Guidelines on learning circles methodology

CIRC4INC

LEARNING CIRCLES
FOR INCLUSION
THROUGH DIGITAL
TOOLS

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Introduction

The project

The Circ4Inc project aims to promote digital and social inclusion among older adults and individuals with limited digital literacy. It gathers 3 partners from 3 European countries:

- o Universita delle Libereta, Italy – coordinator
- o WeLearn, Ireland
- o Itinéraires, France

Purpose and objectives of the guidelines

The guidelines aim at presenting the best methodologies for the realisation of learning circles to foster social inclusion of people over 65 and/or digitally illiterate. It will take into account andragogy principles and will provide a clear methodology as well as learning content for implementing learning circles with the target population.

Lessons learnt from the field study

A survey was submitted to 43 representatives of the target population in Italy, Ireland and France. Its results have been deeply analyzed in the Analysis and report for Learning Circles document, available on the project's website.

However, here is the summary of the results that have been taken into account when designing the methodology:

- o Internet is widely used by the target population of the project
- o Smartphones are the device mainly used to access it
- o Internet is used for:
    - o Communication
    - o Research/Information
    - o Online services
    - o Entertainment
- o Social media – especially WhatsApp and YouTube but to a lesser extent – are used by the target population
- o Respondents don't feel confident in recognizing trustworthy information online
- o Few proportion of respondents factcheck information before spreading it on social networks
- o Online safety is a concern
- o Openness to group-based learning models.

Methodology

Learning circles

A Learning Circle brings together a group of people to discuss and explore a particular topic while learning from one another. The group collaboratively decides on the discussion format and specific focus for each session, promoting flexibility and peer-led learning.

It relies on a will to learn from each other and on a collaboration process. It is a dynamic process that requires participants to be active in their learning paths. By sharing experiences, participants collectively reflect on the issue and retrieve solutions.

Learning circles are, therefore, a pedagogical method enabling a group to learn autonomously, guided by a shared passion, a theme or a problem to be solved, chosen by the group.

Unlike traditional training, there is no teacher, and exchanges are simply guided by the facilitator, who steers the exchanges and ensures the balance of the contributions. Circle members meet regularly to share their knowledge, compare points of view and learn from each other's experiences in a non-judgmental, multi-profile atmosphere.

Since there is no hierarchy of knowledge or experience, everyone is legitimate in the transmission of knowledge and can contribute something to the exchanges.

Through learning circles, a democratic and collaborative space opens up, fostering the development of knowledge in a community spirit. Each participant plays an active role, contributing to this autonomous learning. The aim of the learning circle is to preserve skills over the long term and, above all, to guarantee continuous improvement.

The very essence of the circle is based on fundamental principles such as collective self-training and peer learning, encouraging self-organization, self-determination of objectives and methods, as well as cooperation and co-responsibility in learning. They also encourage self-direction, the elaboration of individual and collective knowledge, self-regulation, the formalization of reflective views and interpretative self-assessment rather than evaluative control.

Beyond its informal setting, the learning circle fits perfectly into organizations where teaching and training play a key role, particularly in the planning and execution of improvement programs. It can be used in its entirety, or adapted to meet specific needs and challenges.

Andragogy

The word "andragogy" comes from the amalgam of the Greek words "andros" (man in the sense of male) and "agagos" (the guide). It literally means "the guide to educate man". The concept focuses particularly on adult education and training. It was created in 1833 by the educator Alexander Kapp and was first developed in the United States in the 1950s by Malcolm Knowles to arrive at the definition we know today: the science of adult education.

In 1984, Malcolm Knowles theorized the concept of andragogy by defining its 6 key-concepts :
  o   the role of experience;
  o   self-directedness;

- o the learner's need to know;
- o readiness to learn;
- o orientation to learning;
- o and intrinsic motivation.

Unlike children, adults already have a certain amount of experience, which gives them a certain base from which to develop new skills. Their learning needs are therefore different from those of children, which is why a different way of learning is needed. In addition, with a greater degree of autonomy, adults are largely able to identify their own goals, so experiential techniques form the basis of adult learning, leading to the development of both technical and soft skills.

One of the most important pillars of andragogy is autonomy. Autonomy leads first and foremost to awareness, which is the starting point for adult learning. Then, unlike children, adults have ample scope for self-assessment, enabling them to differentiate between subjects they have mastered and those they are still learning.

There are many advantages to this method: first of all, it allows us to adapt to each individual, according to his or her needs, expectations and abilities, thereby ensuring an effective increase in skills. Secondly, it helps to develop social cohesion by strengthening social relations and creating a context conducive to communication, a much sought-after quality in the workplace.

Finally, this method does not focus on the "distributor of knowledge" (such as the teacher) as is the case in education, but on the adult who is now responsible for his or her own learning.

In addition, this concept is similar to that of "heutagogy", which refers to self-directed or self-determined learning.

Andragogy methods include :

- Vocational and educational training, which enables adults to acquire skills alongside their professional careers.
- Personal development, which focuses on adults' quality of life.
- Non-formal education, based on traditional techniques such as evening classes, workshops, e-learning, etc.

Practical methodology

Given what was previously said, the CIRC4INC partnership has implemented an online meeting with adult educators in order to establish a practical methodology for implementing learning circles with older adults and individuals with limited digital literacy. The following outcomes were retrieved from the discussion:

- **Assessment of the learners' knowledge**: it is better if the group's members have more or less the same level; therefore, prior to implementing the group, it may be useful to design a questionnaire to be answered by the participants. We advise to conduct this phase internally before the creation of the learning circle to make sure participants have more or less the same level. In the framework of our project, partners will assess participants' knowledge during the participants' selection. As CIRC4INC deals with ICT and social skills, the following questions could be asked:

- o Do you own an ICT device? If yes, which one:
- o Do you have a home access to the Internet?
- o How many times per week do you use it?
- o For which purpose?
  - To socialize
  - To search for information
  - To purchase something (train tickets, goods or services)
  - To communicate with family and friends
  - To access public services
  - Banking
  - To play
  - Other: ………………………….
- o On a scale from 1 to 5, how would you rate your confidence in using your device?
- o On a scale from 1 to 5, how satisfied are you with your social life?

- **Flexible curriculum**: pace will be decided by participants as it follows the group's dynamic. The educator should be included in the session as facilitator rather than teacher, meaning that he/she should adapt to the group and not the other way around. Prior to the implementation of the session, the facilitator should be aware of the topics that could be addressed by the group but as an eventuality rather than a list of topics that must be taught.

- **Educators' qualities**: patience is fundamental since the group may have to repeat some processes several times to make sure that all participants get it. Given the target population, technical jargons and borrowings from English should be avoided not to confuse participants.

- **Supporting documents**: to support participants in the skills 'acquisition, supporting documents should be given at the end of the session to support learners in the self-directed working process in between learning circles.

- **Size of the group**: the group shouldn't exceed 12 people. An even number is better to implement exercising in pairs.

- **Technical requirements**: the training room should be equipped with good wifi connection. It is better if participants bring their own material in order to be able to practice on their own devices. Also, the exploitation system should be the same for all participants (if necessary, create two groups: one for Windows and the other one for Apple users).

- **Communication and recruitment process:** to recruit participants, communication tools could be implemented. Prefer hard copy rather than digital campaign given the target population. Flyers in public places such as libraries, local shops or community centers will be good tools to attract participants.

- **Motivation**: the delivery of a certificate could be a good reward at the end of the learning circles. If it is not the first session of learning circles, you can invite a participant from a previous session to come and share his/her experience.

- **Final evaluation**: it is useful to collect learners' feedback. This could be organized digitally if the group has reached a sufficient level of ICT literacy or face-to-face during the last learning circle. It is important to guarantee the anonymity of the feedback to be sure to collect genuine comments. The following indicators should be measured:
  - o Level of perceived interaction between trainees/trainers (questionnaire with ratings from 1 to 5) at least 4
  - o Level of perceived interaction between trainers/educators and participants (questionnaire with ratings 1 to 5) at least 4
  - o Level of perceived usefulness and satisfaction expressed by participants (questionnaire with ratings 1 to 5) at least 4

Learning content

CIRC4INC focuses on social inclusion and ICT training. According to the results of the survey conducted in the early stages of the project, the partnership has created 3 topics for learning circles:

1) Social networks and information disorders: how to navigate on social media?

2) Data privacy online: how to secure your online presence while enjoying socializing online?

3) Online collaboration: how can the Internet offer you tools to interact with other people?

Learning outcomes

Social networks and information disorders		
Skills	Competences	Attitude
At the end of the learning circles, participants should be able to: – Factcheck an information – Spot fake social media profiles – Recognize AI images	At the end of the learning circles, participants should be able to: – Use fact checking tools – Use Google image search – Distinguish deep fakes and AI generated images	At the end of the learning circles, participants should be able to: – Be aware of deep fake – Be aware of fake news – Be autonomous in digital world – Be aware of information disorders' consequences

Data privacy online		
Skills	Competences	Attitude
At the end of the learning circles, participants should be able to: - Identify online scams (phishing, impersonation, romance etc.) - Know how to use a password vault	At the end of the learning circles, participants should be able to: - Know how to create a securized password - Be able to identify safe connection	At the end of the learning circles, participants should be able to: - Be cautious online - Be aware of dos and don't about data sharing

Online Collaboration		
Skills	Competences	Attitude
At the end of the learning circles, participants should be able to: - How to share pictures - How to implement and participate in an online call - How to share documents	At the end of the learning circles, participants should be able to: - Use Google photo - Use Google Drive - Use Google Meet	At the end of the learning circles, participants should be able to: - Be open to online socialization - Be aware of sharing tools accessible online

Learning circle 1: Social Networks and information disorders		
Duration:	2 hours (6X20 minutes)	**Material needed:**
Number of participants:	12 participants and 1 facilitator	- Computers (at least 2) - WIFI connection - Papers + Coloured papers - Scissors - Pens - Paperboard - Colourful markers

Step 1: Needs assessment (20 minutes)

Activity:

Question-and-answer session: each person will draw a question concerning his/her experience and personal background with fake news, social media and AI. Once the question has been answered, the other participants will be encouraged to share their own experience related to the question. This way, important information concerning the group will be collected in order to adapt as much as possible the content of future activities, while engaging a real discussion between the participants and creating a group synergy and a safe place for the participants to talk about their deficiencies.

Tips for the facilitator:

The facilitator should intervene the least possible during this time. He/she may only be invited to do so to encourage the participants to share their feedback and opinions on the speaker's experience, to create a focus group dynamic.

The facilitator can write key words emerging from the discussion on the PaperBoard.

Step 2: Guess what is real and what is not (20 minutes)

Activity:

True or false: To start the activity, the facilitator will divide the room in 2 identified corners: one for TRUE and one for FAKE. A series of 8 to 10 questions will be presented to participants who will have to assess the veracity of each of them by placing themselves in the dedicated part of the room. The questions will be on various topics and of various formats in order to spot fake news, recognize AI images. For example, the questions can be:

- "Social media is the main source of disinformation today"– TRUE, the majority of fake news are circulating on Twitter, Facebook…
- "Information relayed by various accounts on social media must be true" – FALSE, the source must be verified.
- "Deepfake only concerns famous people or celebrities" – FALSE, it can affect everyone.
- Show an AI generated picture: "is it an AI generated picture" – TRUE and ask the participants why they think it's a real or an AI one.
- Show a fake tweet and ask "Is it a real tweet" – FALSE and ask the participants why they think it's a real or a fake one.

To do so, the format proposed will be prepared in advance and mainly be: images (AI generated and real pictures) but also examples of tweets and posts to guess if it's real information or fake news. These examples are available below but you can look for additional examples.

Participants will have to guess if the proposed questions are true or false. To give their response, participants will have a short time to think and will have to go to the area of the room "True" or to the area "False" without talking first. After everyone has given a response, debate can start between individuals to try to convince each other of their response and share their own experience.

With this activity, participants will develop their critical thinking without any tools to be more aware of deep fake and fake news. It will also provide them more autonomy in the digital world.

Tips for the facilitator:

The facilitator will indicate the various areas: left part of the room for "true", right part of the room for "false", moving across the room will give dynamic to the activity. The facilitator will encourage participants to provide their justifications to their choices which will represent a source of information for others participants.

Except for encouragement: The facilitator should intervene the least possible during this time.

Step 3: Fact checking report based on a false scenario   (20 minutes)

Activity:

The participants will be divided in two groups (as heterogeneous as possible) and will receive a different fake scenario to work on. Each group will have access to a PC with a reliable WIFI connection. The participants will have to create a fact-check report on how, in real life, they would have checked if the information were true. Each group should include the following section in their report:

- Is the scenario believable? According to which hints/ signs.

- A list of practices and tools to use to check the information, included in an overall strategy to debunk the information.
- The reason why such information could have been diffused falsely.

For this activity, the use of one computed per team is necessary, engaging team spirit and coordination between the participants.

Scenarios that can be proposed are the following:

- A picture of your favourite celebrity has gone viral on the internet. This picture is actually a blurry mugshot of this person, where he/she appears tired and threatening, with some bad lighting and a cold background. The media broadcasting this picture declare that this celebrity was arrested for money laundering.

- A new species of berry has been discovered in Asia. According to an article published by a famous tabloid, this berry could drastically reduce the occurrence of serious diseases such as diabetes, Parkison's disease or even cancer. This article refers a few times to scientific studies, without any clear sources.

Tips for the facilitator:

Acknowledge the remarks made by the participants during the activity and the difficulties they face. Give as little help as possible with the aim of encouraging the participants to acquire certain automatisms to face the scenarios.

Step 4 : One question, 10 responses (20 minutes)

Activity:

The participants stand in a circle and the facilitator in the middle will ask one question to the group. The question asked will be: "What is the most worrying consequence of the information disorders on our society or on you personally". The general idea is to obtain the participation and opinion of each person. When a participant wants to speak, they have to go in the middle of the circle.

Tips for the facilitator:

Allow people to speak spontaneously, intervening as little as possible. The facilitator should intervene the least possible during the exchange.

Don't designate them to speak first because the response of one participant can encourage another one to speak.

Step 5 : Awareness Poster (20 minutes)

Activity:

Participants will have to split into two groups (can be the same groups as before) and realize an awareness poster on a paper, with pens, colours... Each group will have to choose a general topic/ issue such as the impact of fake news, AI generated content, deep fakes. The poster must contain: a slogan, target groups, issue and objectives. A small presentation of the poster can be done at the end in 1-2 minutes each.

Tips for the facilitator:

The facilitator should intervene the least possible during this time. In this activity, he only needs to intervene if the groups cannot find common themes.

Step 6: Conclusion and Wrapping-up: Collective Mind Map (20 minutes)

Activity:

To conclude this 2 hours session, each participant will have the opportunity to reflect on the activities by completing a collective Mind Map with a reflection, a word to define this first circle or a feeling, an impression. Afterward, they will be guided to one last discussion about what they choose to include in the Mind Map and their overall thoughts on the circle. This is a great way to gather all the outcomes of the activities and to reflect on what has been learned.

Tips for the facilitator:

The role of the facilitator here is purely organisational. He/she will guide the participants throughout the conclusion activity, from the gathering of the reflection on the Mind Map to the last group discussion.

Supporting documentation for Learning Circle 1

Guess What is Real and What Is Not

Examples of AI generated pictures:

Image source: Niceaunties

source: https://mashable.com/article/best-ai-image-generators , image Chatgpt

Examples of fake tweets:

1st example:

← **Post**

Pediavenir ✓
@Pediavenir
...

🇫🇷🛁 FLASH – Marine Le Pen va vendre l'eau de son bain pour financer sa campagne aux élections présidentielles de 2027.

12:44 PM · 4 juin 2025 · **50,1 k** vues

💬 25   ⟲ 80   ♡ 1 k   🔖 8   ↑

"Marine le Pen will sell bath water to finance her presidential election campaign of 2027"

Source: X
https://x.com/Pediavenir/status/1930214077386612944?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Etweet

In reality, it's not true, Pediavenir is a famous account sharing only fake news.

2nd Example:

The picture is presented as a picture of "Proxima du Centaure, the closest star to the sun, located 4.2 light years from us. It was taken by the JWST. This level of details.. Another world is revealed day after day."

In reality, it was a picture of a chorizo.

Source:
https://www.tf1info.fr/sciences-et-innovation/photo-proxima-du-centaure-chorizo-un-canular-du-celebre-physicien-etienne-klein-affole-twitter-2228425.html

Learning circle 2 : Data privacy online

Duration :	2 hours (6X20 minutes)	Material needed :
Number of participants :	12 participants and 1 facilitator	– Computers (at least 3) – Wifi connection – Post-it notes – Pens – Paperboard – Colourful markers

Step 1 : Needs assessment (20 minutes)

Activity :

Start with activities aimed at getting to know the participants, creating a collaborative atmosphere, and sharing the importance of online data privacy. After arranging the participants in a circle, the facilitator can ask questions such as "Think about when you connect to the Internet or use your phone to chat, watch videos, or post something. What do you think 'online privacy' means? Write the various answers **on the board/chart**, **without correcting**, just to see what emerges using post it notes or simple images.

Then move on to completing a mini quiz on Internet use to start a personal reflection, which will be developed from the results of the mini quiz and reported on the board. The mini quiz, entitled "How safe do I feel online," will be distributed in paper format and can be found below in the "Supporting documentation" section. Test Step 1

Tips for the facilitator:

Create a welcoming environment, encourage participation, simplify concepts, and gently guide participants through their first steps in online privacy without making anyone feel inadequate. Participants are arranged in a circle because this arrangement promotes equal communication, encourages active participation, and supports active methodologies that are fundamental to the creation and success of a study circle. During all activities, avoid correcting and judging, and ensure that everyone can speak, trying to reduce individualistic effects in favour of true group cohesion in order to stimulate the ability to cooperate. It is a good idea to write the keywords that emerge on the board or on a poster.

Step 2: Social media and photo: be cautious on line (20 minutes)

Activity:
The objectives of step 2 are:
– To understand the risks associated with sharing personal images and content online.
– To be able to distinguish between private and public content.
– To think about who can see and use our photos online.

Starting from common situations on social media, questions such as the following are asked
1. Posting a photo in a swimsuit → "Would you do that in a public square?"
2. Saying where you are at that moment → "Would you tell strangers on the bus?"
3. Posting photos of your grandchild → "Would you show them to anyone on the street?"

A discussion will ensue on why yes and why not.
Using a fictitious profile with a first and last name, photos, and even angry comments, participants will try to describe the personality of the profile and what they approve of and what they do not.
The facilitator will lead participants to reflect on who can see and use our posts and photos. Based on the analysis and discussions, participants will understand the need for online privacy. They will then be shown how to control who sees their content on social media (Facebook, Instagram, or WhatsApp Status).

Tips for the facilitator:
Encourage discussion and debate among participants, intervening only when requested and to draw conclusions.

Focus on digital reputation: in other words, "Everything we publish leaves a trace. Even if we delete it, it may already have been saved by others."

Choose only one social media platform at a time, the one most used by the group. If participants have phones, invite them to try it out live to see how many people can see your latest photo/post/story.

Step 3 : Chat, messages and groups: online scams (20 minutes)

Activity:

Real or simulated situations are presented in which messages or requests are received from strangers, such as:

"You have won a 100€ voucher!"

"Hi beautiful, want to be friends?"

"Click here to retrieve your package."

And participants are invited to discuss

"Would you respond? Why?"

"Does this seem real or fake?"

"Have you ever received messages like this?"

Logos and screenshots that look very similar to the real ones are shown, with messages that appear to have been sent by public bodies/banks.

Encourage participants to discuss online scams and think about their WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram settings, and how many people can see their number, profile picture, last time they were online, etc.

Open a discussion on the feasibility/necessity of blocking/reporting a contact, paying attention to messages, and whether it is advisable to only open emails or click on links.

Tips for the facilitator:
Use examples that are relevant to the participants (e.g., fake messages from the post office, social security, couriers, banks).

Do not insist on using technology if someone has difficulty; have participants work in pairs, trying to pair someone with more experience with someone less experienced.

Have participants work in pairs to set up a new WhatsApp/Facebook/Instagram profile based on what they have seen and evaluate messages/emails received and how to block/report contacts.

Intervene only when requested and to provide support, not to criticize or judge.

Step 4 : Games, forums and new online friends (20 minutes)

Activity:

To help participants understand the risks associated with requests to participate in games, forums or make new friends, the facilitator will show three fake profiles (printed images or slides) with strange details: no real photos, implausible friends, generic information, links to games.

Guiding questions:

- – Does this profile convince you?
- – What makes you suspicious?
- – What would you look for to determine if it is real?
- – Would you participate in this game?

A chat between teenagers will then be presented, which may reveal something suspicious by analysing and evaluating any warning signs

For all activities, participants will work in three groups (two groups of three and one group of four). At the end of the discussions, one representative from each group will report on what emerged from their group.

Tips for the facilitator:

The facilitator does not influence the group, intervenes only to clarify and does not judge any type of response, takes note of it and only guides the group towards drawing correct conclusions.

Always use simple language and avoid technical terms.

Also value the informal skills of those who do not use digital technology.

Step 5 : Security settings: tools to protect yourself (20 minutes)

Activity:

Participants are asked to assess how security tools can be incorporated into their online activities and the most common mistakes made when creating passwords as security tools.

Participants will be asked to check their smartphones:

Is there a PIN/screen lock enabled?

Is the operating system up to date?

Are the apps up to date?

What type of passwords do you use to access online services?

A discussion will then be held to assess the security of some passwords, the use of a password archive and to explain what two-factor authentication is.

The discussions, in which all participants will be expected to collaborate, will highlight all security settings.

Participants will assess, based on their online groups and apps, whether and when it is appropriate to grant permissions and contacts. They will set up secure passwords for their online services and use a password archive.

Tips for the facilitator:

The facilitator will only intervene to provide explanations regarding password security, use of the archive and two-factor authentication.

Step 6 : Conclusion and Wrapping-up (20 minutes)

Activity:

The activities carried out with this module aimed to promote conscious and respectful behaviour, focusing attention and discussion on personal and others' privacy, including a discussion on posting photos in which third parties are present.

Each participant was also asked to indicate three rules for their own privacy and safe browsing and to share them with the whole group at the end of the activity.

Supporting documentation for Learning Circle 2

Test Step 1

N.	Activity	Safe	Unsafe	I don't know
1	Using WhatsApp or another messaging app			
2	Sharing photos with friends or family			
3	Liking things on Facebook or Instagram			
4	Posting something (photos, videos, comments)			
5	Responding to messages from unknown people			
6	Checking who can see what I post .			
7	Visiting a website without checking the URL			
8	Giving up banking details online (IBAN)			
9	Giving up your credit card PIN number online			
10	Posting your travel plans online when you are away from home			

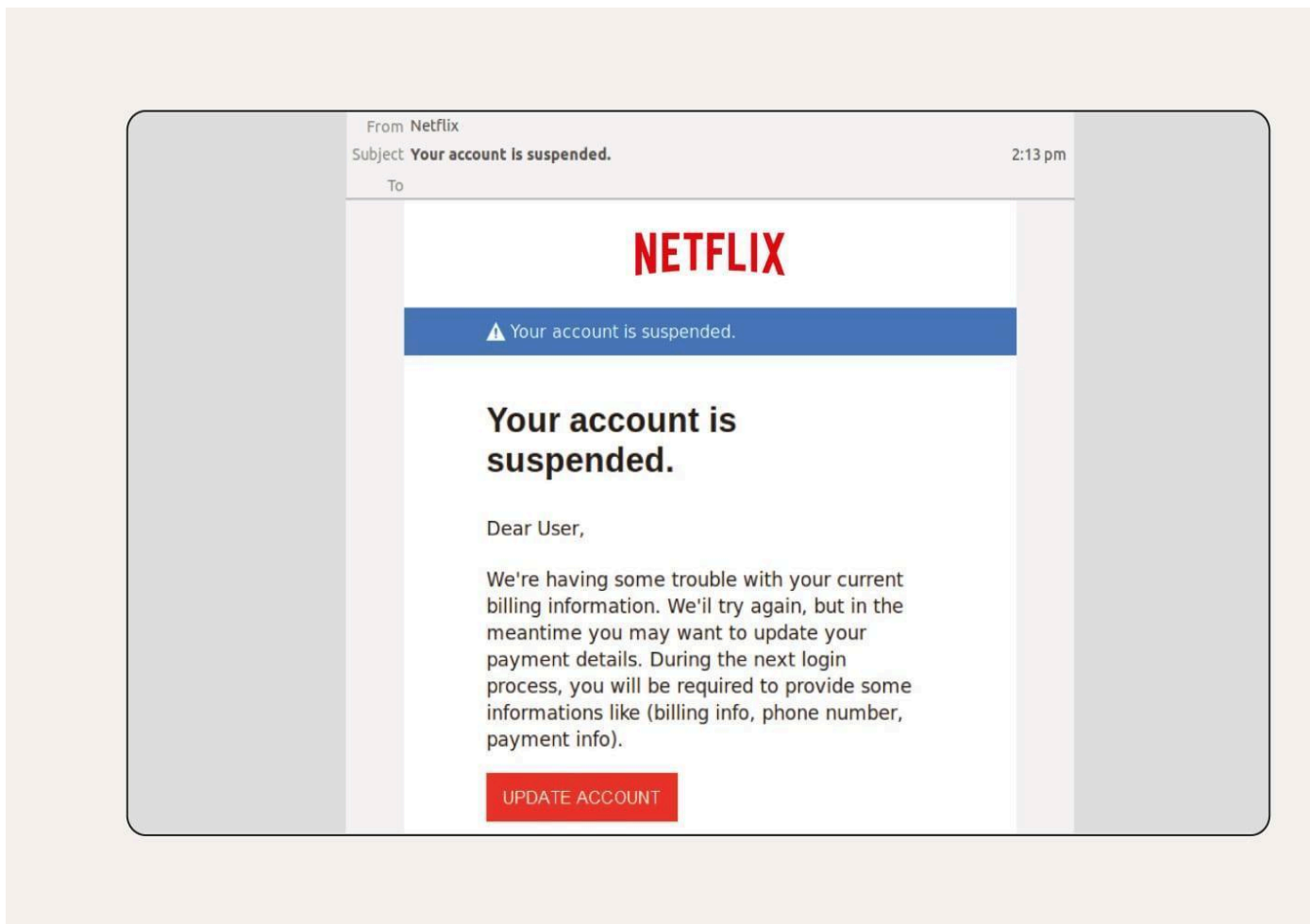## Step 3: chat, messages and groups : online scam

Source: www.us.norton.com

Example 1
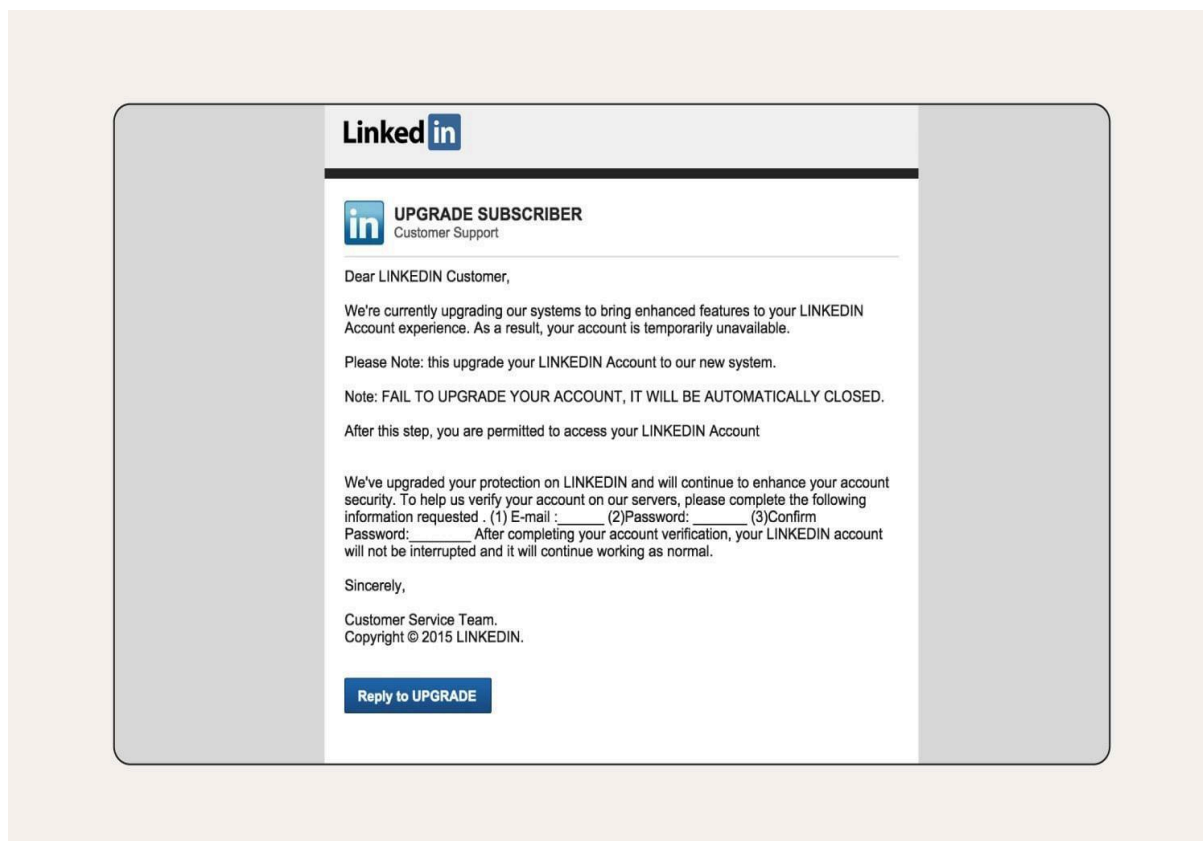
In this LinkedIn scam, the user's name isn't specified in the greeting, which means it's likely sent to multiple email addresses in bulk. The business name is in all capital letters throughout the email, which is not their trademark or branding. There are multiple grammar issues, which is uncommon for a reputable organization. LinkedIn will also never ask you for your password via email.

Example 2

From **Netflix**
Subject **Your account is suspended.**   2:13 pm
To

NETFLIX

⚠ Your account is suspended.

Your account is suspended.

Dear User,

We're having some trouble with your current billing information. We'il try again, but in the meantime you may want to update your payment details. During the next login process, you will be required to provide some informations like (billing info, phone number, payment info).

UPDATE ACCOUNT

There are spelling and grammar mistakes throughout the email. The customer's name is missing from the greeting and the "To:" field is completely blank, meaning the email was likely part of a larger phishing campaign sent to multiple email addresses.

Example 3
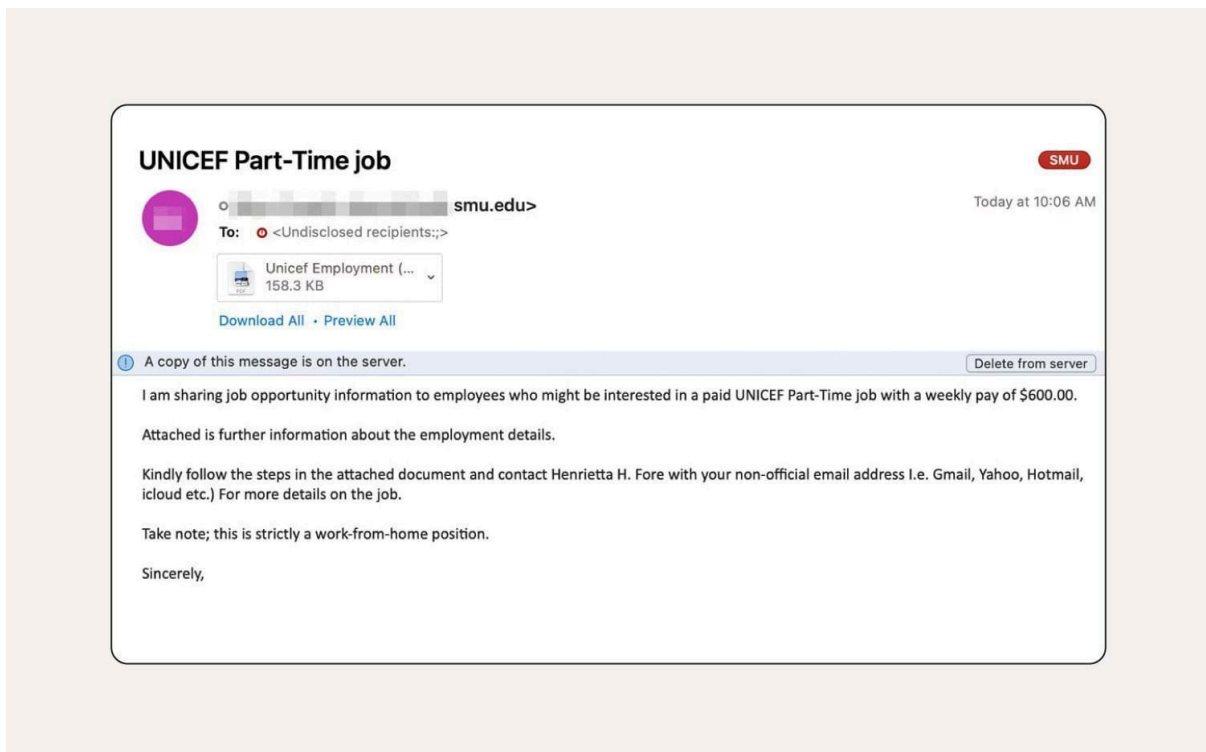
You can identify this fake job email because it's sent from a suspicious email address—it should come from a .org instead of a .edu address. There are also some grammar issues, which you wouldn't expect from UNICEF. The email has been sent to a work email (presumably to look like it's from a headhunter), but they ask the recipient to provide their personal email. Finally, the attachment is titled "Unicef Employment," which doesn't match the organization's branding.

Step 4: Games, forums and new friends

Example 1

Source: www.tech.co

Example 2

Source: www.nanopress.it
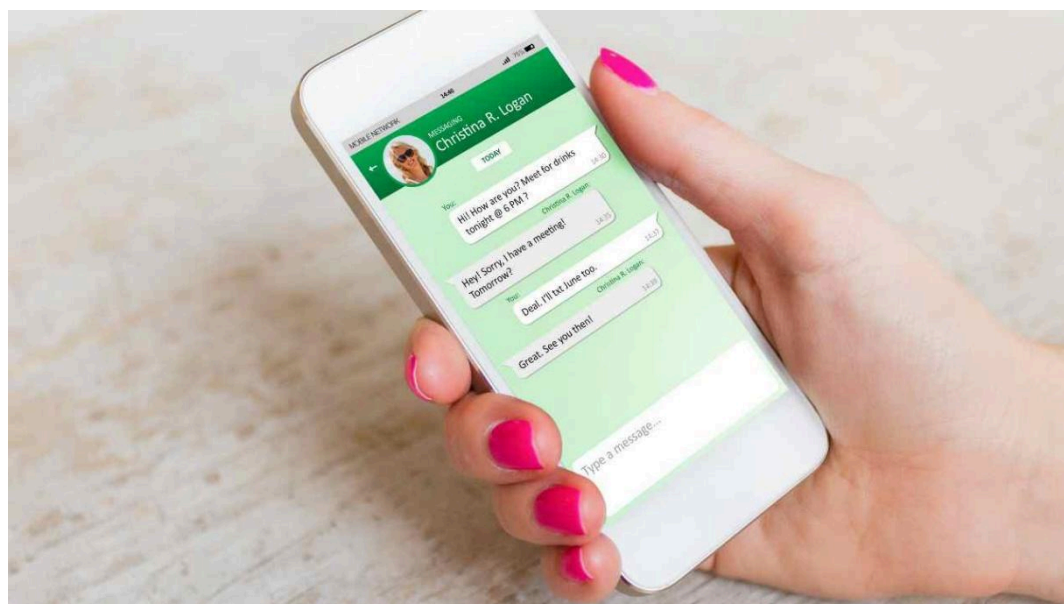
Learning circle 3: Online collaboration

Duration:	2 hours (6X20 minutes)	**Material needed:**
Number of participants:	12 participants and 1 facilitator	– Laptops or tablets with internet access, – Projector/screen, – Whiteboard or flipchart, – Markers – Pre-created Google accounts (if needed), – Example files and images for sharing practice.

Step 1: Needs assessment (20 minutes)

Activity:

Begin with a group discussion to understand participants' current experiences and comfort levels with online tools. Use guiding questions such as:
- "Have you ever shared a photo online?"
- "What platforms do you use to talk with family or friends?"
- "Have you joined a video call before?".

Then ask participants to complete a short self-assessment questionnaire (paper or digital) rating their confidence in tasks like sending photos, joining online calls, or uploading files. A copy of this self-assessment survey is included in 3.1 (below).

Tips for the facilitator:

This session should be implemented as a focus group. Participants should be involved in a self-assessment process.

To facilitate this session effectively, please complete the following steps:
- Create a safe and open atmosphere where participants feel comfortable sharing both their strengths and challenges.
- Use the feedback to tailor your facilitation throughout the session.
- Reassure participants that no prior experience is required and that the goal is to learn together.

Step 2: Uploading to Google Photos (20 minutes)

Activity:

In this activity, you will demonstrate how to use Google Photos to upload and share an image. Participants will then practice uploading one photo from their device and sharing it through a link or directly with another participant. Throughout this activity, it is important that you encourage them to describe what the picture means to them to add a social, narrative element.

To deliver this activity, you can complete the following steps:

Before You Start:

Make sure each participant:
- Has access to a device (laptop, tablet, or smartphone)
- Is connected to the internet
- Has a Google account (Gmail)
- Has a photo saved on their device (you can provide example images if needed)

Part 1: Uploading a Photo to Google Photos

Guide each participant through these steps:
- Open Google Photos
- Go to: https://photos.google.com
- Sign in with your Google account if you're not already logged in.
- Click the "Upload" Button
- On the top-right corner, click the "Upload" button (upward arrow with a line).
- Select "Computer" (or "Device" on mobile).
- Choose a Photo
- Browse your device to find the photo you want to upload.
- Click on it and then click "Open" (or tap "Select" on mobile).
- Wait for the Upload to Complete
- You'll see a message when your photo has been successfully uploaded.

Part 2: Sharing a Photo via Link or Directly

Guide each participant through these steps:

- Option 1: Share via Link
   o Find and click on the photo
   o In your Google Photos library, click on the photo you just uploaded.
   o Click the "Share" icon
   o Look for the "Share" icon (a triangle made of dots or "<" symbol with dots).
   o Click it.
   o Select "Create Link"
   o Click "Create link".
   o Once the link is generated, click "Copy".
   o Send the link to a partner
   o Paste the link in an email, chat or document and share it with another participant.
- Option 2: Share directly with a Google Account
   o Click the "Share" icon on the photo

o   Type the Gmail address of the person
o   Type the email of another participant (if known).
o   Click "Send".

Part 3: Storytelling Prompt

Ask participants to describe their photo in 1–2 sentences when sharing it. You can prompt them with:
- Why did you choose this photo?
- What memory or feeling does it represent

Tips for the facilitator:

- Make sure everyone can log into a Google account.
- Have sample images ready for those who may not have any on their device (sample photographs are included in 3.2 (below).
- Walk through the process step-by-step using a screen share or projector, and support participants who need extra help.
- Walk around and provide 1-on-1 help to anyone who needs support.
- Reinforce that there are no right or wrong photos — the goal is connection and practice.

Step 3: Getting familiar with Google Meet (20 minutes)

Activity:

In this activity, you will introduce Google Meet and demonstrate how to join a call, turn on/off the microphone or camera, and use the chat function. To deliver this activity, you can start by breaking participants into small groups to join short "practice calls" where they introduce themselves and share something light (e.g., their favourite food or hobby).

To deliver this activity, you can complete the following steps:

Before You Start:

Make sure each participant:
- Has access to a device with a microphone and (ideally) a camera
- Is connected to the internet
- Has a Google account (Gmail)
- Is using a supported browser (Google Chrome is best)

Part 1: Joining a Google Meet Call

Guide each participant through these steps:

- Open Google Meet
  o   Go to https://meet.google.com
  o   Or, open the Google Meet app on a mobile device
- Sign In

- o Sign in using your Google account (if prompted)
- ▪ Join a Meeting
  - o If the facilitator has shared a link, click the link (e.g., https://meet.google.com/sgb-hmoh-bex)
  - o Or, click "Join or start a meeting" and enter the code provided
- ▪ Allow Camera and Microphone Access
  - o The browser may ask for permission to use your camera and microphone
  - o Click "Allow" when prompted

Part 2: Using Meet Controls

Guide each participant through using these basic features of Google Meet, once they are in the call:

Control	What It Does
Microphone icon	Click to mute/unmute yourself
Camera icon	Click to turn your video on or off
Chat icon (speech bubble)	Opens the chat window to type messages
Leave call (red phone)	Click to exit the meeting

Part 3: Practice Activity – Small Group Introduction Calls

- ▪ Divide into Groups
  - o The facilitator will assign you to a small group (2–3 people)
- ▪ Join Your Group Call
  - o Each group will receive a separate Google Meet link to join
- ▪ Introduce Yourselves
  - o Take turns saying your name and answering a fun question, like:
    - ▪ What's your favourite food?
    - ▪ Where is one place you would most like to visit?
    - ▪ What song always makes you smile or brings fond memories?
- ▪ Try the Tools
  - o Practice muting/unmuting yourself
  - o Turn the camera on/off
  - o Send a message in the chat (e.g., "Hi from [Your Name]")
- ▪ Return to Main Room
  - o After 5–10 minutes, return to the main call by closing your group tab

Tips for the facilitator:
- Make sure that everyone has headphones or is in a quiet space to avoid audio issues.
- Encourage participants to experiment with features like changing the view layout or raising their hand virtually.
- Offer encouragement and normalise any technical hiccups.
- Try to pair confident participants with those needing support
- Monitor groups for technical issues
- Debrief in the main call: ask what was easy, what was tricky, and what they learned

Step 4: Sharing files through Google Drive (20 minutes)

Activity:

Through this activity, you will explain what Google Drive is and how it can be used to upload and share documents. In delivering this activity, you will ask participants to think of a poem that they like or recipe that they use regularly, and to upload this simple file (recipe or poem) and share it with a partner. Through this activity, they will also explore how to set permissions (view, comment, edit).

To deliver this activity, you can complete the following steps:

Before You Start:

Make sure each participant:
- Has a Google account (Gmail)
- Has a device with internet access
- Has or can create a simple text file (a poem, a recipe, or a short note)
- Is signed in at https://drive.google.com

Part 1: What is Google Drive? (Facilitator Introduction)

Here you should start by explaining briefly:

- Google Drive is a free cloud-based tool where you can store, organise, and share files online
- It supports documents, images, spreadsheets, and more
- You can access your files from any device with internet

Part 2: Uploading a Document to Google Drive

Here, you can guide participants through the following steps, or if some pair partners or peers know how to use Google Drive already, then match them with a peer who doesn't know how to use it to encourage peer learning:

- Go to Google Drive
  o Open your browser and go to https://drive.google.com

- Click "+ New" (top-left corner)
  - Select "File upload"
- Choose a file to upload
  - Find a document on your device — a favourite recipe, poem, or something similar.
  - Click "Open" and wait for it to upload (you'll see it appear in "My Drive")

Part 3: Sharing the Document

As above, here you can guide participants through these steps, or a more experienced peer can guide them alternatively.

- Right-click on the uploaded file
  - Choose "Share" from the menu
- Add a partner's email address
  - Type the email address of the person you want to share with
  - Choose their access level:
    - Viewer – can only read
    - Commenter – can comment but not change
    - Editor – can make changes
- Click "Send"
  - They'll get an email with a link to the file

Alternative: Create a Shareable Link

- Click "Copy link" in the share window
- Under "General access," click "Restricted" and change it to:
  - "Anyone with the link"
  - Then choose Viewer, Commenter, or Editor
- Share the link via chat or email

Part 4: Participant Activity – Upload & Share a Poem or Recipe

Lastly, in this part of the activity, you can guide learners through complete these steps, or a more experienced peer can facilitate this session:

- Ask participants to think of a poem or recipe, and explain to them that it could be something they love, or something simple like a note or a memory. Then they should complete these steps:
  - Type or copy it into a Word Document or Google Doc
  - Upload the file to your Google Drive (See Part 2)
  - Share it with a partner (See Part 3)
  - Explore 'Permission Settings'
    - Change the file access from "Viewer" to "Editor"
    - Let your partner leave a comment or even add a note

Tips for the facilitator:
- Use simple, relatable file examples that are easy to find or create.

- Emphasise safe sharing practices and explain what "private" vs "public" settings mean.
- Walk around to provide hands-on support as needed.
- Offer help to anyone having trouble uploading or finding files
- Encourage storytelling: Why did you choose this recipe or poem?

Step 5: Online Collaboration Challenge! (20 minutes)

Activity:

In this activity, you will divide the group into smaller teams or peer partnerships, so that participants complete a mini 'online collaboration challenge'. In this challenge, participants will create a shared Google Doc where they list 3 things they have in common. Working in their peer partnerships, they must them partner with another pair and communicate using Google Meet, share their Google Doc through Google Drive and discuss what they have in common with their peer partner on the Google Meet call; all working together in real time.

To deliver this activity, you can complete the following steps:

Before You Start:

Make sure each participant:
- Has a Google account
- Can access Google Drive, Google Docs, and Google Meet
- Has headphones (recommended for small group calls)
- Is part of a device-sharing pair or group

Part 1: Forming Pairs and Teams

Here you should facilitate these steps directly:

- Create peer pairs
  o Divide participants into pairs (or trios if uneven)
  o Each pair will work closely together for this activity
- Assign teams
  o Combine two peer pairs to form a team of four
  o These teams will later collaborate in a shared Google Meet call

Part 2: Create and Share a Google Doc

Here, should explain these steps to participants, but do not guide them as this is a challenge to test what they have learned. They can ask questions if they are struggling, and they can be guided by their peers:

- One Person per pair creates a Google Doc
  o Open https://docs.google.com
  o Click "Blank" to create a new document
  o Title it: "3 Things We Have in Common – [Your Names]"
- Brainstorm together

- o With their partner, each pair types three things they have in common
- o (e.g., love of music, speaks two languages, prefers tea to coffee)
  - ▪ Share the Google Doc with their partner
    - *o* Click "Share" (top right corner)
    - *o* Type in the email address of the partner and give them Editor access

Part 3: Team Up and Join a Google Meet Call

As above, here you cannot guide participants, but rather you are just outlining the steps they should complete on their own, unless they get stuck and run into issues:

- ▪ Facilitator assigns a team a Google Meet link:
  - o Each team of four gets a Google Meet link (sent via chat, email, or document)
- ▪ Both pairs join the call together:
  - o Each participant joins the call with their mic and camera on (if possible)

Part 4: Cross-Pair Collaboration in Real Time

As above, here you cannot guide participants, but rather you are just outlining the following steps:

- ▪ Share Docs across the team
  - o One pair shares their Google Doc with the other pair via email or by copying the shareable link into the Meet chat
  - o The second pair does the same
- ▪ Review and compare
  - o Each pair reads the other's document
  - o Together, all four participants:
    - ▪ Discuss similarities
    - ▪ Ask questions
    - ▪ Add a final bullet point to each document: "One new thing we all have in common"
- ▪ Edit documents in real time
  - o All four participants can now type into both shared Docs live

Tips for the facilitator:
- – Frame this as a fun team-building activity.
- – Encourage participants to troubleshoot together before asking for help, to build confidence and peer learning.
- – Prepare Meet links and a backup tech support plan in advance
- – Check that everyone understands how to create, share, and edit Google Docs
- – Monitor Meet rooms briefly to ensure everyone is on track

Step 6 : Conclusion and Wrapping-up (20 minutes)

Activity:

To close this learning circle, you can facilitate a group reflection where each participant shares one new thing they learned and one thing they want to practice more. You should also distribute copies of the self-assessment from Step 1 if completed on paper, or share the findings to the online survey if completed online, and invite participants to work on their own to update their responses on a new version of the form, now that they have completed this learning circle. This will help them to track and to value the learning that they have completed through these activities.

Tips for the facilitator:
- Celebrate progress, no matter how small.
- Emphasise that learning takes time and encourage ongoing practice.
- Consider creating a shared online folder where participants can stay connected and continue practicing their skills beyond the session.

Supporting documentation for Learning Circle 3

3.1   Self-Assessement Checklist: Online Collaboration Skills

Name (optional): _____

Date: _____

Part 1: Confidence with Online Tools

Please rate how confident you feel completing each of the following tasks.

Task	1 Not at all confident	2 Slightly confident	3 Somewhat confident	4 Confident	5 Very confident
Sharing a photo online	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Joining a video call	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Muting/unmuting on a call	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Uploading a file to the cloud	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sharing a document or file with others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Working together with others on the	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

same document (e.g. Google Docs)					

Part 2: Familiarity with Collaboration Tools

Tick the tools you have used before, and circle the ones you feel comfortable using.

- ☐ Google Drive
- ☐ Google Photos
- ☐ Google Meet
- ☐ Zoom
- ☐ WhatsApp
- ☐ Microsoft Teams
- ☐ Other: _____

Part 3: Attitudes Towards Online Collaboration

Please tick the box that best describes how much you agree with the following statements.

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am open to trying new online tools.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I enjoy learning how to use technology.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel nervous about participating in online meetings.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I think online tools can help me stay connected with others.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Part 4: Reflection Questions (Only for the final reflection activity, not for Step 1):

1. What do you find easy about using online tools?

_____

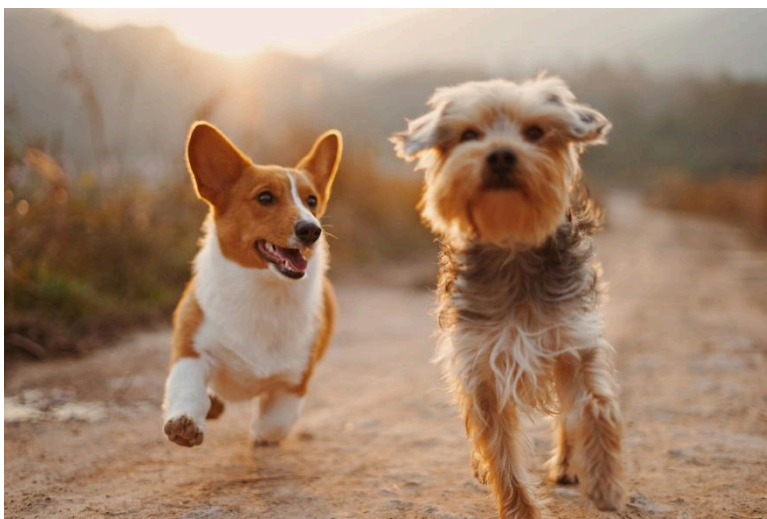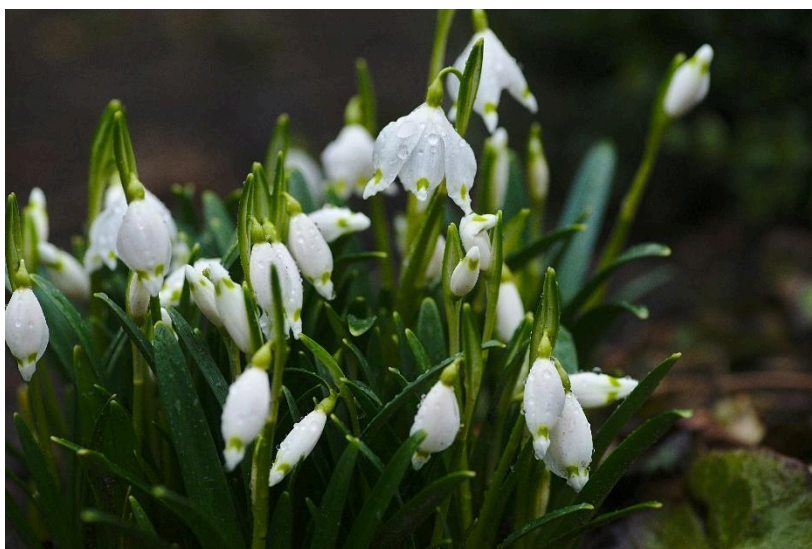_____

2. What do you find most challenging?

_____

_____

3. What would you like to learn or improve during future learning circles?

_____

_____

3.2 Sample Photographs for Step 2 – All from Unsplash.com:

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