

Developing the empowerment competence through RE.M.I.D.A. model

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The concept of “continuing education” is linked to a learning process that is repeated on an ongoing basis with the aim of acquiring knowledge, skills and competences so that the individual can develop socially, culturally and economically (Jarvis, 2012). The societal changes created the need for continuous education and lifelong learning in the whole professional life of each employee. Further, in many cases and especially for the unemployed, people need a second 'opportunity' that will allow them to restart their professional career, or with groups in danger of social exclusion, usually found outside the borders of the traditional education system that need an entry point for the labour market.

The need for better-trained and more motivated employees, who will be able to act independently and apply their skills in addition to the use of flexible technologies and work processes, has given impetus to new methods of developing human resource skills. In many cases, employers do not require, as a qualification, the simple existence of competent academic knowledge but also practical knowledge and application of this knowledge in the field of work. Employers are also looking for a set of behavioural skills that are not taught in formal education nor are they part of traditional academic analytical programs, such as problem-solving skills, communication skills, and interpersonal and leadership skills (Hodzic, et al., 2015). These skills can be developed through adult-oriented training programs, which are developed and implemented by specialized adult educators.

One of the key skills for improving employability is considered empowerment (Kinlaw, 1995) The concept of empowerment is a multifaceted term, widely used, the definition of which varies, depending on the researchers and the specific context (educational, social, cultural, political, psychological, etc.) used each time. Empowerment can be perceived as a process, as a product, as an approach or as a goal. empowerment is linked to broader social, economic and cultural rights. Individuals are active citizens who seek empowerment within a recognized framework of inequality and in relation to a common purpose (Pruijt, & Yerkes, 2014). Developing training programs that will develop empowerment or similar skills is quite challenging.

This paper presented the RE.M.I.D.A. project methodology that can be used for developing the “empowerment” skill. The project "Re.M.I.D.A. Renewed Models for the Inclusion of Disadvantaged Adults" was created to support the social and working inclusion of adults 45+ at risk of exclusion (e.g. people with low qualifications, those with obsolete skills, immigrants) (<https://remidaproject.eu/>). RE.M.I.D.A. model is an adaption of Lego Serious Play (LSP), a well-established serious game (Kristiansen, & Rasmussen, 2014). The LSP is a methodology built as a tool to unlock imagination and innovation within the company and use it for various purposes (e.g. developing team working, business modelling). The method nurtures the idea that everyone in an organization can contribute to outcomes because bricks encourage exploration and suspend hierarchy for better, more effective communication. By building visual 3D metaphors, LSP unlocks innovative solutions through storytelling and experimentation. In this way play is a serious activity that can unleash

imagination so sorely needed in the competitive context we're living in. RE.M.I.D.A. model has been used in groups of unemployed adults with promising results.

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