

H-OST

Trainer's Guide

Module 4: Support Management

Project Number: 2022-1-CY01-KA220-VET-000086365

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

Using the HOST Trainer's Guide

The HOST Trainer's Guide has been designed specifically to support and streamline the delivery of the Vocational Education Curriculum developed in the context of the HOST project. The Curriculum constitutes a 2-day course, a total of 18 hours of training.

Slide no. 1: Introduction



Trainer's Notes: Introduction

Introduce yourself and dedicate some time to introduce learners to the HOST training course. Describe the learning objectives of the course as well as Module 4; learners will be educated on creating an inclusive environment for employees with autism in hospitality, managing autism-friendly teams, understanding the impact of autism in the workplace, implementing tailored training sessions, utilizing tools for continuous adaptation, and promoting collaboration among diverse team members.

Give learners the opportunity to introduce themselves and ask about their expectations.

Slide no. 2: About the HOST Project

Module 4: Support Management

The HOST Project aims to train Hospitality Managers and HR Experts in managing and developing staff with autism.

Project Results:

- Comprehensive Training Course
- A VET Delivery Methodology
- A Board Game for Neurodiverse Hospitality Teams


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Trainer's Notes: Talk about the HOST Project

- This slide provides an overview of the HOST Project and its objectives.
- Begin by explaining that the HOST Project stands for "Hospitality Opportunities for Supporting Transitions." It is a European project aimed at promoting inclusion in the hospitality sector.
- Mention the main goals of the project:
 - To support the employment of people with autism in the hospitality industry.
 - To develop training materials and methodologies for hospitality managers and HR experts.
 - To create an inclusive environment in the workplace.
- Highlight the collaborative nature of the project, involving partners from different countries and sectors.
- Explain that the project has produced valuable resources and training materials, including the course they are currently taking.

Slide no. 3: Module Content

The graphic for Module 4: Support Management features a central illustration of a wooden desk with a smartphone, a smartphone, and a smartphone. The desk is surrounded by various geometric shapes and patterns, including a large red triangle with a white dotted pattern, a blue zigzag line, and a blue dotted pattern. The H-OST logo is visible in the bottom right corner of the graphic, and the Erasmus+ logo is in the bottom left corner.

Module 4: Support Management

Module 4 Aim

Empower hospitality managers to foster an inclusive workplace for employees with Autism. Learn training, inclusion, adaptation, and team management strategies for a thriving environment.

Learning Outcomes

1. Create an inclusive environment for employees with Autism.
2. Lead and manage autism-friendly teams effectively.
3. Understand the challenges and strengths of Autism in the hospitality sector.

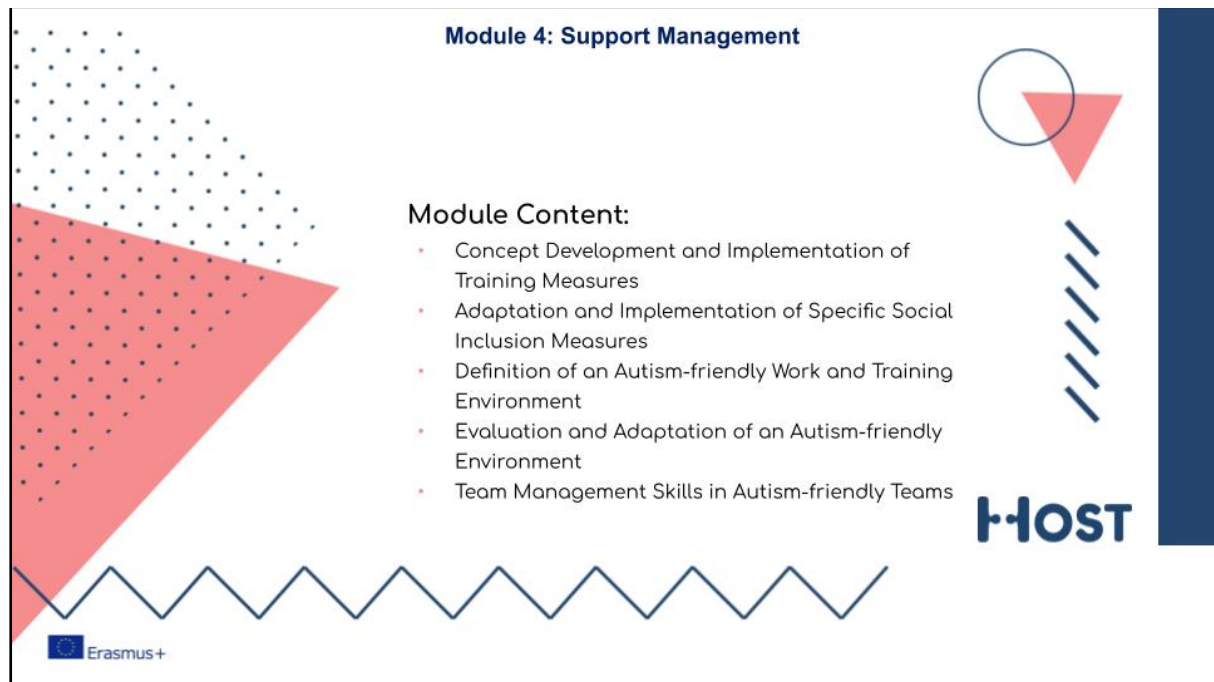
Trainer's Notes: Describe the Aims and Learning Outcomes of the Course.

This Module is about learning to create an inclusive workplace for employees with Autism in the hospitality industry.

Learning Outcomes:

- Create an inclusive environment for employees with Autism.
- Lead and manage autism-friendly teams effectively.
- Understand the challenges and strengths of Autism in the hospitality sector.

Slide no. 4: Module Content



The slide features a decorative background with a red triangle on the left, a dotted pattern, and a blue zigzag line at the bottom. The Erasmus+ logo is in the bottom left corner. On the right, there is a vertical blue bar and a graphic consisting of a circle, a red triangle, and a series of blue diagonal lines. The H-OST logo is also present on the right side.

Module 4: Support Management

Module Content:

- Concept Development and Implementation of Training Measures
- Adaptation and Implementation of Specific Social Inclusion Measures
- Definition of an Autism-friendly Work and Training Environment
- Evaluation and Adaptation of an Autism-friendly Environment
- Team Management Skills in Autism-friendly Teams

Trainer's Notes: Discuss the content of Module 4

This module will educate learners on:

- Concept Development and Implementation of Training Measures.
- Adaptation and Implementation of Specific Social Inclusion Measures.
- Definition of an Autism-friendly Work and Training Environment.
- Evaluation and Adaptation of an Autism-friendly Environment.
- Team Management Skills in Autism-friendly Teams.

Slide no.5: Challenges of Autism in the Hospitality Sector

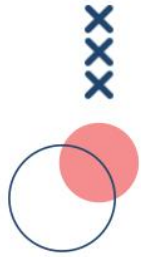
Module 4: Support Management

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Challenges of Autism in the Hospitality Sector

- Limited access to tailored vocational education.
- Communication barriers in guest-centric roles.
- Prevalent biases and misconceptions about autism.
- Gap in employer understanding.
- Absence of roles harnessing unique abilities.
- Non-sensory-friendly work environments.
- Limited dedicated resources for sustained support.





Trainer's notes: Talk about the challenges of having autistic employees in the context of hospitality

In recent years, there has been a growing emphasis from Autism-related NGOs, Researchers, Therapists, and Socially Responsible Enterprises on the need to expand early-life interventions to provide comprehensive support throughout the Employment Cycle and beyond for individuals with Autism. However, many individuals with Autism, including those in the hospitality industry, often face challenges in securing and sustaining meaningful employment. These challenges can be attributed to several factors:

1. Lack of access to vocational education and training tailored to their needs.
2. Communication difficulties, particularly in guest-centric roles.
3. Pre-existing biases and misconceptions about autism.
4. Limited understanding from employers in the hospitality sector.
5. Absence of job roles and task descriptions that consider their unique strengths.
6. Work environments that may not always be sensory-friendly.
7. A lack of dedicated organizational resources for sustained support.

To address these barriers, Vocational Education and Training (VET) tailored for hospitality managers plays a crucial role. VET equips them with the skills, knowledge, competences, and tools needed to

provide enduring support to staff with Autism. This module will explore essential units, including tailored training measures, social inclusion, defining autism-friendly work environments, and team management skills within autism-friendly teams.

Slide no. 6: The solution



The solution

Tailored Vocational Education

- Vocational Education and Training (VET) tailored for hospitality managers.
- Equip managers with skills, knowledge, and tools.
- Focus areas: Tailored training, social inclusion, autism-friendly environments, and effective team management.

Trainer's Notes: Introduce the solution to address the challenges outlined earlier

- Start by highlighting that the solution to overcoming the barriers faced by individuals with Autism in the hospitality sector is Tailored Vocational Education.
- Explain what Vocational Education and Training (VET) is and emphasize that it is specifically tailored for hospitality managers.
- Mention that VET is designed to equip managers with the necessary skills, knowledge, and tools to support their staff effectively.
- Break down the focus areas of VET, which are crucial components of this module. These areas include:
 - Tailored Training: VET provides insights and strategies for developing training measures that cater to the unique needs of staff, including those with Autism.
 - Social Inclusion: VET emphasizes the importance of creating an inclusive environment where every team member, especially those with Autism, feels valued and integrated.

- Autism-Friendly Environments: VET guides managers in defining, implementing, and adapting work and training environments that are supportive of individuals with Autism.
- Effective Team Management: VET equips managers with skills to lead and manage teams that include members with Autism, ensuring smooth and efficient operations.
- Conclude by reiterating that Tailored Vocational Education is the key to fostering an inclusive and supportive workplace in the hospitality sector."

Slide no. 7: Unit 1 - Concept Development & Training Implementation

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Unit 1 - Concept Development & Training Implementation

Guidelines for Developing Training Measures

- Engage directly with employees, observe their work patterns, and gather feedback.
- Collaborate with autism experts and, if possible, autistic employees for insights.
- Emphasize practical sessions, like role-playing, to navigate complex social interactions.
- Establish a feedback mechanism to continually refine the training.




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Trainer's notes: Elaborate on the Guidelines for Developing Training Measures

In the realm of hospitality, creating effective training for employees with autism hinges on a deep understanding of their unique strengths and challenges. This understanding is fundamental to crafting training that resonates with their needs. As we delve into the guidelines for developing training measures, it's crucial to recognize that autism is a spectrum, and each individual is distinct. Consequently, a one-size-fits-all approach may not yield optimal results. To ensure training matches the specific needs of staff in the hospitality sector, consider the following:

1. Understanding Individual Needs: Before embarking on any training program, it's imperative to gain insight into the distinctive requirements of employees with autism working in settings such as hotels and restaurants. This entails direct communication with them, observation of their work processes, and soliciting feedback to inform your training approach.

- **Empathy and Customer Service:** Highlight the significance of empathy and exceptional customer service. Make sure that employees, including those with autism, are equipped with the skills to recognize and respond to a wide range of customer emotions. This capability is pivotal in creating memorable and positive guest interactions.
- **Navigating Team Dynamics:** Emphasize the importance of teamwork in the hospitality sector. Provide training that fosters a synergistic effect within diverse teams. This means helping employees, including those with autism, effectively collaborate with their colleagues to enhance overall team performance.
- **Continuous Learning and Adaptation:** Underscore the dynamic nature of the hospitality industry. Encourage the cultivation of a culture of continuous learning among employees. Stress the importance of staying updated with industry trends and evolving demands. This ensures that employees, regardless of their background, are always well-prepared to meet the changing needs of the industry.

Slide no. 9: Unit 2 - Social Inclusion in Hospitality

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Unit 2 - Social Inclusion in Hospitality

Significance of Inclusion for Individuals with Autism

- Every staff member shapes the guest experience.
- Unique strengths and perspectives of autistic employees can enhance guest interactions.

Trainer's Notes: Explain the importance of social inclusion for individuals with Autism and its positive impact on the hospitality industry.

- **Integral Role of Every Staff Member:** Emphasize that every staff member in hospitality, including those with autism, plays a crucial role because they interact with guests. Make it clear that ensuring every staff member feels valued and integrated is vital for the success of

the team. Use the analogy that a chain is only as strong as its weakest link to illustrate the importance of each staff member's contribution to the guest experience.

- **Recognizing Unique Strengths and Perspectives:** Encourage managers to recognize and embrace the unique strengths and perspectives that individuals with autism bring to the workplace. Explain that these unique viewpoints often lead to innovative solutions and a deeper understanding of guest needs. It's essential to convey that individuals with autism may see situations differently, and this fresh perspective can be a valuable asset.

Slide no. 10: Benefits of inclusivity

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Benefits of inclusivity

- Diverse perspectives leading to innovative solutions.
- Enhanced guest experiences with inclusive staff environments.
- A positive brand image appealing to both potential employees and guests.



Trainer's Notes: Highlight the benefits of fostering an inclusive environment for individuals with autism

- **Diverse Perspectives:** People with autism often possess unique ways of viewing situations. This can lead to innovative solutions and a deeper understanding of guest needs, which your learners should encourage and appreciate.
- **Enhanced Guest Experience:** Emphasize that an inclusive staff environment often translates to superior guest interactions. When employees, including those with autism, feel a sense of belonging, they tend to excel in their roles, positively impacting the overall guest experience.

- **Positive Brand Image:** Stress that establishments that prioritize inclusivity for all, including those with autism, are more attractive to potential employees and guests alike. A positive brand image can set the organization apart in the competitive hospitality industry.

Slide no. 11: Strategies & Action Steps for Inclusivity - Tailoring Inclusion Strategies for Autistic Individuals

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Strategies & Action Steps for Inclusivity

Tailoring Inclusion Strategies for Autistic Individuals

- Training
- Clear Communication
- Environment Considerations





Trainer's Notes: Explain the potential ways of tailoring social inclusion strategies specifically for individuals with autism in the hospitality industry

- **Training:** Start by emphasizing the importance of training sessions that focus on understanding autism and its impact on individuals. Your learners should organize these sessions to equip staff with knowledge about autism, fostering understanding and empathy among team members.
- **Clear Communication:** Encourage your learners to establish guidelines for effective communication that take into account the unique needs of individuals with autism. This may involve using clear and direct language, avoiding potential misinterpretations, and incorporating visual aids when necessary to enhance communication clarity.
- **Physical and Social Environment:** Stress the significance of creating an environment that caters to the sensory preferences of individuals with autism. Your learners should consider scheduling tasks during less busy times or designating quieter areas to provide sensory relief.


Additionally, encourage them to nurture a welcoming atmosphere where everyone, regardless of their background, appreciates each other's uniqueness and is willing to lend a helping hand when needed.

Slide no. 12: Strategies & Action Steps for Inclusivity - Promoting Inclusivity: Action Steps

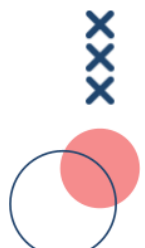
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Strategies & Action Steps for Inclusivity

Promoting Inclusivity: Action Steps



- Fair Recruitment
- Mentorship
- Regular Reviews




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- **Fair Recruitment:** When training managers, underscore the significance of ensuring transparent and unbiased recruitment processes. Advise managers to actively consider individuals with autism during the hiring process. Encourage them to establish inclusivity right from the beginning.
- **Mentorship Initiatives:** Highlight the importance of mentorship programs. Instruct managers, through your training, to pair new hires, particularly those with autism, with experienced employees. Clarify that this mentorship can facilitate smoother integration into the workplace and provide valuable support.
- **Regular Reviews:** Emphasize the need for continuous assessment and improvement. Train managers to periodically evaluate the effectiveness of their inclusion initiatives. Encourage them to actively seek feedback, especially from staff with autism, and use this feedback to make necessary adjustments. Stress that continuous improvement is vital to maintaining an inclusive environment.

By prioritizing these action steps for social inclusion, especially for individuals with autism, hospitality managers can create a welcoming and enriching environment for all employees.

Slide no. 13: Unit 3 - Autism-friendly Work & Training Environment - Characteristics

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Unit 3 - Autism-friendly Work & Training Environment

Characteristics of an Autism-friendly Work Environment

- Sensory Accommodations
- Clear Communication
- Flexibility and Routine
- Inclusive Culture
- Supportive Management



Trainer's Notes: Highlight the characteristics of an autism-friendly work environment

1. Sensory Accommodations:

- **Minimizing Sensory Overload:** Emphasize the importance of reducing sensory overload in hospitality establishments, especially during busy periods. Provide strategies such as reducing background noise to create a more comfortable environment for employees with autism.

- **Breaks for Overwhelm:** Highlight the need to allow autistic staff to take breaks when they feel overwhelmed. Managers should be aware of signs of overwhelm and support staff accordingly.

2. Clear Communication:

- **Clarity and Directness:** Stress the significance of clear and direct communication. Explain that individuals with autism benefit from straightforward communication.

- **Visual Aids and Written Instructions:** Encourage the use of visual aids and written instructions whenever possible. These tools enhance understanding and reduce ambiguity.

3. Flexibility and Routine:

- **Managing Schedule Changes:** Discuss the challenges individuals with autism may face with changes in schedules. Emphasize the importance of offering flexibility in scheduling and work arrangements while maintaining a consistent routine. Managers should be open to accommodating individual needs.

4. Inclusive Culture:

- **Education and Training:** Explain the need for education and training for colleagues to better understand and support individuals with autism. Managers should be proactive in providing such training to create a more inclusive culture.

- **Valuing Neurodiversity:** Emphasize the importance of promoting a workplace culture that values and accommodates the unique strengths and challenges of individuals with autism. Highlight that diversity is an asset to the team.

5. Supportive Management:

- **Identifying Overwhelm:** Instruct managers on how to identify signs of overwhelm in employees with autism. Explain the significance of being attentive and responsive to their needs.

- **Offering Support and Adjustments:** Guide managers on offering the right kind of support or adjustments when needed. Encourage them to be proactive in addressing challenges.


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Unit 4 - Evaluating an Autism-friendly Environment

Methods for Evaluating an Autism-friendly Environment

- • • Feedback Collection
- • • Observational Assessments
- • • Performance Metrics




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Trainer's Notes: Elaborate on the Methods for Evaluating an Autism-friendly environment

1. Feedback Collection:

- **Direct Feedback:** Emphasize the importance of hearing directly from those impacted by the autism-friendly initiatives. Managers should regularly collect feedback from all employees, with a specific focus on individuals with autism. This feedback is invaluable in understanding what is working well, what needs improvement, and where adjustments may be necessary.

2. Observational Assessments:

- **Importance of Observation:** Explain the significance of observing the work environment beyond just collecting feedback. Managers should take the time to observe how employees, including those with autism, navigate their roles and interact with others. This observation can reveal areas for improvement or challenges that may have been overlooked.

3. Performance Metrics:

- **Measuring Success:** Discuss the value of using performance metrics as a tangible measure of the environment's effectiveness. Managers should consider monitoring the performance and job satisfaction levels of employees, especially those with autism. These metrics can provide insights into the overall well-being and productivity of employees.

- **Relevant Metrics:** Provide examples of relevant metrics in the hospitality sector, such as guest satisfaction scores, service efficiency, and retention rates of employees with autism.

Explain that a combination of these methods allows for a comprehensive evaluation of the autism-friendly environment. Managers should understand that ongoing assessment is essential to ensure that their initiatives are making a positive impact on employees, including those with autism.

Slide no. 15: Feedback Mechanisms & Continuous Improvement

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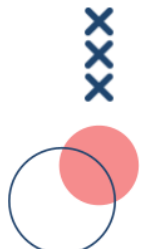
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Feedback Mechanisms & Continuous Improvement

Some strategies for continuous adaptation include:

- Surveys and Questionnaires
- Regular Review Meetings
- Action-Response System

Employing the right listening tools and acting on feedback ensures a continuously evolving work environment that meets the needs of all employees, especially those with autism.





Trainer's Notes: Describe to managers how to give constructive feedback

1. Surveys and Questionnaires:

- **Structured Feedback:** Explain the importance of using structured tools like surveys and questionnaires to gather comprehensive feedback from employees. These tools should be designed to capture specific insights into the effectiveness of current strategies and areas that may require improvement.
- **Anonymity:** Emphasize the need to ensure anonymity in these tools. Anonymity encourages employees, including those with autism, to provide honest and candid responses without fear of repercussions. Honest feedback is essential for meaningful improvements.

2. Regular Review Meetings:

- **Open Discussions:** Describe the benefits of organizing periodic review meetings where employees can openly discuss their experiences in the work environment. These meetings serve as a platform for employees to share their perspectives, voice their challenges, and offer suggestions for improvement.
- **Sense of Belonging:** Highlight that such interactions foster a sense of belonging among employees. Ensuring that their concerns are addressed promptly demonstrates a commitment to their well-being and inclusion.

3. Action-Response System:

- **Transparency:** Explain the importance of having a transparent action-response system in place. Managers should ensure that employees can see tangible changes or improvements made based on their feedback. This transparency instills confidence in the feedback process and reassures employees that their input is valued.
- **Continuous Evolution:** Stress that the work environment should continuously evolve to meet the needs of all employees, especially those with autism. The action-response system should facilitate ongoing improvements.

Encourage managers to use these listening tools effectively to gather feedback and create an environment where employees can express their feelings and experiences. Analyzing this data helps identify areas of success and those in need of attention. Acting on this information in a timely manner ensures that the work environment remains conducive and supportive for all, including individuals with autism.

Slide no. 16: Unit 5 - Team Management Skills in Autism-friendly Teams - Understanding Neuro-diverse Team Dynamics

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Unit 5 - Team Management Skills in Autism-friendly Teams

Teams are the backbone of the hospitality sector. When these teams include members with autism, understanding and managing them effectively is crucial.

Understanding Neuro-diverse Team Dynamics

- Communication Styles
- Sensory Experiences
- Structured Interactions





Trainer's Notes: Explain how to better manage neuro-diverse teams

- **Strengths and Challenges:** Explain that autism introduces a distinctive combination of strengths and challenges in the workplace. Emphasize the importance of managers recognizing and appreciating these nuances to create a conducive work environment.
- **Communication Styles:** Highlight that individuals with autism often have distinct communication styles. They may prefer clear and direct instructions. Additionally, visual aids can be extremely helpful for them. Encourage trainers to promote effective communication techniques that cater to these preferences.
- **Sensory Considerations:** Describe how sensory experiences, which are prevalent in the bustling hospitality environment, can be particularly intense for some individuals with autism. Suggest that simple adjustments, such as modifying lighting or creating quiet zones, can significantly enhance their comfort and well-being.
- **Structured Social Interactions:** Stress the importance of social interactions in the hospitality sector and the challenges they can pose for individuals with autism. Advise learners to emphasise the need for structured and predictable social interactions. This approach can greatly ease the challenges associated with interpersonal communication.

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Exercise 1

Case Study 1: The case of Linda

Linda is a 25-year-old autistic woman who was recently hired as a housekeeper at a 4-star hotel. Linda is very energetic and willing to work, and is always responding to the requests of her colleagues when they require assistance. Linda works together with Judy and Christina; Judy and Christina have been working at the hotel for more than 15 years and are very familiar with the space and daily routine. Since Linda's hiring, the hotel director, Mr. Piers, tasked them with training her so she can get accustomed to the layout of the rooms and learn the proper cleaning, washing and disinfecting procedures as fast as possible.

Linda has met quite a few people from other departments of the hotel and they became good friends. They hang out during lunch breaks, chatting and socialising. During a recent lunch break, Linda told one of her friends, Joshua, that she feels that Christina and Judy are 'bossing her around' and that she also feels that she is being treated like she is their personal employee. Linda claimed that Judy and Christina send her to do work in rooms that are not in her area of responsibilities, and they frequently ask her to fetch them cleaning supplies from the storeroom, which has a very strong smell of chemicals. Linda also claimed that she is hesitating to report her concerns because she is afraid that as a newcomer, she will be an easy target and the situation will escalate further.

The next day, Joshua requested a private meeting with Mr. Piers, and informed him of Linda's situation.

Exercise Guidelines


Assign the class in groups of 2-4 people, and ask them to read and discuss the case study above. Then, ask the learners to answer the following questions and present their conclusions to the rest of the class. In order to enhance learning and enrich the discussions, you may direct learners to refer back to the content of Module 4.

Questions

1. What steps would you take to address the claims and concerns of Linda in order to help her resolve the conflict with Judy and Christina?

2. Is there a procedure that could be established in order to clarify the roles, responsibilities and available support for Linda?
3. How would you manage the behaviour of Judy and Christina, without leaving Linda exposed to further issues with them?
4. Are there any strategies you would implement in order to foster a more inclusive and accepting work environment without singling out Judy and Christina?


Slide no. 17: Strategies for Effective Team Management - Promoting Collaboration & Understanding

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Strategies for Effective Team Management

Promoting Collaboration & Understanding

- Training
- Clear Communication
- Sensory Considerations
- Routine & Change
- Valuing Every Member





Trainer's Notes: Discuss how to promote collaboration and understanding within a team

- **Autism Awareness Training:** Begin by emphasizing the importance of autism awareness training for all team members. Suggest that managers initiate simple training sessions to foster understanding among the team. This foundational step sets the stage for a more inclusive work environment.
- **Clear Communication:** Highlight the critical role of clear communication, especially in the fast-paced hospitality sector. Encourage managers to ensure that communication is crystal clear. For employees with autism, this may involve a preference for written instructions or the use of visual aids to eliminate ambiguity.

- **Team-building Activities:** Emphasize the importance of team-building activities as effective tools for enhancing collaboration. Encourage managers to organize group brainstorming sessions, problem-solving challenges, or similar activities. These activities foster teamwork, improve communication, and create a more cohesive work environment.
- **Open Communication Channels:** Stress the value of open channels of communication within the team. Advise managers to create an environment where team members, including those with autism, feel comfortable sharing their experiences and concerns. This open dialogue ensures that everyone's voice is heard and understood, contributing to a positive and collaborative work environment.

Exercise 2

Case Study 2: The case of Marco

Andrew is an F&B manager at a hotel. The hotel recently hired Marco, an autistic waiter who is very passionate about his work and tends to the smallest details; customers and hotel guests are impressed with Marco's service in terms of etiquette and helpfulness.

Marco was assigned to wait tables at one of the hotel restaurants, and Andrew assumed the responsibility to be his 'contact person' should any problems or concerns arise.

Lately, Marco has been complaining to Andrew that he has been having issues with the performance of his colleagues at the restaurant; Andrew claims that his colleagues are slow and take too much time taking orders and talking to customers, therefore slowing down the service and wasting time. Marco appears to be convinced that the root cause of the problem is his colleagues are socialising too much with the customers and he believes that they are not putting in the necessary effort to ensure that the restaurant is not working as efficiently as possible.

Marco is reluctant to express his concerns to his colleagues, because he is afraid that they will not respond positively to his comment; after all, he experienced this kind of negativity before in the past during his school years and studies. He feels frustrated and struggles to focus during the days at work.

Marco shared his thoughts with Andrew, explaining his views about the 'underperformance' of his colleagues, requesting measures to be taken in order to solve this problem. However, Andrew has been working with the particular team at the restaurant for quite some time, and he is very familiar

with the way they work; there have never been any complaints about the team and the restaurant is always busy, with excellent reviews.

Exercise Guidelines

Assign the class in groups of 2-4 people, and ask them to read and discuss the case study above. Then, ask the learners to answer the following questions and present their conclusions to the rest of the class. In order to enhance learning and enrich the discussions, you may direct learners to refer back to the content of Module 4.

Questions

1. If you were in Andrew's position, what steps would you take to address the claims and concerns of Marco in order to help him understand the value of teamwork and communication?

Note: Consider the fact that Marco has always been a perfectionist and has high expectations of himself and others.

2. How would you help Marco realise that the restaurant team may have different working style than his own? (Is it possible that Marco's perfectionism puts too much stress on himself?)

3. Is there a way to involve the team in your efforts to inform Marco about restaurant targets and current performance?

4. If you were in Jasmine's position, what strategies would you use to foster a more inclusive and flexible workplace, where employees' opinions and perspectives were heard and valued?

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Benefits of Serious Gaming & Gamification

• • **Serious Gaming**

- • ● Engaging & meaningful
- • ● Safe learning environment
- • ● Adaptive & flexible




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Trainer's Notes: The first and perhaps less known form of gaming as a learning intervention is Serious Gaming. A serious game can be an app, board game, or sports activity that is designed from scratch to reach a specific learning goal.

- **Engaging & Meaningful:** The intervention is usually designed to be highly engaging to the target audience. A fun board game, or mesmerizing game app on your phone. They are fun to engage with and make the player forget that they are even learning.
- **Safe learning environment:** The primary benefit of a serious game is that the player feels safe to make mistakes within the game. These mistakes often directly relate to the learning goals, making it clear for the player where their blind spots or lack of knowledge lies, without needing a negative experience during their work to learn this.
- **Adaptive & Flexible:** Serious Games are often designed to work with a facilitator, guiding the play session. A combination of a good facilitator and rules that have flexibility build in, the game can be adapted to match the level of the players. This makes the experience fun and achievable for all levels of experience among employees.

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Benefits of Serious Gaming & Gamification

Gamification

- Integrate into daily work
- Actionable goals




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Trainer's Notes: Explain that Gamification is a term used to describe the application of gaming elements into 'normal' activities. For example; adding a point system to a certain task, with achievable milestones that rewards players with something else than money (such as praise, status, recognition). The prime example is Duolingo, which makes normal language learning activities more engaging through points, streaks and badges.

- **Integrate into daily work:** The benefit of gamification is that it can be integrated into daily work. This means that the time requirement is reduced, and it can be easier to convince management to take a chance on this type of intervention.
- **Actionable goals:** The point of gamification is often to make 'players' motivated to perform a certain type of task or show behaviour that gets them ahead in the 'game'. This can make vague goals such as: 'our goal is to keep the workplace tidy everyday' actionable, by rewarding employees that show the appropriate behaviour with points.

Slide no. 22: The difference between Serious Gaming and Gamification

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The difference between Serious Gaming and Gamification

Serious Gaming

- Form: Standalone
- Purpose: Education
- Structure: Defined
- Interactivity: Highly interactive

A Venn diagram consisting of two overlapping circles. The circle on the left is red, and the circle on the right is blue.

Trainer's Notes: With a baseline explanation of the benefits, we dive deeper into the difference between Serious Gaming and Gamification in these slides.

- **Form:** Serious Gaming is almost always designed in a standalone form. That means that it is not integrated into a regular activity.
- **Purpose:** Because of this dedicated form, the format lends itself well to dive deep into a topic. Therefore, education (obtaining knowledge) and analysis/reflection are common purposes to apply this type of intervention. It should be compared with a training activity such as training with an actor, or participating in a workshop. It is aimed at long term results.
- **Structure:** Serious Games often have a clearly defined structure (game rules) that should be followed to achieve the learning outcome as designed by the game designers and researchers.
- **Interactivity:** Serious Games are highly interactive. This means that the input provided by the players (choices made, questions answered) have a big impact on the outcome of the game. This is one of the requirements of a fun game; if the player feels like they are 'on rails' towards a predefined destination, they will lose interest.

Module 4: Support Management


Comparison

Serious Gaming

- Form: Standalone
- Purpose: Education
- Structure: Defined
- Interactivity: Highly interactive

Gamification

- Form: Standalone
- Purpose: Engagement & Motivation
- Structure: Flexible
- Interactivity: Low level 'interaction'




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Trainer's Notes: This slide can be used to recap. Ask the students if they can explain why the form and the purpose are related to each other. Does it make sense that a standalone intervention would be better suited for deep learning and long term results than an integrated gaming activity?

Exercise

Case: The leadership of a hotel chain is receiving feedback from managers that some employees at one of their locations feel excluded in their team. The managers indicate that this feedback is coming mostly from employees that work part-time. It seems that full-time employees find it difficult to adjust to the fluctuating schedules of their colleagues, and complain to each other. This is causing resentment on both sides.

Design a Serious Game or Gamification to help this situation. The end goals should be:

- * The tension / resentment between both groups is reduced
- * Both groups understand what is causing frustrations on the other side
- * Both groups start discussing ways to remove these difficulties and improve their collaboration

Discussion:

Discuss with the players why a Serious Game or Gamification would be suitable for this situation. Talk about potential risks of implementing this type of intervention, and discuss the benefits of using this intervention.

Slide no. 25: Design of HOST Board Game

[illegible]

Trainer's Notes: Start by explaining the goals of the HOST Board Game

- **Team reflection exercise:** The game should get the players to reflect together on their inclusivity of neurodiverse colleagues.
- **In person:** As the intervention touches on a difficult subject, the intervention should be done in person. This allows for deeper discussion than a remote or non-simultaneous activity.
- **Inclusive activity:** The intervention should be inclusive towards neurodiverse people. The way this is done

Explain that the above goals made it clear that a Serious Game was the best option. A gamification solution would not work with subject matter that is this sensitive. Gamification would also not be a good option to get colleagues in the same place to discuss something together, it is mostly done 'on the side' during regular work.

Lastly, it would be difficult to make this an inclusive activity, as the actions that could lead to change are not the same for all colleagues. Neurodiverse colleagues can increase inclusivity by being open about the challenges they face. Non neurodiverse colleagues can increase inclusivity by listening to these challenges and adapting the work environment to accommodate for challenges faced by their colleagues. This makes it difficult to design a gamification that feels fun, fair and equal for all players.

Slide no. 26: Design of HOST Board Game

[illegible]

Trainer's Notes: In this slide, dive deeper into why a boardgame can be an inclusive activity for neurodiverse people, especially people with ASD.

- **Structure:** The game offers a clear structure. This helps people with ASD to understand the actions they can take during the game, and the steps that will be taken throughout the game. Removing big surprises in the rules allows them to strategize and play along with their colleagues.
- **Turn taking:** Turn taking can be a challenge in the development of people with ASD. By providing a clear turn taking structure (when is a round over, who gets to make a choice at what point, who gets to say something), allows people with ASD to feel confident to provide their input when it is appropriate.
- **Role-playing:** Research shows that people (especially boys) with ASD enjoy games that involve roleplaying. This seems counter intuitive, as roleplay is a highly social activity. However, by removing themselves from their personal struggles and contexts they can remove their inhibitions in social settings and more naturally interact within a group.
- **Close to reality:** Despite having this roleplay element, the context of the fantasy should still stay close to the reality. In this case: running a hotel. Making the game too abstract can cause issues in the transfer of the learning. If the outcome of the game is too symbolic, it can be difficult for people with ASD to relate it to a different, real, situation.

Slide no. 27: Sustainability of HOST Board Game

[illegible]

Trainer's Notes: Lastly, discuss with the group how A Serious Game or Gamification should be introduced into an organization

- **Positioning:** It can help to present the gaming intervention as a ‘learning tool’, rather than a game. The market for Serious Games is still too young to be widely accepted and understood by managers worldwide. This means that it can be easier to explain the intervention as a learning tool, rather than a serious game. Be aware that some managers might already be enthusiastic for gaming as a learning tool, and change the promotion accordingly.
- **Ambassadors:** Because gaming can be an intrinsically fun activity to partake in, it helps to have ambassadors among employees that can attest to the fun and value factors of the game. This helps to create enthusiasm among other colleagues. Generating ‘hype’ and buzz around the gaming intervention can have benefits for the learning outcomes, as players will have more buy-in to engage with the game.