult learners.
- Familiarize themselves with available resources and learning tools to enhance the educational experience.
- Learn to assess and evaluate the effectiveness of the educational program, ensuring continuous improvement.

OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES

Facilitators will:

- Reflect on and discuss the role of community learning and its anthropological foundations as a key framework for working with older adults.
- Analyze communication strategies and forms of interaction specifically relevant to adult education, with a focus on older learners.
- Understand and apply non-hierarchical learning approaches that encourage active participation and knowledge exchange.
- Gain practical experience by conducting educational sessions for older adults both in-person and through digital platforms (ICT).



2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 USING THE PROGRAM FOR FACILITATORS

This program has been developed as a comprehensive resource for individuals facilitating the SenSyn educational program, created in collaboration with the SenSyn partnership. It serves as both an introductory guide to facilitation and a practical reference for trainers working with older adults.

The program's content is structured into key topics that address essential aspects of effective facilitation, including:

- **Principles of learning** – Understanding how older adults acquire and retain knowledge.
- **Guidance on program preparation** – Best practices for structuring an educational program that supports a well-prepared transition into senior life.
- **Participatory training methods** – Strategies for engaging learners and fostering active participation.
- **Development of learning materials** – Guidance on writing and producing handouts, visual aids, and other instructional resources.
- **Program evaluation** – Methods for assessing the effectiveness of the educational experience.

For experienced trainers and facilitators, this program serves as a valuable reference tool, offering insights and support for refining existing practices, particularly in the context of SenSyn. For those new to training or with limited facilitation experience, reading the entire program will provide a solid foundation, equipping them with the necessary skills and structure to confidently plan and conduct educational sessions.

2.2 ORGANIZATION OF EDUCATION

The program is conducted in a group of **five facilitators** using a blended learning approach. It typically includes an **introductory meeting** to set the foundation and a **concluding meeting** to reflect on the learning process and outcomes. Between these meetings, facilitators participate in **modular education sessions** held in a classroom setting, focusing on key aspects of the SenSyn educational program.

A **detailed syllabus** outlining the specific modules and learning objectives is provided below.

2.3 TEACHING AIDS AND MATERIALS

To support the facilitation of the program, the following teaching materials will be available:

- A **classroom** equipped with standard didactic materials
- **Whiteboard, interactive board, and flip chart (demo board)**
- **Poster sheets, A4 sheets, pens, markers**
- **Notebooks** for both the lecturer and participants

REQUIRED SPATIAL AND MATERIAL CONDITIONS

For the program's successful implementation, appropriate facilities and equipment must be ensured, including:

- A **classroom adapted for adult education**
- A **computer network with internet access**
- An **LCD display and a DVD player** to support multimedia learning



3. EDUCATIONAL MODULES AND CONTENTS



3.1 MODULE 1: PRESENTATION OF TRAINING PROGRAM FOR FACILITATORS (2 HOURS)

TRAINING CONTENTS AND METHODS

TRAINING CONTENTS

- **Content 1:** Introduction to the **SenSyn project** (A SenSyn), including an overview of the training program, participant expectations, and the benefits of participation (social, financial, networking, and topic-related advantages).
- **Content 2:** Key principles of **effective andragogic practice**, emphasizing essential skills for both individual and team-based work during training.

TRAINING METHODS

Training methods should be adapted to the specific needs of the participant group while remaining **interactive and communication-driven** throughout the sessions. To effectively

develop the competencies required for facilitators, clear and innovative methods tailored to the target audience are essential. Recommended methods include:

- **Workshops** – Group and pair work to encourage collaboration.
- **Video and film-based learning** – Watching relevant content followed by guided discussions.
- **Outdoor activities** – Educational walks, lessons in nature (e.g., in a garden setting).
- **Indoor activities** – Physical exercises to promote well-being.
- **Brainstorming sessions** – Using flipcharts to capture and organize ideas.
- **Expert contributions** – Inputs from trainers and guest specialists.
- **Self-exploration exercises** – Encouraging participants to reflect on their own experiences.
- **Storytelling** – Using personal narratives to enhance learning and connection.
- **Group discussions** – Formats such as round tables, plenary discussions, and U-shaped seating arrangements to foster open dialogue.
- **Creative activities** – Hands-on, engaging exercises that stimulate learning through creativity.

These diverse methods ensure an **engaging, dynamic, and participatory** learning experience, equipping facilitators with the skills needed to successfully lead educational programs for older adults.

UNIT 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE SENSYN FACILITATOR TRAINING PROGRAM

DURATION: 0.5 HOUR

AIMS:

- The **mentor** introduces the training program for facilitators.
- Participants **share their motivations** for becoming facilitators.
- Participants **get to know each other** and build rapport.
- Participants **understand the objectives and goals** of the SenSyn facilitator training.

CONTENTS:

- Overview of the **training program** for older adults who wish to become facilitators in the SenSyn project.
- Discussion of **motivations** for taking on the facilitator role.
- Explanation of the **aims and methodologies** used in the SenSyn educational program.
- Exploration of the **advantages and challenges** of being a facilitator.

ACTIVITY 1.1: EXPLORING THE MOTIVATION TO BECOME A FACILITATOR

PURPOSE OF THE EXERCISE:

To help participants clarify and reflect on their personal motivations for joining the training.

DURATION: 0.5 HOUR

GROUP SIZE: 4–8 PARTICIPANTS

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE TRAINER:

1. **Introduction Round:** Ask each participant to introduce themselves by sharing their **name, age, and some personal background** (e.g., where they live or have worked).
2. **Motivation Reflection:** Distribute **cards and pens** and ask participants to write down their **personal reasons** for wanting to become a facilitator. Encourage them to be honest and thoughtful.
3. **Group Sharing:** Collect the cards, pin them on a board, and facilitate a discussion. Participants take turns sharing their motivations, noticing similarities and differences.
4. **Past Experience Mapping:** Hand out a second set of cards and have participants write down any **past experience in a facilitator's role**—for example, mentoring friends, leading senior groups, participating in societies, teaching at a University for the Third Age, etc.
5. **Clustering & Discussion:** Collect and group these experiences on a board, allowing participants to see **common interests** and areas of expertise within the group.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

- Chairs arranged in a **circle** to encourage open discussion.
- **Cards and pens** for participants to write down their thoughts.
- A **pinboard** or wall space to display collected responses.

TRAINER TIPS & CONSIDERATIONS:

- Ensure there is **enough space** for small groups to engage comfortably in the exercise.
- Create a **trusting and respectful environment**—participants will be sharing personal stories and reflections, which may be emotional.
- Emphasize **confidentiality**—what is shared in the room should remain within the group to foster openness and safety.

This introductory session sets the tone for the training, helping participants understand their motivations, establish connections, and build confidence in their future roles as facilitators.

UNIT 2: FACILITATOR SKILLS

DURATION: 1 HOUR

AIMS:

- Encourage participants to systematically reflect on their skills.
- Motivate participants to seek further learning opportunities where necessary.
- Increase participants' awareness of their own skills and talents.

- Support participants in rediscovering skills they may have overlooked.
- Emphasize the importance of **lifelong learning**, recognizing that skills are acquired through both formal education and life experiences.
- Highlight that certain skills become more valuable in later life stages.

CONTENT:

- **Personal skills profile & memory mapping** – Identifying strengths, abilities, and areas for improvement.
- **Skills profiling** – Recognizing one's competencies as a foundation for future growth and action.

ACTIVITY 2.1: MEMORY MAP – VISUALIZING PERSONAL SKILLS

PURPOSE OF THE EXERCISE:

To create a **visual representation** of personal skills on a single page, allowing participants to identify and structure their competencies.

DURATION: 1 HOUR

GROUP SIZE: 4–8 PARTICIPANTS

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE TRAINER:

1. **Individual Reflection:** Provide each participant with a **blank sheet of paper** and encourage them to think about their skills, both formal and informal.
 - Distinguish between **everyday skills** (e.g., cooking, household management) and **facilitator-relevant skills** (e.g., communication, leadership, ICT proficiency, teaching experience).
 - Offer guiding examples such as **language proficiency, organizational abilities, mentoring experience, and digital skills**.
2. **Pair Discussion:** Participants pair up to discuss their findings, sharing insights and helping each other recognize additional strengths.
3. **Memory Map Creation:**
 - Using a **structured framework**, participants map out their skills in different life areas, including:
 - **Work experience**
 - **Formal and informal education**
 - **Further training and personal development**
 - **Family and caregiving roles**
 - **Previous facilitation experience**
 - **Hobbies and leisure activities**
 - **Special life experiences and personal challenges**
4. **Plenary Sharing:** Each participant presents their key skills to the group, fostering encouragement and support.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

- **Memory map template** (or blank paper for free-form mapping)
- **Pens and markers**

TRAINER TIPS & CONSIDERATIONS:

- Encourage **storytelling and personal narratives**, as this helps participants recall skills and experiences in a meaningful way.
- **Applaud and acknowledge each participant's contributions** to create a positive and supportive atmosphere.
- Emphasize that the **memory map is a personal tool**, not an assessment—participants should focus on skills that matter to them rather than compiling an exhaustive list.
- This activity is particularly effective for those who may feel uncomfortable with traditional **written questionnaires**, as it allows for **creative expression and verbal sharing**.

By the end of this session, participants will have a **clearer sense of their skill set**, an **increased confidence in their abilities**, and a **greater appreciation for lifelong learning and personal growth**.

3.2 MODULE 2: PRESENTATION OF EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR OLDER ADULTS (2 HOURS)

DURATION: 2 HOURS

TRAINING CONTENTS

CONTENT 1:

- Presentation of the **goals** of the **face-to-face educational program** for older adults.
- Overview of the **competences** required for facilitators working with this target group.

CONTENT 2:

- **Exercise: WHAT KIND OF FACILITATOR AM I, AND WHAT KIND OF FACILITATOR DO I WANT TO BECOME?**
- **Group evaluation** of the exercise, leading to the development of the **SenSyn facilitator model**, which defines the role and qualities needed for leading participant groups.

TRAINING METHODS

The program is designed to be highly **interactive**, incorporating discussions, hands-on exercises, and dynamic group activities. Over the **16-hour training period**, participants will develop their facilitation competences through structured discussions and shared reflections.

RECOMMENDED METHODS:

- **Frontal teaching (lecture/presentation):**
 - Introduction and explanation of the **face-to-face educational program** for older adults.
- **Group discussions in a circle:**
 - Participants are seated **close to one another in a circle**, fostering open communication and active listening.
- **Active listening strategies:**
 - The circular seating arrangement allows for **better group engagement**, ensuring that all participants can see and hear each other clearly.
- **Practical exercises:**
 - Hands-on activities based on the **learning content of the SenSyn educational program** to reinforce key concepts.
- **Questioning technique:**
 - Encouraging participants to **ask questions** on various topics to **clarify concepts** and ensure accurate understanding.
- **Encouraging discussion:**
 - The trainer actively engages in discussions, promoting **collaboration and peer learning**.
- **Using silence effectively:**
 - Allowing **pauses in conversation** gives participants time to reflect. A helpful phrase such as, “LET’S THINK ABOUT THIS TOGETHER”, can encourage deeper contemplation.

This module provides a **structured yet interactive learning environment**, preparing facilitators to **confidently lead educational sessions** for older adults while fostering a collaborative and supportive learning culture.

UNIT 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE SENSYN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

DURATION: 0.5 HOUR

AIMS:

- Equip future facilitators with a comprehensive understanding of the **SenSyn educational program**, including its learning modules, materials, and techniques.
- Ensure facilitators feel **confident and prepared** to deliver the program according to its structured schedule and content.
- Enhance facilitators' **motivation and engagement** in leading the SenSyn course for a pilot group of participants.

CONTENTS:

- **Overview of the face-to-face SenSyn educational program** – structure, objectives, and methodology.
- **Introduction to active ageing** – key issues and the importance of fostering a positive perspective on ageing.
- **Training facilitators to lead small groups** – integrating **previous experience** with newly acquired skills.
- **Effective communication and engagement strategies** – presenting course content in a **simple, engaging, and accessible** manner.

ACTIVITY 1.1: LECTURE ON THE SENSYN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM FOR OLDER ADULTS

PURPOSE OF THE EXERCISE:

To introduce participants to the **contents and structure of the SenSyn educational program**, equipping them with the knowledge needed to support older adults in preparing for senior life. The mentor presents:

- **The overall framework** of the program.
- **The aims and objectives** of SenSyn.
- **The structure of general and specific modules** and their relevance.

By exploring the educational program in depth, participants will gain insights into the **diverse learning opportunities** it offers and how different techniques can be **effectively applied in training plans**.

DURATION: 0.5 HOUR

GROUP SIZE: 4–8 PARTICIPANTS

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE TRAINER:

1. **Clarifying the Training Purpose:**
 - Before beginning, ensure both **trainer (mentor) and participants (future facilitators)** understand the purpose of the training and what they aim to achieve.
 - The mentor outlines the **overall objectives** of the educational program and explains the specific goals for each session and activity.
 - Emphasize **what participants will be able to do** as a result of completing this training.
2. **Trainer's Objectives:**
 - "To familiarize participants with the **complete content of the SenSyn educational program**, including its **general and specific modules**, enabling them to confidently **deliver it in a face-to-face format**."
3. **Participant's Objectives:**
 - "Facilitators will gain an **in-depth understanding** of the SenSyn educational program and its modular structure, developing the ability to **conduct it effectively in face-to-face learning sessions**."
4. **Practical Guidance:**

- The trainer **utilizes the blueprint** of the **SenSyn Educational Program**, developed by the **SenSyn partnership**, which provides a **detailed breakdown of aims, objectives, and content**.
- **Interactive discussion:** Encourage questions and reflections to ensure a solid grasp of the material.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

- **Whiteboard / Flipchart** for visualizing concepts.
- **LCD projector and computer** for presentations.
- **Sheets of paper and writing utensils** for note-taking and exercises.

TRAINER TIPS & BEST PRACTICES:

The **SenSyn face-to-face educational program** follows a structured **three-stage approach** to ensure effective facilitation. The mentor should introduce these stages to participants, emphasizing:

1. **Preparation Phase:**
 - Understanding course content and materials.
 - Adapting teaching methods to the needs of older adults.
 - Building confidence in facilitation techniques.
2. **Implementation Phase:**
 - Delivering **interactive and engaging** training sessions.
 - Encouraging participation through discussions and hands-on activities.
 - Using real-life scenarios to connect learning to practical experiences.
3. **Reflection & Continuous Improvement:**
 - Gathering participant feedback.
 - Adjusting teaching strategies based on observed challenges and successes.
 - Strengthening facilitators' abilities through ongoing learning and peer collaboration.

By following this structured approach, facilitators will be well-prepared to **effectively guide older adults through the SenSyn educational program**, ensuring a **meaningful and impactful learning experience**.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM SENSYN	PHASE/METHOD	PURPOSE	
FACE TO FACE (16 HOURS)	PRE-WORKSHOP	Knowledge Skills reflection	Participants are introduced to the subject matter through selected readings, videos or other sources. They are then asked to reflect on these and the completion of activities including questionnaires and worksheets.
	WORKSHOP	Validation Interaction Encouragement	Participants come together to share ideas and develop their knowledge thought interaction with other participants.
	POST-WORKSHOP	Application Practice reinforcement	Participants are required to apply their learning in the group.

ACTIVITY 1.2: OPENING THE MEETING

PURPOSE OF THE EXERCISE:

The success of the **Face-to-Face Training Program** largely depends on how sessions are introduced and conducted by the facilitator. A well-structured opening sets the tone for engagement, encourages **positive interaction** among participants, and ensures a **peer-friendly learning atmosphere**.

This exercise provides **future facilitators** with the opportunity to **practice opening a meeting**, delivering **short introductions**, explaining **working methods**, and presenting the **goals of the training program**. The primary aim is to prepare them to **deliver training sessions clearly, confidently, and in an engaging manner**.

DURATION: 0.5 HOURS

GROUP SIZE: 4–8 PARTICIPANTS

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE TRAINER:

1. **Pair Work – Practicing Meeting Openings:**
 - Participants work in **pairs** to practice a **short introductory opening**, where they present a **welcome message, training goals, and key working methods**.

- Each pair **discusses and refines** their approach based on **recommendations** for specific training sessions.
- They take turns presenting their opening to the group.
- 2. **Using the SenSyn Syllabus and Presentation Tools:**
 - Participants refer to the **prepared syllabus and educational program content** for SenSyn.
 - A **PowerPoint presentation** provides an **overview of program objectives, activities, and methods**, guiding facilitators in structuring their introductions.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

- **Whiteboard and flipchart** for brainstorming and note-taking.
- **LCD projector and computer** for PowerPoint presentations.

TRAINER TIPS & BEST PRACTICES:

KEY COMPONENTS OF A WELL-STRUCTURED TRAINING SESSION:

- **Title:** Use a **clear and engaging slogan** in simple language to make the topic approachable.
- **Introduction:** Provide **general information** about the session's purpose and the issues it will cover.
- **Objectives:** Outline **clear learning outcomes**, structured into preparation, introduction, main tasks, and conclusion.
- **Materials:** Ensure participants know what **resources and materials** they need for the session.
- **Facilitation Tips:** Offer **practical advice** for effectively guiding the session.
- **Warm-up Activity:** Include an **icebreaker** to engage participants at the beginning.
- **Main Activities:** Provide a structured **list of exercises and tasks** relevant to the session's objectives.
- **Conclusion:** End each session with a **summary**, an open-ended discussion, or a group **reflection exercise**.

IMPORTANT TIPS FOR OPENING AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM:

1. **Arouse Interest – Create a Bridge into the Topic:**
 - Even if participants are eager to learn, they need a structured introduction to the material.
 - Use multiple approaches to **engage** them:
 - **Group discussion**
 - **Interesting input from the trainer**
 - **A well-designed icebreaker**
 - If some participants seem **hesitant**, explore their **concerns**, discuss their **expectations**, and highlight the **benefits** of participation.
2. **Establish Group Rules – Set the Foundation for Interaction:**
 - Define and agree on **guidelines** for group interactions, including:
 - **Respectful communication**
 - **Active participation**
 - **Acceptable behavior during sessions**

3. Clarify the Program – Align Expectations with Objectives:

- Learning is a **two-way process**—facilitators come with a **structured program**, but participants arrive with their **own expectations and preconceptions**.
- To ensure alignment, use two key strategies:
 - **Before the program:** Maintain **good communication** with participants to identify key learning needs and introduce them to the **program methodology**.
 - **At the start of the program:** Encourage participants to **express their expectations** and compare them with the planned content.
- This **negotiation process** is essential for creating a **shared vision** of the training. A successful outcome depends on the facilitator’s ability to **bridge the gaps** between planned content and participant expectations.

By following these guidelines, facilitators will be **better prepared to lead structured, engaging, and effective training sessions**, ensuring a **positive learning experience** for all participants.

UNIT 2: WHAT KIND OF FACILITATOR/TEACHER AM I?

DURATION: 0.5 HOUR

AIMS:

- Future facilitators **identify their strengths and weaknesses** in relation to the **SenSyn program**.
- Facilitators understand the importance of **communication and teamwork**, demonstrate **empathy**, encourage **open dialogue**, and actively listen to the **needs and concerns** of participants.
- Facilitators feel **confident and comfortable** leading a group of older adults (55+).

CONTENTS:

- **Core principles of effective training in SenSyn:**
 - Older adults must be able to **find, understand, evaluate, and apply** information relevant to their lives.
- **Balancing receptive and expressive skills:**
 - Facilitators should **not only present information** but also encourage participants to **share their knowledge and opinions**.
- **Flexibility in Active Ageing training:**
 - As **Active Ageing** is an **open concept**, facilitators should **adapt the training approach** to fit different learning styles and participant needs.

ACTIVITY 2.1: FACILITATOR OR TEACHER?

PURPOSE OF THE EXERCISE:

Participants **explore and discuss** the **differences and similarities** between **teachers and facilitators**. They reflect on when a **teacher transitions into a facilitator** and why this distinction is essential in **adult education**.

DURATION: 0.5 HOUR

GROUP SIZE: 4–8 PARTICIPANTS

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE TRAINER:

1. Pair Discussion (5 minutes):

- Participants sit **in pairs facing each other**.
- The **facilitator briefly explains the purpose of the exercise (5 minutes)**.
- Each pair **lists as many characteristics as possible** of both **teachers and facilitators**, noting the differences and overlaps.
- They also consider **when and why a teacher shifts into the role of a facilitator**.
- **Notes and observations** are written on **sheets of paper**.

2. Group Sharing & Discussion (25 minutes):

- Each **pair presents their findings** to the group.
 - The mentor **records key points on a whiteboard or flipchart**, categorizing **pros and cons** of both roles.
 - Open **group discussion** follows, encouraging insights and reflections.
-

EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

- **Whiteboard / Flipchart** for listing characteristics.
 - **Sheets of paper and writing utensils** for note-taking.
-

VARIATIONS & ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- **Facilitator Competence Evaluation:**
 - At the end of the module, facilitators **collectively define the key characteristics** of a **successful facilitator**.
 - They create a **list of essential competences and skills** based on the discussion.
-

TRAINER TIPS & BEST PRACTICES:

- Encourage participants to **reflect on their own skills** and categorize them into two groups:
 - **Competences I am strong at.**
 - **Competences I need further development in.**
- Highlight that **facilitation** is about **guiding learning rather than just delivering knowledge**—this distinction is key in **adult education**.
- Emphasize that **learning is a two-way process**—facilitators should **learn from participants as much as they teach**.

By the end of this session, future facilitators will have a **clearer understanding of their role**, recognize their **strengths and areas for improvement**, and gain confidence in **leading group discussions in an engaging and inclusive way**.

3.3 MODULE 3: THE ROLE OF THE FACILITATOR – WORKING WITH TARGER GROUP (2 HOURS)

TRAINING CONTENTS

1. **Understanding the Teaching Process & Motivation for Learning**
 - Future facilitators gain an **overview of effective teaching processes**.
 - Exploration of **motivational factors** that influence adult learning.
 - Understanding different **communication styles** and the importance of **effective communication techniques** in facilitating learning.
2. **The Role of the Facilitator in a Group Setting**
 - Key responsibilities of a **facilitator** in leading an educational program.
 - Methods for **presenting and delivering information** effectively to older adult learners.
 - Understanding the **diverse needs and daily challenges** of older learners and how to adapt facilitation techniques accordingly.
3. **Designing Engaging & Effective Learning Experiences**
 - How to develop **useful and meaningful learning experiences** tailored to the needs of the participants.
 - Introduction to **didactical methods** for conducting exercises in adult education.
 - Essential **competencies of a modern facilitator** working with older adults.

TRAINING METHODS

The **learning process** is the foundation of successful training. A facilitator must have a **solid understanding of how adults learn** to effectively tailor their teaching methods to different situations. Research suggests that **adult learning is most effective** when:

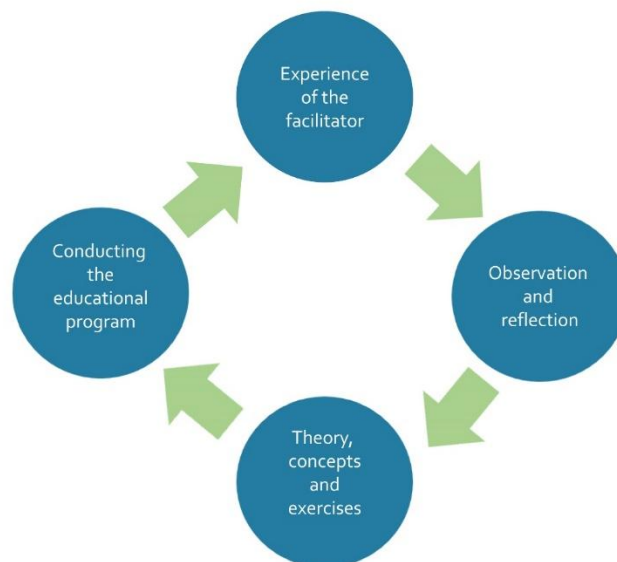
- **Participants play an active role** in defining or refining their **own learning objectives**.
- The **content directly relates** to real-life challenges and experiences of the participants.
- Training is conducted in a **varied and participatory** environment, engaging learners in meaningful ways.

One of the fundamental **models of training** that supports this approach is the **learning cycle**, which emphasizes:

1. **Experiencing** – Engaging in an activity or discussion to introduce new concepts.
2. **Observing & Reflecting** – Analyzing experiences and drawing insights.
3. **Thinking & Conceptualizing** – Connecting experiences to theoretical knowledge and frameworks.
4. **Applying** – Practicing newly acquired knowledge and skills in real-world scenarios.

By integrating these principles into the training process, facilitators can create **engaging, effective, and learner-centered educational experiences**, ensuring that participants **actively participate, reflect, and apply their learning** in meaningful ways.

Learning cycle



RECOMMENDED TRAINING METHODS

To ensure an engaging and effective learning experience, the following methods are recommended:

- **Lectures** – Providing structured knowledge and insights on key topics.
- **Group and Pair Work** – Encouraging collaboration, discussion, and shared learning experiences.
- **Brainstorming on Flipcharts** – Generating and organizing ideas visually to foster creativity and group input.
- **Individual Reflection & Work** – Allowing participants to deepen their understanding and connect learning to personal experiences.
- **Storytelling** – Using personal narratives and real-life examples to illustrate concepts and enhance engagement.
- **Group Discussions** – Facilitating dialogue in various formats such as **round tables, plenary sessions, and U-shaped seating arrangements** to promote open communication.
- **Information Literacy & Digital Research** – Teaching participants how to effectively **find, evaluate, and use information from online sources** to expand their knowledge base.

UNIT 1: TEACHING PROCESSES AND COMMUNICATION TECHNIQUES

DURATION: 1 HOUR

AIMS:

- Future facilitators gain **familiarity with key teaching processes** they will use when delivering the SenSyn program.
- Facilitators develop the ability to **apply different facilitation methods** to effectively present the program content.
- Facilitators become **confident and proficient** in communication techniques essential for conducting the SenSyn educational program.

CONTENTS:

- Understanding the **processes and goals** of an effective facilitator.
- Encouraging participants to **recognize their strengths** and compare different **communication styles and roles** in facilitating learning.
- Developing the ability to **deliver information clearly, simply, and effectively** to the target group.
- Enhancing **group communication** by fostering a **positive learning atmosphere** and strong **interpersonal relationships**.
- Emphasizing the **importance of active listening** and ensuring **equal inclusion of all participants**.

ACTIVITY 3.1: COMMUNICATION STYLES AND TECHNIQUES

PURPOSE OF THE EXERCISE:

Participants will understand and learn to apply **various communication techniques** when working with a group.

DURATION: 0.5 HOUR

GROUP SIZE: 4–8 PARTICIPANTS

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE TRAINER:

1. **Group Discussion (10 minutes):**
 - Ask participants:
 - **WHAT IS COMMUNICATION?**
 - **WHAT IS ITS PURPOSE?**
 - **WHY IS LISTENING IMPORTANT?**
 - **HOW DO WE LEAD A PRODUCTIVE GROUP DISCUSSION?**
 - Encourage participants to share their thoughts.
2. **Presentation on Communication Styles (10 minutes):**
 - Use a **flipchart** to list and briefly explain the **three primary communication styles**:
 - **Assertive** – clear, direct, respectful.
 - **Aggressive** – forceful, demanding, often disregards others.
 - **Submissive** – passive, avoids confrontation, lacks confidence.
 - Discuss the importance of **nonverbal communication** (body language, tone of voice, facial expressions) in group facilitation.
3. **Group Discussion & Pair Work (10 minutes):**
 - Ask participants to **discuss the three communication styles** in small groups.

- Have them **identify real-life examples** where each style might be used.
 - Encourage them to explore the **advantages and disadvantages** of each style in the context of **facilitating older adult learning**.
4. **Sharing & Reflection (10 minutes):**
- Each group selects a representative to **summarize their discussion**.
 - If necessary, the trainer **clarifies key points** about communication styles.
 - Encourage participants to reflect on **which style they use most often** and how they can **adapt their communication** for effective facilitation.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

- **Flipchart and markers**
- **Sheets of paper and writing utensils**

TRAINER TIPS & BEST PRACTICES:

- **Encourage self-awareness** – Ask participants to reflect on **which communication style they naturally use** and how it affects their interactions.
- **Use real-life examples** – Make the discussion relatable by having participants share personal experiences where they used or encountered different communication styles.
- **Promote inclusivity** – Ensure that all participants feel comfortable sharing their insights.
- **Emphasize adaptability** – Help facilitators understand that effective communication requires **adjusting their approach** based on the group's needs.

By the end of this session, future facilitators will have a **better understanding of communication techniques**, be able to **identify and apply appropriate communication styles**, and feel more **confident in fostering effective group discussions**.

UNIT 2: THE ROLE OF A FACILITATOR

DURATION: 1 HOUR

AIMS:

- Participants understand the **aims and objectives** of a facilitator's role in the SenSyn educational program.
- Participants explore the **advantages and challenges** of being a facilitator.

CONTENTS:

- Introduction to the **training program for older adults** interested in becoming facilitators (peers) in the **SenSyn project**.
- Understanding **motivations** for taking on the role of a facilitator.

- Exploring the **goals of facilitator training** and methods for effectively delivering the **SenSyn educational program** to older adults.
- Identifying the **benefits and challenges** of being a facilitator.
- Understanding the **facilitator’s role as a group leader**, ensuring smooth, inclusive, and goal-oriented discussions.

ACTIVITY 3.2: THE FACILITATOR’S ROLE IN A GROUP – ROLE-PLAYING EXERCISE

PURPOSE OF THE EXERCISE:

Participants gain **firsthand experience** of the **facilitator’s role**, learning how to **lead discussions, engage participants, and manage group dynamics** effectively. A facilitator’s primary role is to **draw out knowledge and insights** from group members rather than dominate the conversation. This requires a balance of **listening, guiding, and encouraging participation**.

In general, facilitators have three key responsibilities:

- Ensuring that **every participant has the opportunity to share their ideas and experiences**.
- Guiding the discussion toward a **meaningful outcome** (such as a decision, a plan, or a brainstorming session) without **rushing the process**.
- Maintaining a **safe, inclusive, and respectful** group environment where all participants feel **valued and heard**.

DURATION: 1 HOUR

GROUP SIZE: 4–8 PARTICIPANTS

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE TRAINER:

1. **Introduction & Volunteer Selection (10 minutes)**
 - Ask for a **volunteer** to take on the role of the **facilitator** for the role-play exercise.
 - If no one volunteers, the **trainer demonstrates** the role first, serving as an example.
2. **Role-Playing Group Discussion (40 minutes)**
 - All **other participants** take on the role of **older adults** attending a **face-to-face SenSyn educational session**.
 - The chosen facilitator leads a **group discussion** on a **selected topic** from the SenSyn program, such as:
 - **Health and well-being**
 - **Physical activities for active ageing**
 - **Social participation and community engagement**
 - **Lifelong learning and mental stimulation**
 - **Nutrition and healthy lifestyle choices**
 - The **facilitator must**:
 - Keep the discussion **focused and structured**.
 - Encourage **equal participation** and ensure everyone’s voice is heard.

- Manage **differing opinions and possible tensions** in a respectful and constructive way.
 - Use **open-ended questions** and reframe discussions if necessary.
3. **Feedback & Reflection (40 minutes)**
- After the discussion, the **group provides feedback** to the facilitator.
 - Encourage participants to reflect on:
 - **What went well?**
 - **What challenges arose?**
 - **How did the facilitator handle group dynamics?**
 - **What could be improved for future facilitation sessions?**

EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

- **Chairs arranged in a circle** to encourage an open and inclusive discussion.

TRAINER TIPS & BEST PRACTICES:

- **Create a Safe & Inclusive Space:** Ensure that every participant feels comfortable expressing their thoughts.
- **Emphasize Equality:** Remind participants that in a well-facilitated group:
 - Everyone is an **expert in their own experience**.
 - Each group member is **equal** to others, including the facilitator.
- **Encourage Active Participation:** A well-facilitated discussion **flows naturally**, allowing ideas and personal experiences to be shared freely.
- **Guide, Don't Dominate:** The facilitator's role is to **support and structure** the discussion, not to lecture or impose opinions.

By the end of this exercise, participants will have **practical experience** in group facilitation, a **better understanding of their strengths and areas for improvement**, and the confidence to **lead discussions effectively in the SenSyn educational program**.

UNIT 3: COMPETENCIES OF A MODERN FACILITATOR FOR THE TARGET GROUP

DURATION: 0.5 HOUR

AIMS:

- Future facilitators **identify and understand** the core competencies required for effective facilitation, categorized into four key areas:
 1. **Communication and Interpersonal Skills**
 2. **Effective Facilitation & Mentoring**
 3. **Organization & Leadership**
 4. **Self-Development & Lifelong Learning**

CONTENTS:

- Facilitators develop **effective communication strategies** that promote open and democratic learning environments.
- Recognition of **social skills, strengths, and areas for improvement** among participants.
- Adoption of a **positive facilitation mindset** and exploration of strategies for engaging older adults in **active ageing programs**.
- Efficient integration of **individual, frontal, and group-based teaching methods** to suit diverse learning styles.
- Techniques for **enhancing motivation** among participants through **innovative and engaging approaches**.
- Understanding **ICT as a supportive tool** for modern facilitation.
- Raising awareness of the **importance of continuous lifelong learning** as a key competency for facilitators.

ACTIVITY 3.3: RECOGNIZING OUR COMPETENCIES

PURPOSE OF THE EXERCISE:

Participants gain an **understanding of key competencies**, reflect on their own **skills and knowledge**, and **compare them to the EU-based key competencies framework**.

DURATION: 0.5 HOUR

GROUP SIZE: 4–8 PARTICIPANTS

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE TRAINER:

- 1. Individual Reflection (10 minutes)**
 - Ask participants to **list their formal and non-formal knowledge, skills, and competencies**, including:
 - **Professional qualifications**
 - **Informal learning experiences**
 - **Practical skills from work, volunteering, or everyday life**
 - Encourage them to **include strengths and areas they feel need further development**.
- 2. Group Discussion & Categorization (10 minutes)**
 - Collect all individual responses on a **flipchart or whiteboard**.
 - Work as a group to **categorize these competencies** based on the **EU's eight key competencies** (see below).
 - Discuss the **importance of each competency** and compare it with participants' existing skills.
 - Encourage participants to identify which competencies they **already excel in**, where they **want to improve**, and how they **can develop further**.
- 3. Wrap-Up & Reflection (10 minutes)**
 - Open the floor for discussion:
 - **WHICH COMPETENCIES ARE MOST RELEVANT FOR A SENSYN FACILITATOR?**
 - **WHICH AREAS REQUIRE FURTHER TRAINING?**
 - Reinforce the **importance of continuous self-development and adaptability** in adult education.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

- **Flipchart and markers**
- **Whiteboard for brainstorming**
- **Chairs arranged in a circle for open discussion**

TRAINER TIPS & BEST PRACTICES:

UNDERSTANDING THE EIGHT KEY COMPETENCIES

1. **Communication in the Mother Tongue** – Ability to express thoughts, feelings, and ideas effectively in oral and written form.
2. **Communication in Foreign Languages** – Intercultural understanding and communication beyond one's native language.
3. **Mathematical Competence & Science/Technology Skills** – Problem-solving abilities using logical reasoning and applied knowledge.
4. **Digital Competence** – Confident use of technology and digital resources for education and communication.
5. **Learning to Learn** – Ability to manage and direct personal learning throughout life.
6. **Social & Civic Competence** – Personal, interpersonal, and social skills that allow effective participation in society and work environments.
7. **Sense of Initiative & Entrepreneurship** – Turning ideas into actions through creativity, innovation, and strategic planning.
8. **Cultural Awareness & Expression** – Appreciating creative expression through various artistic and cultural mediums.

These competencies are **interconnected**, with a strong emphasis on **critical thinking, creativity, problem-solving, and effective communication**.

FIVE ESSENTIAL TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL TRAINING EXPERIENCE

1. **Create a Supportive Learning Environment:**
 - Ensure the training space is **welcoming, inclusive, and engaging**.
2. **Focus on Participant Needs:**
 - Adapt content to **real-life challenges and priorities** of the target group.
3. **Use Participatory Methods:**
 - Encourage **active engagement** by integrating interactive and discussion-based learning.
4. **Encourage Small Group Reflection:**
 - Foster **collaboration and shared learning** through small group discussions.
5. **Remain Flexible & Adaptable:**
 - Adjust educational activities based on the **group's progress and feedback**.

3.4 MODULE 4: FACILITATING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM FOR SENSYN (2 HOURS)

TRAINING CONTENTS AND METHODS

TRAINING CONTENTS

1. **Delivering the Face-to-Face SenSyn Program**
 - Exploring **different learning methods** and strategies for their **effective implementation** in group settings.
 - Understanding how to **adapt facilitation techniques** to enhance participant engagement and comprehension.
2. **Face-to-Face Educational Program Modules**
 - Overview of the **SenSyn educational modules**, their structure, and key learning objectives.
 - Training methods and **interactive exercises** designed to support active learning.

TRAINING METHODS

To successfully prepare future facilitators, **clear and innovative approaches** are required, tailored to the needs of the target group. The following methods are recommended:

- **Frontal Lectures** – Structured presentations to introduce key concepts and methodologies.
- **Practical Examples** – Real-life case studies and hands-on demonstrations to illustrate theoretical principles.
- **Group & Pair Work** – Encouraging collaboration and peer learning through shared experiences.
- **Brainstorming on Flipcharts** – Collecting and organizing ideas visually to stimulate creativity and group participation.
- **Use of ICT Tools** – Incorporating digital resources to enhance learning and accessibility.
- **Expert Insights & Trainer Input** – Involving specialists to provide additional perspectives and deepen understanding.
- **Group Discussions** – Engaging in **round tables, plenary discussions, and U-form seating arrangements** to foster interactive and inclusive dialogue.

UNIT 1: DELIVERING THE FACE-TO-FACE PROGRAM FOR SENSYN

DURATION: 0.5 HOUR

AIMS:

- Equip **peer facilitators** with a strong foundation in **planning, developing, delivering, and evaluating** the SenSyn face-to-face program.
- Ensure facilitators can **effectively apply diverse teaching methods** to achieve the program's intended results.

- Enhance understanding of the **specific needs and expectations** of the target group and their alignment with the **general goals of the SenSyn program**.
- Foster an **enthusiastic and motivational approach** to the program, encouraging facilitators to act as **role models** in active ageing.

CONTENTS:

- The **SenSyn educational program** is designed for **adults aged 55+**, conducted in **modular format**, with a total duration of **16 hours**.
- Strengthening **participants' existing skills**, knowledge, and good practices related to **active ageing**.
- The program is **inclusive and interactive**, allowing participants to **engage in discussions, share experiences**, and adapt topics to their **individual goals, values, age, health status, and interests**.
- Addressing **support measures** that can be **tailored to meet the expectations and aspirations** of different participants.

ACTIVITY 4.1: MY EXPERIENCE – “I CAN LEAD THE FACE-TO-FACE PROGRAM”

PURPOSE OF THE EXERCISE:

- Recognizing that **future peer facilitators** come from **diverse backgrounds**, this exercise helps them **identify and consolidate** their existing skills relevant to the **SenSyn face-to-face program**.
- Participants explore **the key principles and methods** of adult education, focusing on **how and when** to apply them effectively.
- Encourages facilitators to **connect their past teaching, mentoring, or group leadership experiences** with the requirements of **face-to-face learning in SenSyn**.
- Helps facilitators gain confidence in **using their own educational skills** to deliver the program successfully.

DURATION: 0.5 HOUR

GROUP SIZE: 4–8 PARTICIPANTS

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE TRAINER:

1. **Individual Reflection (10 minutes)**
 - Ask participants to **think about their previous experiences** in education, training, mentoring, or leadership roles.
 - Encourage them to **connect their existing skills** with the **SenSyn educational program**.
 - Provide guiding questions:
 - **WHAT TEACHING OR GROUP LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE DO I ALREADY HAVE?**
 - **WHAT METHODS HAVE WORKED BEST IN MY PAST EXPERIENCES?**
 - **HOW DO I ADAPT MY SKILLS TO WORK EFFECTIVELY WITH OLDER ADULTS?**
2. **Group Discussion & Experience Sharing (10 minutes)**

- Participants **share their reflections** with the group, discussing different approaches they have used in the past.
 - Each participant **presents their perspective**, giving everyone the opportunity to **listen and learn from one another**.
 - The mentor **records key experiences and insights** on a **flipchart**.
3. **Target Group Analysis (10 minutes)**
- The group **identifies key characteristics of older learners**, their **learning preferences**, and **common challenges**.
 - Participants discuss **which teaching methods** and approaches are **most effective for older adults in face-to-face learning**.
 - The mentor **summarizes** the discussion and **lists practical recommendations** for teaching older adults.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

- **Flipchart and markers** for listing insights and key takeaways.

TRAINER TIPS & BEST PRACTICES:

- If participants feel **uncomfortable speaking in front of the group**, allow them to **write their thoughts down individually** before sharing.
- Encourage **peer-to-peer support** by highlighting that **everyone brings valuable experiences** to the group.
- Reinforce the idea that **facilitators are not just teachers, but also mentors and motivators** who guide learning rather than dictate it.
- Help participants see **how their unique experiences** can contribute to a **more effective and engaging learning process** for older adults.

By the end of this session, future facilitators will have **gained confidence** in their ability to **lead the SenSyn face-to-face program**, while also recognizing **the specific needs of their target group** and **the best strategies for engagement and motivation**.

UNIT 2: MODULES OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM FOR SENSYN

DURATION: 1.5 HOURS

AIMS:

- Develop a **comprehensive understanding** of the **SenSyn educational program** and its structure.
- Gain **insight into the four core modules** of the program:
 1. **Introduction to the project and physical activity**
 2. **Maintaining mental health**
 3. **Nutrition and healthy living**
 4. **Strengthening social connections**

- Ensure facilitators are **confident in delivering** the modules effectively within a group setting.

CONTENTS:

- **Detailed exploration** of the SenSyn educational program, as developed by the **SenSyn partnership**.
- Discussion of **module content, implementation techniques, and instructional strategies** to maximize engagement.
- **Understanding participant diversity** and adapting training to different **learning styles** (auditory, visual, and kinesthetic learners).

ACTIVITY 4.2: GROUP DISCUSSION ON EDUCATIONAL MODULES

PURPOSE OF THE EXERCISE:

- Introduce facilitators to the **content and structure** of each module.
- Engage participants in **discussion, opinion sharing, and problem-solving** to anticipate potential challenges in implementation.
- Provide a **general overview** of planned activities to ensure future facilitators feel prepared to conduct the program in a **classroom setting**.

DURATION: 0.5 HOUR

GROUP SIZE: 4–8 PARTICIPANTS

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE TRAINER:

1. **Module Introduction (10 minutes)**
 - Present the **four modules** of the SenSyn program, highlighting **key topics** and **learning objectives**.
 - Emphasize **implementation techniques, clarity in delivery, and adaptability** for different learning needs.
2. **Facilitated Group Discussion (20 minutes)**
 - Encourage participants to share their **thoughts on the modules**:
 - **WHAT ARE THE STRENGTHS OF EACH MODULE?**
 - **WHAT CHALLENGES MIGHT ARISE DURING DELIVERY?**
 - **HOW CAN FACILITATORS ADAPT THE CONTENT FOR DIFFERENT PARTICIPANTS?**
 - Record **key points, concerns, and suggested solutions** on a **flipchart** for reference.

TRAINER TIPS & BEST PRACTICES:

- **Address learning diversity** by explaining the **three main learning styles**:
 - **Auditory learners** – Learn best through **listening and discussion**.
 - **Visual learners** – Prefer **charts, diagrams, and presentations**.
 - **Kinesthetic learners** – Benefit from **hands-on activities and movement-based learning**.

- Encourage facilitators to **adapt their teaching** by incorporating strategies that **cater to all three learning styles**.

ACTIVITY 4.3: PRACTICING EXERCISES FROM THE MODULES

PURPOSE OF THE EXERCISE:

- Provide facilitators with **hands-on experience** in delivering **selected exercises** from the educational program.
- Build **self-confidence** in leading group activities.
- Encourage **peer feedback** and **reflection** on different teaching methods.

DURATION: 1 HOUR

GROUP SIZE: 4–8 PARTICIPANTS

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE TRAINER:

1. **Pair Work (10 minutes)**
 - Divide participants into **pairs** and provide access to the **SenSyn educational program exercises**.
 - Each pair selects **two different exercises** from the modules.
2. **Exercise Practice (30 minutes)**
 - Each pair **leads their selected exercises** with another pair acting as learners.
 - Trainers **observe and provide feedback** on:
 - **Clarity of instructions**
 - **Participant engagement**
 - **Facilitation skills**
3. **Debrief & Reflection (20 minutes)**
 - Facilitators discuss **their experience**, highlighting:
 - **WHAT WENT WELL?**
 - **WHAT WAS CHALLENGING?**
 - **HOW DID THEY FEEL IN THE ROLE OF A FACILITATOR?**
 - The trainer reinforces the **importance of self-confidence**, adaptability, and trusting **one's own skills** when leading a group.

TRAINER TIPS & BEST PRACTICES:

- **Support nervous participants** by allowing them to **start with smaller exercises** before moving to larger group activities.
- Emphasize the importance of **positive reinforcement** and **self-trust** in facilitating learning.
- Encourage **peer feedback** to create a **collaborative learning environment**.

3.5 MODULE 5: FACILITATOR'S EDUCATIONAL PLAN – PREPARATION AND CONDUCTING (2 HOURS)

TRAINING CONTENTS AND METHODS

CONTENT 1: UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF AN EDUCATIONAL PLAN IN PROGRAMS FOR OLDER ADULTS

- Participants gain **familiarity with the concept of an educational plan** and its significance in structuring learning experiences for older adults.
- Exploration of **what an educational plan is**, its **purpose**, and its **key components**.
- Examination of **examples of educational plans**, identifying their **basic elements** and understanding **who needs them and why**.

TRAINING METHODS: THE IMPORTANCE OF AN EDUCATIONAL PLAN FOR FACILITATORS

- The **facilitator's educational plan** serves as a **strategic tool**, guiding decision-making in a **logical and systematic way**.
- The primary role of a facilitator in this process is **coordination**, ensuring that all elements of the educational program are **aligned and effectively implemented**.
- The planning process involves **integrating diverse aspects** of the learning experience to create a **structured, engaging, and impactful educational journey** for older adults.



The diagram above illustrates various stages of the process.

RECOMMENDED TRAINING METHODS

To effectively prepare future facilitators, **clear and innovative approaches** tailored to the needs of the training group are essential. The following methods are recommended:

- **Lectures** – Structured presentations to introduce and explain key concepts.
- **Group & Pair Work** – Encouraging collaboration, knowledge exchange, and peer learning.
- **Brainstorming on Flipcharts** – Generating and organizing ideas visually to stimulate creativity and engagement.
- **Group Discussions** – Utilizing **round tables, plenary discussions, and U-form seating arrangements** to foster open dialogue and interactive participation.
- **Practical Exercises** – Hands-on activities that allow participants to apply learned concepts in real-life scenarios.

UNIT 1: EDUCATIONAL PLAN – DIDACTICS, MATERIALS, CONTENT, AND IMPLEMENTATION

DURATION: 2 HOURS

AIMS:

- Develop a **personalized action plan** for becoming a facilitator.
- Define **concrete next steps** toward facilitation.
- Encourage participants to **clarify their personal goals** and aspirations.
- Organize **thoughts and ideas** into a structured plan for future action.
- Translate **dreams and ambitions** into **realistic and achievable steps**.

CONTENTS:

- **Developing an individual action plan**, either in groups or independently.
- **Discussing and refining action plans** through peer feedback.
- **Setting a date for a follow-up workshop** to review progress and share experiences.

ACTIVITY 5.1: CREATING AN ACTION PLAN FOR BECOMING A SENSYN FACILITATOR

PURPOSE OF THE EXERCISE:

To support participants in **developing a structured action plan** that outlines their journey toward becoming a **SenSyn facilitator**, including **personal goals, steps, and milestones**.

DURATION: 2 HOURS

GROUP SIZE: 4–8 PARTICIPANTS

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE TRAINER:

1. **Introduction to Action Planning (10 minutes)**
 - Ensure participants understand the **importance and benefits** of creating an action plan.
 - Initiate a **group discussion** on why planning is valuable—list **pros and cons** on a **flipchart**.
2. **Exploring Action Plan Examples (20 minutes)**
 - Provide a **sample action plan**, either fully or partially filled out, to serve as a model.
 - Encourage **questions and discussion** to ensure clarity before participants begin working on their own plans.
3. **Developing Individual or Group Action Plans (1 hour)**
 - Participants start working on their **own action plans**, using a structured **template**.
 - Plans can be developed **individually or in pairs**, depending on preference.
4. **Peer Discussion and Feedback (20 minutes)**
 - Once plans are completed, participants **share their plans in small groups**.
 - Encourage discussion by asking:
 - **WHAT ARE THE KEY GOALS IN YOUR ACTION PLAN?**
 - **WHAT CHALLENGES MIGHT ARISE, AND HOW DO YOU PLAN TO OVERCOME THEM?**
 - **ARE THERE ANY SIMILARITIES BETWEEN DIFFERENT ACTION PLANS?**
 - Participants are given time to **revise or expand their plans** based on feedback.
5. **Encouraging Implementation & Follow-Up (10 minutes)**
 - Emphasize the importance of **taking action** and integrating their plans into real life.
 - Encourage participants to **take their plans home** and begin implementation.
 - Set a **follow-up workshop date** where participants will have the opportunity to **review progress, share experiences, and discuss challenges**.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

- **Action plan templates**
- **Paper and pencils**
- **Flipchart and markers**

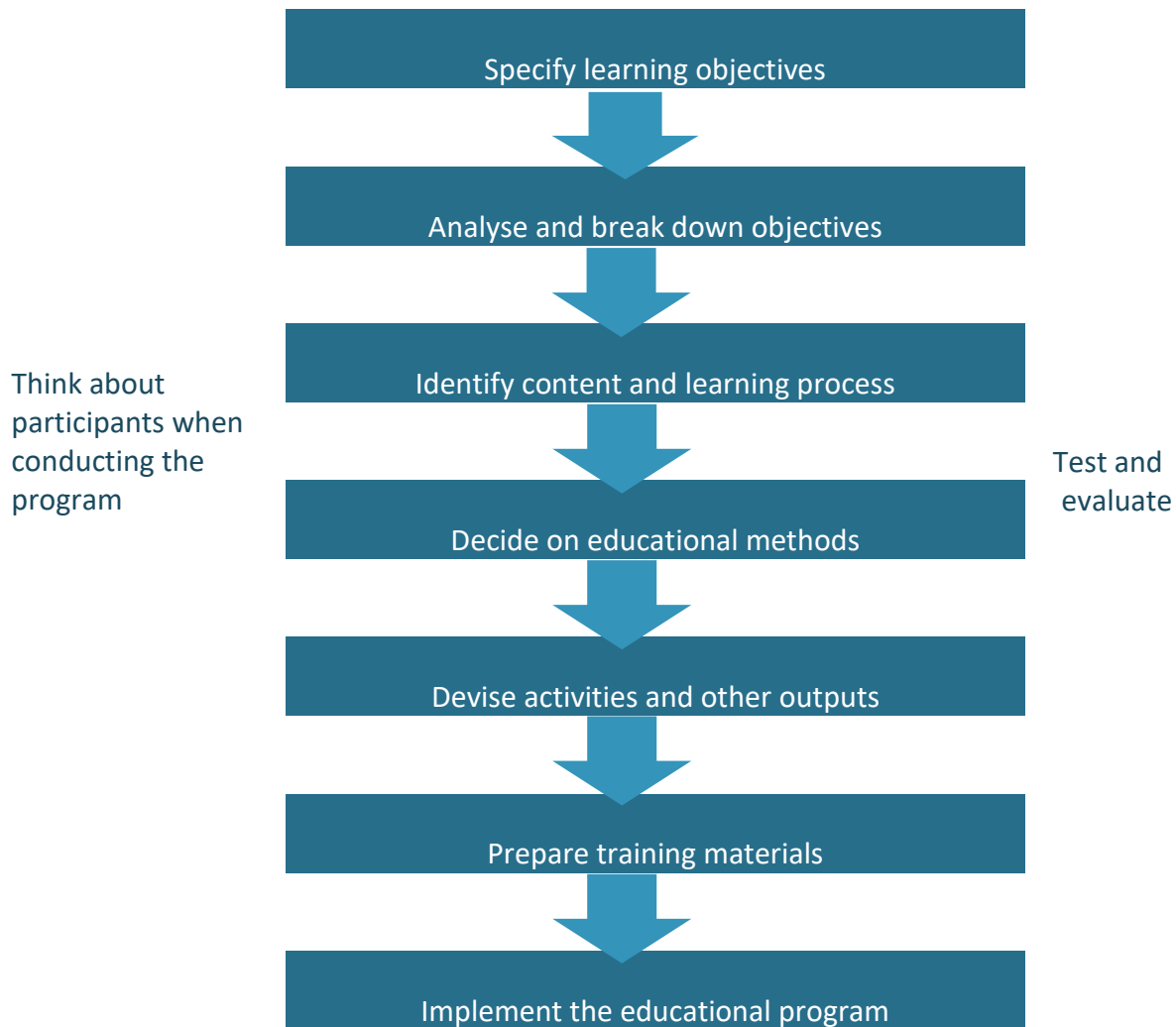
TRAINER TIPS & BEST PRACTICES:

- **Make planning realistic:** Some older adults may find it challenging to **envision themselves as facilitators in 5–10 years**. Encourage them to **focus on the immediate future (e.g., the next 12 months)** and set **small, achievable goals**.
- **Encourage networking:** Discussing plans in small groups helps **participants connect with one another**, reinforcing a sense of **peer support and motivation**.
- **Provide flexibility:** Allow participants to **modify their plans** after discussions, as new insights may emerge.

- **Follow up for accountability:** A scheduled follow-up workshop ensures that participants stay engaged, reflect on their progress, and overcome obstacles together.

By the end of this session, participants will have a **clear, actionable roadmap** toward becoming a **SenSyn facilitator**, along with **increased motivation and confidence** to achieve their goals.

SUGGESTED ACTION PLAN



FACILITATOR'S CHECKLIST: EFFECTIVE ADULT LEARNING

1. Is the learning environment welcoming and supportive?
2. Have you addressed potential anxieties or barriers that participants may face?
3. Do your teaching methods recognize and incorporate participants' prior experiences?
4. Does the program provide opportunities for participants to track their own progress?
5. Do you ensure that participants know they can seek additional help when needed?
6. Are the first few minutes of each session engaging and attention-grabbing?
7. Do you incorporate frequent reinforcement and hands-on practice?
8. Are you minimizing lecture time, keeping it within a 10–20 minute limit?
9. Have you integrated regular feedback sessions to enhance learning and engagement?

3.6 MODULE 6: PRACTICAL EXAMPLE OF EDUCATION – PILOTING THE PROGRAM (2 HOURS)

TRAINING CONTENTS AND METHODS

TRAINING CONTENT:

- Participants work in **pairs** to develop a **learning project** focused on the **Face-to-Face Educational Program for SenSyn**.
- The learning project will serve as a **practical guide** when conducting **educational sessions** with older adults.
- Emphasis is placed on designing a **Face-to-Face program for active ageing**, ensuring it is engaging, inclusive, and effective for the target group.

RECOMMENDED TRAINING METHODS:

To support participants in effectively designing and delivering their learning projects, **diverse and interactive methods** are recommended:

1. SMALL GROUP WORK

- Breaking participants into **smaller groups** within a larger session encourages **active participation**.
- **Smaller groups** provide a **safer and more confidential** space for participants to **contribute and express ideas**.
- This method fosters **peer learning** and **collaborative problem-solving**.

2. BRAINSTORMING SESSIONS

- A highly **effective technique** for generating **ideas and solutions**.
- Encourages **creativity** and allows participants to **freely contribute thoughts** without judgment.
- After brainstorming, ideas are **sorted and refined** for further discussion.
- Useful for **introducing topics**, stimulating engagement, and energizing the group.

3. CASE STUDIES

- Provides **real-world examples** for discussion and analysis.
- Participants **apply theoretical knowledge** to practical situations.
- Facilitators should **select or modify case studies** to match the needs and experiences of participants.
- Encourages **critical thinking and problem-solving skills**.

4. CHECKLISTS

- Serves as a **guiding tool** for participants to **track key learning points**.

- Can be used for **self-assessment** or as a **reference for training**.
- Prepared in advance by the facilitator to **reinforce essential elements** of the program.

5. DISCUSSION EXERCISES

- Encourages **active participation** through **structured or unstructured discussions**.
- Formats include:
 - **Pair discussions** for deeper reflection.
 - **Small group discussions** for shared experiences.
 - **Plenary discussions** for broader insights.
- Helps participants **internalize concepts** by relating them to **personal experiences**.

6. LECTURES AND PRESENTATIONS

- Used to **introduce core topics** and **explain key concepts**.
- Facilitators should ensure **lectures remain interactive**, incorporating **questions, visuals, and short discussions**.
- Best when used in combination with **other active learning methods**.

7. QUESTIONS AND QUESTIONNAIRES

- Facilitators use **questions** to check understanding and stimulate thought.
- Participants can create and use **questionnaires** for:
 - Self-assessment.
 - Group activities.
 - Gathering data for discussion.
- Encourages **active engagement and critical reflection**.

8. VISUAL AIDS: DIAGRAMS, PHOTOS, AND VIDEOS

- Supports **visual learners** and enhances **comprehension of complex ideas**.
- **Diagrams and infographics** clarify relationships between concepts.
- **Photos and videos** add **real-life context**, making lessons more relatable and impactful.
- Ensures **equal participation** for all, regardless of literacy level.

9. PRODUCING POSTERS AND FLIPCHARTS

- A creative approach for **synthesizing key ideas**.
- Helps participants develop **key messages** from previous exercises or discussions.
- Facilitators can encourage **collaborative poster-making** to **promote teamwork**.
- Also useful for **advocacy and promotion** of educational concepts.

10. PERSONAL REFLECTION: DIARIES AND LEARNING LOGS

- Encourages participants to **reflect on their learning journey**.
- Provides deeper insights into **personal experiences and emotions** related to the topic.
- Can be used as a **self-evaluation tool** to track progress.

11. ROLE-PLAYING EXERCISES

- Offers an **experiential learning opportunity** by acting out **real-world scenarios**.
- Helps participants develop **problem-solving and interpersonal skills**.
- Facilitators should **carefully design and adapt role-plays** to ensure **cultural relevance and sensitivity**.
- When executed effectively, role-playing **enhances engagement and understanding**.

UNIT 1: PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THE LEARNING PROCESS – SUPERVISION DURING PILOT TRAINING

DURATION:

- **Lecture:** 2 hours
 - **Supervised Pilot Training:** 10 hours
-

AIMS:

- Enable peer facilitators to **deliver the SenSyn educational course** to participants aged **55+**.
 - Ensure facilitators **effectively implement** all objectives and activities outlined in the SenSyn program.
 - Equip facilitators with skills to **seek updated resources** (e.g., online research, library materials) for continuous improvement.
 - Guide facilitators in **following the structured syllabus**, ensuring smooth execution of planned exercises and activities.
-

CONTENTS:

- **SenSyn Educational Program** for older adults, developed by the **SenSyn partnership**.
 - **Pilot implementation** of the educational course, conducted in a **classroom setting with 12 participants**.
 - **Post-implementation evaluation**, including a **focus group discussion** to assess activity effectiveness and suitability for the target group.
-

ACTIVITY 6.1: INTRODUCTION TO PILOTING THE SENSYN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

PURPOSE:

Future facilitators will conduct the **Face-to-Face version** of the SenSyn educational program over **8 hours** with one group of **10 - 12 older adults**. Facilitators will work in **pairs**, with supervision provided by an experienced trainer. **Evaluation tools**, including a pre- and post-implementation questionnaire, will be used to assess the training process.

DURATION: 1 HOUR

GROUP SIZE: 4–8 PARTICIPANTS

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE TRAINER:

- The pilot program will begin **immediately after training**, with **two selected facilitators** leading the first sessions.
- The **trainer supervises and validates** the process before and after implementation.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

- **Classroom setup**
- **Computer for research and presentations**

KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION:

1. PARTICIPANT ENGAGEMENT

- Monitor **attendance and involvement** throughout the program.
- Encourage participants through **brief individual check-ins** to emphasize the value of their engagement.
- Assess whether **materials and activities are effective** for the target audience.

2. EVALUATING ACTIVITIES AND OBJECTIVES

- Are the learning activities helping to **achieve the identified training goals**?
- What **feedback** are participants providing about the training experience?
- Are there **any changes needed** to improve learning outcomes?

3. ADAPTING THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE

- Training plans **may require modifications** during implementation.
- Any changes should be **systematic, well-documented, and communicated** to all stakeholders.

TRAINING SESSION MODEL:

A) INTRODUCTION & ICEBREAKER:

- Engage participants by **eliciting their initial thoughts** on the session's topic (brainstorming, ranking exercises, personal experiences).

B) CORE LEARNING ACTIVITY:

- Use **participatory methods** such as case studies, role-plays, or structured discussions to reinforce key learning points.

C) GROUP REFLECTION & DISCUSSION:

- Encourage participants to share insights through **small-group exercises or Q&A sessions**.

D) CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK & KEY LEARNING POINTS:

- Provide supporting **handouts, short presentations, videos, or diagrams** to illustrate key concepts.

E) PRACTICAL APPLICATION:

- Participants **practice new skills** or apply concepts through **real-life scenarios** or **hands-on exercises**.

F) FEEDBACK & EVALUATION:

- Wrap up the session with structured feedback and assessment discussions.

ACTIVITY 6.2: CLOSING SESSION

PURPOSE:

A well-structured closing session ensures that participants **reflect on their learning experience**, provide **feedback**, and leave the training with a **sense of accomplishment**.

DURATION: 1 HOUR

GROUP SIZE: 4–8 PARTICIPANTS

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE TRAINER:

1. **Seating Arrangement:**
 - Form a **circle** to encourage openness and visibility.
2. **Facilitator's Role:**
 - Thank participants for their **engagement and dedication**.
 - Lead a **reflection session** with guiding questions:
 - **WHAT KEY INSIGHTS DID YOU GAIN FROM THIS TRAINING?**
 - **WHAT DID YOU ENJOY THE MOST?**
 - **WHAT IMPROVEMENTS WOULD YOU SUGGEST?**
 - **HOW DO YOU PLAN TO USE THIS KNOWLEDGE?**
3. **Interactive Closing:**
 - Participants take turns **sharing their final thoughts**.
 - As a **symbolic gesture**, the group **taps each other on the back** to recognize their effort.

PARTICIPANT BENEFITS:

- Creates **positive reinforcement** and a **lasting impression** of the training experience.

- Strengthens **group cohesion and motivation**.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

- **Classroom setup**

TRAINER'S TIPS:

- Ensure that the session **reinforces key takeaways** from the training.
- Allow **ample time for reflection and evaluation**, rather than rushing through the final segment.

ACTIVITY 6.3: SUPERVISED PILOT IMPLEMENTATION

PURPOSE:

Trained **peer-to-peer facilitators** will deliver the program while **under supervision**. The trainer will intervene if necessary and guide facilitators toward **effective delivery techniques**. A web-based forum will be available for participants to **share experiences and ask questions**.

DURATION: 8 HOURS (10-12 PARTICIPANTS)

GROUP SIZE: UP TO 12 PARTICIPANTS

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE TRAINER:

1. **Pilot Training Execution:**
 - The Face-to-Face training program will be conducted in **multiple countries**, with each location hosting **two training sessions** for older adults.
 - Sessions focus on **enhancing self-efficacy, coping strategies, and active ageing**.
 - A **pre- and post-training questionnaire** will evaluate participant satisfaction and effectiveness.
2. **Participant Recruitment:**
 - Older adults will **volunteer** through **informational campaigns and partner networks**.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

- **Action plan templates**
- **Paper, pencils, flipcharts**
- **Checklists for monitoring progress**
- **Photo materials & evaluation questionnaire**

TRAINER'S TIPS FOR SUPERVISION:

- Observe facilitators and provide **constructive feedback** on **teaching methods, engagement, and clarity of delivery**.
- Use a **structured checklist** to evaluate:
 - **Participant engagement**
 - **Facilitator's clarity and adaptability**
 - **Overall session success and goal achievement**
- If a group struggles, **offer guidance without taking over** the session.
- Ensure materials and equipment are **readily available** before the session starts.
- Facilitate **mid-session time checks** to keep activities on track.

KEY TAKEAWAYS FOR FUTURE FACILITATORS:

- ✓ **Know your content:** Familiarize yourself with the material before conducting a session.
- ✓ **Be organized:** Ensure all **resources and materials** are prepared in advance.
- ✓ **Encourage participation:** Use **inclusive techniques** to engage all learners.
- ✓ **Adapt when necessary:** Be **flexible** while ensuring the **core objectives are met**.
- ✓ **Monitor progress:** Regularly assess **learning outcomes** and adjust strategies accordingly.



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