

A manual on interpersonal skills development in adult education  
through media and information literacy

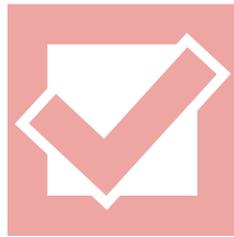


# Learning to Teaching Identities

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# About this manual



This learning manual provides an insight into non-formal adult education in using media and information to advocate for and foster both interpersonal and digital skills among adult educators. Media and information literacy has become an essential form of education and communication for people across the world to socialise, to continuously learn, communicate, campaign, stay informed and connected, etc. But with many misleading information, advocacy to hatred, and other types of online human rights violations observed in the media today, there is therefore a need to learn how information and media are used to educate adult learners, but also to train adult educators how to help adult learners identify and address fake, manipulated information. Thus, this manual offers basic knowledge about information and media literacy as a means to support and facilitate adult educators develop teaching or training skills to not only integrate interpersonal skills in adult education, but also to foster digital skills.

The manual provides an open to adoption or adaptation learning material, which responds to the global problem of misinformation and disinformation that confront societies today in general. Serving as a learning module, the manual is designed to give adult educators and trainers a framework to help adult learners to navigate the issues associated with information disorder by practicing how to deal with the challenges of misinformation and disinformation. Furthermore, the manual offers an understanding of the emergence of fact-checking, along with the methodologies on how to identify and/or verify the original source of digital information online. It introduces strategies for determining the authenticity of sources, photos, and videos, especially UGC shared via social networks.

Moreover, the manual reflects on the ability to conduct basic verification steps for visual content. It raises awareness among users of more advanced techniques and metadata that can be used in verification processes. Awareness of the need to seek permission to use UGC and other online content and the knowledge of how to do so. In the last chapter, the manual provides a step-by-step guide to web blogging as means to transform the contextual and theoretical content of the manual into an extremely practical manual. Therefore, if used together as a learning manual or independently, the manual can help refresh existing teaching manuals on media and information literacy in adult education or create new offerings.

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## The project partners

### P01. Denizli İl Afet ve Acil Durum Müdürlüğü – Turkey

Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD), an institution working to prevent disasters and minimize disaster-related damages, plan and coordinate post-disaster response, and promote cooperation among various government agencies. AFAD currently has 81 provincial branches across Turkey in addition to 11 search and rescue units.

### P02. Neotalentway S.L. – Spain

Neotalentway is an educative consultancy specialized in new teaching methodological strategies and educational guidance, which is why it works with teachers to develop and improve their professional skills. Other areas of work of Neotalentway are entrepreneurship, key competencies and soft skills.

### P03. Learning centre “EVA-93” – Latvia

As a long-established and experienced adult learning Centre (more than 18 000 adult students since 1996), EVA-93 take pleasure and pride from seeing their students develop new skills, enhance their knowledge or study a subject for pure enjoyment. Learning Centre “EVA-93” lines of action are adult formal, informal and non-formal learning. Learning Centre do all to promote their specialist.

### P04. Jafnréttishús (Equality Centre) – Iceland

Equality Centre is a private NGO founded in April 2008 in Hafnarfjörður, Iceland. It is a non-profit adult education provider. It employs 5 staff members and has wide subcontracting-network with specialists in various fields. On average, it provides education to over 300 learners per year in various fields. The goals and activities are implemented through a variety of ways such as Integration activities for foreigners.

### P05. Vilnius Adult Education Centre (VAEC) – Lithuania

Vilnius Adult Education Centre (VAEC) was established in 1993. Here adult students can acquire complete or partial upper secondary education. The Centre has already done its steps in applying the non-formal principles as the method of teaching and learning. At the Centre adult students can choose a single subject providing knowledge of a certain level and amount.

## The targeted groups

It is of greatest importance to have a clear picture of the project’s target groups; otherwise, it is not feasible to evaluate and monitor the quality, sustainability and effectiveness of result dissemination and exploitation activities. To safeguard that all partners have the same understanding of the project’s dissemination objectives, the target groups are defined to ensure that partners are aware of each group’s needs and reason why it is being targeted. In Pathways to Teaching Identities project, we are engaging with:

1. **Adult learners:** here, we address learners by creating inclusive learning environments from a gender-sensitive and an interpersonal skills perspective to meet their learning needs by respecting their identities.
2. **Adult educators:** here, we address adult educators by calling them to integrate a gender-sensitive and an interpersonal skills perspective in their practices through inclusive and participatory training approaches.
3. **Adult institutions:** here, we address adult education institutions play their role in adapting interpersonal skills development in developing the appropriate approaches for adult learners and preparing their educators in a lifelong learning perspective for a productive career.

Thus, considering a broader dissemination strategy to lay the foundations for later result exploitation efforts, it is thus of greatest importance to start with dissemination activities early in the project, even if they took place on a more general layer, they are ensuring later activities to be successful:

1. Awareness is easily raised from the begging by providing information about the project and expected results, which are the most important aspects for sustainability.
2. Project goal and objectives are outlined on project website to provide constant information to different stakeholders, which enables them to be aware and follow project implementation processes much easier.
3. Exchange of information is fostered through social media, newsletters to build relationships with those carrying out similar activities.





# CHAPTER-1

Introduction to media and information literacy

## 1.1. Media and information literacy

Literacy refers to a continuum education about lifelong learning; knowing how we know or learn to fully participate in the wider society. Media and information literacy refers to the skills, knowledge, attitudes, and understanding that allow one to use media and information critically, effectively, and safely. Our thinking and interactions depend on the information to work optimally. So, the quality of information we engage with largely determines our perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes, which influence our socialisation and communication skills. This could be information from other persons, the media, libraries, or publishers, in the form of print, broadcast, or digital content, etc. Hence, media and information literacy provides answers to how can we access, search, critically assess, use or contribute content wisely, both online and offline. It allows to be aware of our rights online and offline, the ethical issues surrounding the access and use of information, and how we can engage with media and ICT to promote social inclusion, intercultural dialogue, diversity, freedom of expression, access to information, etc.

Media and information literacy is closely connected to the growing influence of digital technologies; information exchange via digital media is now widespread and active that mobile access to the network makes the smartphone a unique window to the world. This has resulted in the ordinary citizens becoming active consumers, distributors, and creators of information. Digitalisation has given rise to new information reality where the user of media: digital media, mobile media, social networks and so on, is required to have networking skills: remixing, sharing, downloading, debating, creation, distribution and the proper use of content and multimedia. So, media and information literate citizens are able to access, receive, critically evaluate, create, use, and disseminate information and media content of all forms. They understand and know their rights in their field of work with information and the media, as well as their rights to demand quality information and media systems that are free, independent, and diverse. In their relations with the media, they understand the role and functions of information and media providers and the conditions for the implementation of these functions.

## 1.2. Media and information literacy in adult education

Media and information literacy in adult education relevant because an important aspect of the work of the adult educators is to ensure that the adult learners can distinguish between real information, misinformation, and disinformation, and how this information is disseminated on different social media. Adult educators should not only possess the competencies to themselves identify misinformation and disinformation and to use the tools for clarifying, checking, identifying the authenticity of facts, but should also be able to help their adult learners do the same. This becomes crucial knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop as today

the information agenda can be determined by any person, being the recipient, distributor, or creator of information about an endless number of topics. That is to say, media and information literate adult learners are active participants in the information exchange for social interaction by understanding and respecting the ethical issues surrounding the access and use of information and digital media.

To build a better understanding of how this is achieved through adult education, herein media and information literacy skills knowledge, skills, and attitudes are divided into these main areas:

1. Access,
2. Analysis and comprehension,
3. Critical evaluation,
4. Use,
5. Creation, and engagement.

In other words, an adult educator should be able to facilitate adult learners to learn how to analyse these questions any time they see, have access to new information:

1. Who created the information or content?
2. What is the purpose?
3. Who are the target audiences?
4. What is the message?
5. What information is included and what is excluded?
6. Who will benefit from this message? Who will not benefit?

### 1.2.1. Understanding information disorder

It is important to distinguish narratives that are true from those that are false, but also those that are true and those narratives with some truth, but which are created, produced, and distributed by agents who intend to harm, rather than, serve the public interest. Such mal information, like true information that violates a person's privacy without public interest justification goes against the standards and ethics of freedom of expression. Narrative is present in media information or content, it is embedded in what facts are selected as salient in social media, news, in what facts are made up or taken out of context in toxic communications. This is one reason why fact-checking can be profitably accompanied by narrative unpacking, by examining the structures of meaning within which facts and non-facts are mobilised for a specific purpose.

Even though there are many uses of the term **fake news** to describe reporting of information which the claimant does not agree with, this term is increasingly vulnerable to being politicised and therefore, used as a weapon against the news industry, as a way of undermining the news that those in power do not like or that threatens their power. Instead, throughout this manual, it is recommended

to use the terms **misinformation** and **disinformation** to contrast with verifiable information, in the public interest:

1. **Misinformation** is the information that is false, but the person who is disseminating it believes that it is true.

- **False Connection:**  
When headlines, visuals or captions do not support the content, this can be called false connection. The most common example of this type of content is clickbait headlines. With the increased competition for audience attention, an agent can write headlines to attract clicks, even if when people read the article, they feel that they have been deceived.
- **Misleading Content:**  
This type of content is when there is a misleading use of information to frame issues or individuals in certain ways by cropping photos or choosing quotes or statistics selectively. Visuals are particularly powerful vehicles for spreading misleading information, as our brains are less likely to be critical of visuals.
- **E.g., Misinformation:**  
A terror attack on the Champs Elysees in Paris on 20 April 2017 inspired a great deal of misinformation as is the case in almost all breaking news situations. Individuals on social media unwittingly published several rumours. The people sharing this type of content are rarely doing so to cause harm. Rather, they are caught up in the moment, trying to be helpful, but fail to adequately inspect and verify the information they are sharing.

2. **Disinformation** is the information that is false, and the person who is disseminating it knows it is false. It is a deliberate, intentional lie, and points to people being actively dis-informed by malicious actors.

- **False Context:**  
One of the reasons the term “fake news” is so unhelpful, is because genuine content is often seen being re-circulated out of its original context. For example, an image from Vietnam, captured in 2007, re-circulated seven years later, was shared under the guise that it was a photograph from Nepal in the aftermath of the earthquake in 2015.
- **Imposter Content:**  
There are real issues with journalists having their by-lines used alongside articles they did not write, or organisations’ logos used in videos or images that they did not create.
- **Manipulated Content:**  
Manipulated content is when genuine content is manipulated to deceive.
- **Fabricated Content:**  
This type of content can be text format, such as a completely

fabricated news site, or it can be visuals targeting a group.

- **E.g., Disinformation:**  
One of the attempted hoaxes of the French election campaign, was the creation of a sophisticated duplicate version of the Belgian newspaper *Le Soir* with a false article claiming that the presidential candidate Emmanuel Macron was being funded by Saudi Arabia. Disinformation circulated via Twitter raids in which loosely connected networks of individuals simultaneously took to Twitter with identical hashtags and messages to spread rumours about the candidate’s personal life.

### 1.2.2. Understanding the framework for toxicity

Though consequences of disinformation or misinformation may be similar: such as human rights violations and corrupting the integrity of democratic processes, in particular cases, some might exhibit a combination of both conceptualisations, and there is evidence that an individual use of one, is often accompanied by the others as part of a broader strategy by particular actors. However, it is helpful to keep the distinctions in mind because the causes, techniques, and remedies can vary accordingly. That is, the purpose of adult education in the context of media and information literacy is to facilitate adult learners to separately examine the main elements of information disorder: **the agent**, **message**, and **interpreter**. Only by dissecting, or analysing and interpreting information disorder from this perspective, we begin to understand these nuances:

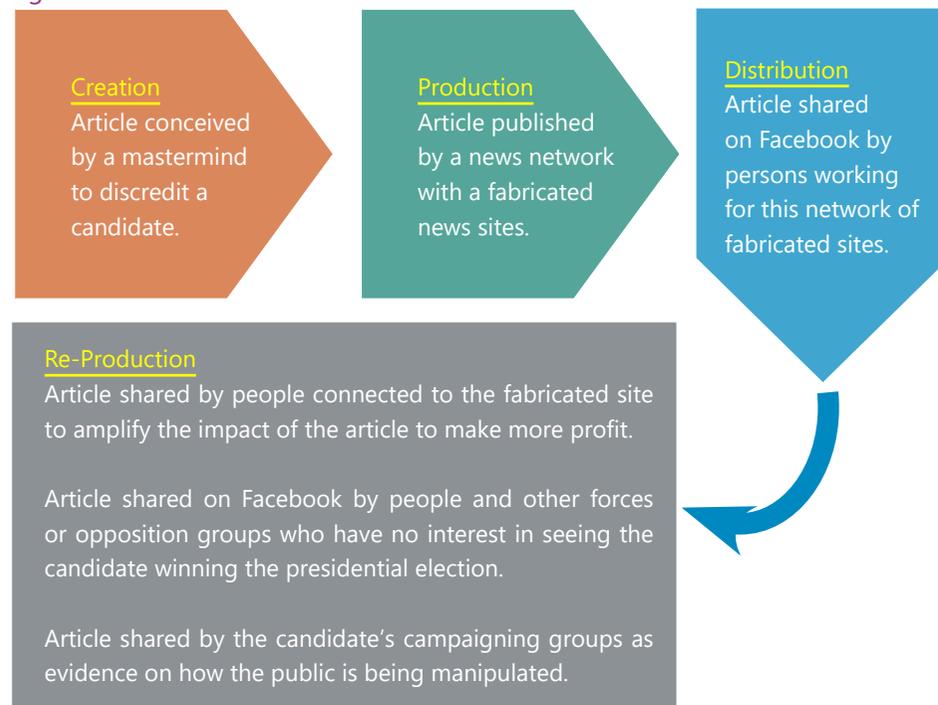
1. The agent who creates a fabricated message might be different to the agent who produces that message, who might also be different from the agent who distributes the message.
2. Similarly, there is a need for a thorough understanding of who these agents are and what motivates them. The different types of messages being distributed by agents also need to be understood, to estimate the scale of each and begin addressing them.
3. Though most of the debates have been overwhelmingly focused on fabricated text news sites, visual content is just as widespread and much harder to identify and debunk.
4. The motivations of a mastermind who creates a disinformation campaign are very different from those of the ones on the low-paid row tasked with turning the campaign’s themes into specific posts. And once a message has been distributed, it can be reproduced and redistributed endlessly via mainstream media operating without scrutiny, by various actors, with different motivations.

### Box-1: Elements of information disorder

<b>Agent</b>	Actor type: Level of Organisation: Type of Motivation: Level of Automation: Intended Audience: Intent to Harm: Intent to Mislead:	- Official or Unofficial. - None - Loose - Tight - Networked. - Financial - Political - Social - Psychological. - Human - Cyborg - Bot. - Members - Social Groups - Entire Societies. - Yes - No - Yes - No
<b>Message</b>	Duration: Accuracy: Legality: Imposter Type: Message Target:	- Long-term - Short-term - Event-based. - Misleading - Manipulated - Fabricated. - Legal - Illegal. - No - Brand - Individual - Individual - Organisation - Social Group - Entire Society.
<b>Interpreter</b>	Message reading: Action taken:	- Hegemonic - Oppositional - Negotiated. - Ignored - Shared in support - Shared in opposition.

Finally, there is a need to consider the 4 possible different phases of information disorder: **creation**, **production**, **distribution**, and **re-production**. It is important to consider the different phases of an instance of information disorder alongside its elements because the agent who masterminds the content is often separate from the producers and disseminators.

Figure-1: Phases of information disorder



E.g.:

During a presidential campaign, news articles with nude pictures of a female presidential candidate were published by a news network that has fabricated news websites to discredit her integrity. It is a useful case study for thinking about the different phases of information disorder.

### 1.2.3. Understanding fact-checking

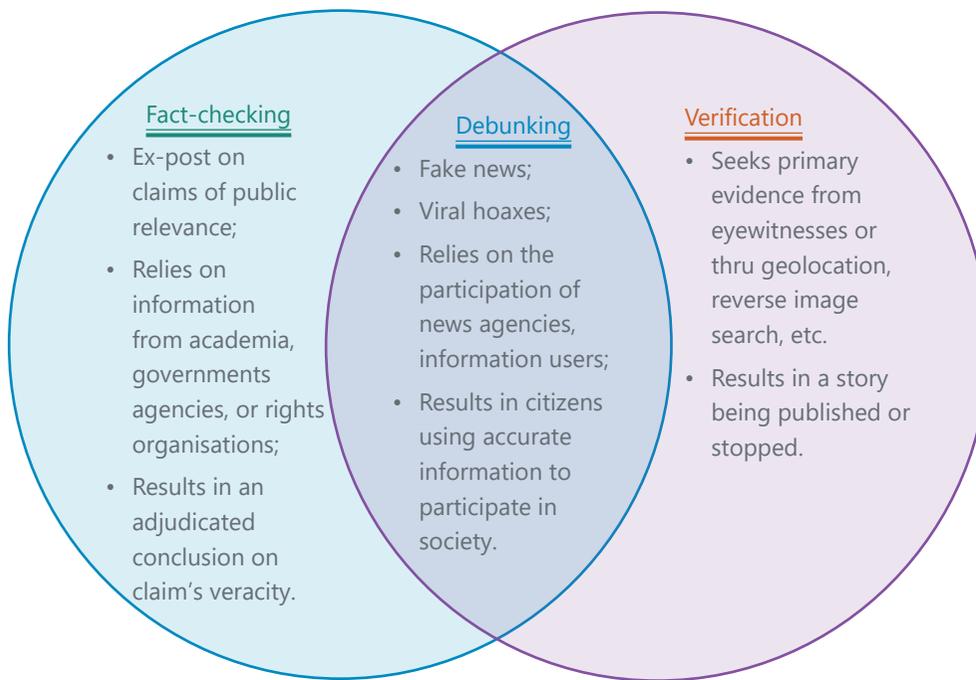
From politicians to marketers, from advocacy groups to brands; everyone who seeks to convince others has an incentive to distort, exaggerate or obfuscate the facts. So, adult education institutions should seek to equip adult educators with a methodology to detect fact checkable claims and evaluate evidence critically, in line with ethical norms and standards. Only then, an adult educator is able to facilitate adult learners to develop fact-checking skills, attitudes, and behaviours.

This is because, term "fact-checking" can mean two different things:

1. traditionally, fact-checkers were employed by the newsrooms to proofread and verify factual claims made by reporters in their articles. This genre of fact-checking evaluates the solidity of the reporting, double-checks facts and figures, and serves as an overall round of quality control for a news content before publication.
2. contemporary, fact-checking happens not before something is published but after a claim becomes of public relevance. This form of ex-post fact-checking seeks to make politicians or public figures accountable for the truthfulness of their statements. Fact-checkers in this line of work seek primary and accurate sources that can confirm or negate claims made to the public.

Present-day fact-checking surge in the so-called **fake news era**. The term misused to describe entirely fabricated sensationalist stories that reach such an enormous audience by using social media algorithms to their advantage. As it is becoming clearer the under covid-19 reality to what extent online information infrastructure is particularly permeable to disinformation and misinformation, it becomes more important than ever for adult education institutions to turn their attentions to fact-checking; focusing as much on fact-checking public claims as debunking viral hoaxes. Debunking is a subset of fact-checking and requires a specific set of skills that are in common with verification (especially of user-generated content).

Figure-2: Fact-checking, debunking, and verification



### 1.2.4. Methodology and ethics of fact-checking

Fact-checking is not rocket science. It is an analysis driven by one basic question: **How do we know that?** Further, fact-checking is not spell-checking. There is not a dictionary-style guidebook with all the facts, nor a simple software that will examine information and flag something misstated as fact. Generally speaking, fact-checking is composed of three phases:

1. Finding fact-checkable claims by scouring through legislative records, media outlets and social media. This process includes determining which major public claims:
  - can be fact-checked and
  - ought to be fact-checked.
2. Finding the facts by looking for the best available evidence regarding the claim at hand.
3. Correcting the record by evaluating the claim in light of the evidence, usually on a scale of truthfulness based on the following ratings:
  - **True:** the statement is accurate and there is nothing significant missing.
  - **Mostly True:** The statement is accurate but needs clarification or additional information.
  - **Half True:** the statement is partially accurate but leaves out important details or takes things out of context.
  - **Mostly False:** the statement contains some element of truth but ignores critical facts that would give a different impression.
  - **False:** the statement is not accurate and makes a ridiculous claim.

### 1.2.5. Exploring challenges to factual understanding

Before diving into the practical aspects of fact-checking, adult learners need to be aware of its limitations and their own. Currently, we are in a **post-truth** or **post-fact era**. The argument that could be made in support of this view is that politics and the media have become so polarised to the extent that citizens flat-out reject any facts which they disagree with without a framework for forming an accurate statement in support of what they think and believe is true. It found that when corrected, especially by referencing to authorities the citizens deemed credible, people become, on average, better informed. That is, it would be unrealistic to suggest that facts are perfect characterisations of the world and that humans are entirely rational beings who accommodate the new facts flawlessly regardless of their previous belief and personal preferences. Each of us comes with cognitive and other biases, or mental obstacles that can get in the way of absorbing new factual information. It is crucial to stress that this is not something that happens to other or some people, it happens to all of us because of:

#### 1. Confirmation bias:

Refers to the tendency to process information by looking for and/or interpreting information that is consistent with one's existing beliefs. This biased approach to decision making is largely unintentional and often results in ignoring inconsistent information. Existing beliefs can include one's expectations in a given situation and predictions about a particular outcome. People are likely to process information to support their own beliefs when the issue is highly important or self-relevant.

#### 2. Motivated reasoning:

Refers to the unconscious tendency of individuals to fit their processing of information to conclusions that suit an end goal. A classic example is when participants were asked to watch a football game between two schools. The participants from each school were more likely to see the referees' calls as correct when it favoured their school than when it favoured their rival. Their loyalty to their respective schools shaped what they saw and felt as being fair or not.

Fact-checking in itself, is not perfect; some information could be 100% accurate, and yet still leaves out important contexts. The facts are invariably constructed, ordered, and reordered within the broader narrative structures which can provide different significance to the same basic facts to different people. Hence, the truth is more than a collection of facts, the context has also an important role to play.

### 1.2.6. Understanding the sources and visual content

So, beyond fact-checking and debunking, the adult education institutions need to prepare their adult educators to facilitate adult learners identify and verify the original source of digital information online. That is, an adult educator should be trained on how to apply, use different strategies in classroom with adult learners to help them determine the authenticity of sources, photos, or videos, especially User Generated Content (UGC) shared via social networks. To achieve this goal, an

adult educator can help the adult learners to test their instincts with real-world scenarios or examples, before putting into practice basic investigative techniques and strategies for verifying the online content. This is important as it allows adult learners to become aware of different types of false and misleading content often shared during breaking news events on social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube.

In the current time, social media has changed news content creation, production, dissemination, and consumption. Real-time audience engagement has given rise to crowdsourcing content, and even reporting tasks like verification can now be outsourced to the audiences. The discipline of verification, methods of verifying content and sources require a constant updating to reflect on the impacts of fast-changing digital technologies, online behaviours, and newsgathering practices. Today, eyewitness accounts and visual content are amongst the most important and compelling tools a news publisher can draw on to tell a high impact story. In a breaking news scenario, moving faster is a critical factor in verifying information from social media. However, this is somehow becoming more overwhelming as the content creator, producer, users must navigate a huge amount of information to get to sources, information, or images that can now be created, produced, and disseminated by any person. Such a rapid growth in the amount of visual content (photos, videos, GIFs, etc.) uploaded to social platforms, is driven by:

1. The proliferation of camera-enabled smart and feature phones around the world.
2. Increased access to inexpensive, and in some places, free mobile data.
3. The rise of global social networks and social messaging platforms on which anyone can publish content and build an audience.

For instance, in present-day, in many breaking news scenarios, the first accounts, photos, or video footage to emerge from an incident; be it a protest, a train crash, a hurricane, or a terrorist attack, are more likely to be published by an eyewitness, a participant, or a bystander with just a smartphone. Techniques for verifying this content vary depending on resources, norms, standards, and interests.

### 1.2.7. Why verifying source & visual content is important

In today digital world, it is straightforward for ill-intentioned actors to create and share convincing and difficult to detect false information. There are many cases where news agencies have damaged their reputation by sharing or republishing misleading information, photos, or videos, or information from fake persons. At times, they have also misinterpreted satirical content, sharing, or publishing it as fact. More than ever before, this problem is compounded by the volume of visual content available online, all of which could be taken out of context and recycled in future news events or information sharing, as we see it happening daily around the world with hoaxers tricking citizens, politicians, rights groups, and journalists alike. There are, however, various steps that can be taken to assess the credibility of a given source who has a story to tell, or content to share. Important questions

should be asked, some directly, while some are answered by using the evidence available through investigation. Verification tools can be used to establish where a source has posted from, but it is also possible to manually triangulate a source by analysing their social media history to check for clues that could indicate the feasibility of them being in a particular place at a particular time.

By identifying the originator of information or images and performing a system of checks on both the source and the content they have shared, it is then possible to verify them as the source, providing the checks give the required outcomes. This is because, the vast majority of individuals who get caught up in news events and share their stories are not looking to deceive; they are just sharing their experiences. If misinformation arises, it may not be malicious. Instead, it could simply be that the individual cannot remember the events properly or has perhaps chosen to exaggerate their story. While it might not be possible to ascertain with full certainty the original of visual content, there are a number of red flags that can be uncovered through a simple verification process that asks:

1. Is the content original, or has it been scraped from previous news event and re-appropriated misleadingly?
2. Has the content been digitally manipulated in some way?
3. Can we confirm the time and place of the photo or video capture, using available metadata?
4. Can we confirm the time and place of the photo or video capture, using visual clues in the content?

To find red flags efficiently, there is also a need to understand the different types of common false or misleading visual content:

1. **Wrong time, wrong place:** the most common type of misleading visuals are old visuals that are being re-shared with new claims about what they show. Virality in such cases is often caused by accidental sharing, of content that can be easy to debunk, but not easy to pull back.
2. **Manipulated content:** content that has been digitally manipulated using photo or video editing software.
3. **Staged content:** original content that has been created or shared with the intent of misleading.

Non-formal adult education, can be effective at this by introducing adult learners to basic tools, techniques to learn, practice source and content verification such as:

- Facebook account analysis: find out more about a source by analysing their Facebook account.
- Twitter account analysis: find out more about the source by analysing their social history and thereby identify whether it is a bot tweeting.
- Reverse Image Search: check to see if an image is being recycled to support a claim or event. Reverse image search lets the user see if one or more image databases contain an earlier version of the image.



## CHAPTER - 2

Social media's perception among generations

## 2.1. Social media

Social media is the computer-based technology that facilitates sharing of ideas, thoughts, or information through building of virtual networks and communities. Well known social media platforms are:

- **Social networks:** connecting with people via Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn.
- **Publishing networks:** publishing content or blog via WordPress, Tumblr, Medium.
- **Media sharing networks:** sharing photos, videos, and other media via Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube.
- **Discussion forums:** share news and ideas (Reddit, Quora, Digg).
- **Content curation networks:** discovering, saving, and sharing new content via Pinterest, Flipboard.
- **Consumer review networks:** finding and reviewing businesses via Yelp, Zomato, TripAdvisor.

Though the 21st century digital media has an essential difference from old days traditional media such as printed newspapers, magazines, videotapes; there is a similarity that can be noticed in the values of popular culture like: tv shows, music, sports, entertainment and leisure, fashion trends, and linguistic conventions that resembles the today's influencers on different social media platforms, who run blogs, create online content, share posts or comments on some topics.

## 2.2. Essential digital skills in adult education

To facilitate the adult learners to use critically, effectively, and safely social media, adult education is more open to integrating informational technology tools into the overall teaching-learning-training process for adult learners to improve their media and information literacy, and thereby, be able to acquire and strengthen essential digital skills such as:

1. How to use different devices: finding, evaluating, managing, and storing information.
2. How to identify and solve simple technical problems on different devices.
3. How to handle information handling and analyse messages in a variety of forms by identifying the author, purpose, and evaluating the quality and credibility of the content.
4. How to create, produce, and edit information in a variety of forms such as text content, visual content, or sound using new digital tools and

technologies.

5. How to campaign by taking or initiating social action individually or collaboratively to share knowledge, solve problems in the family, workplace, or community, to fully participate in society through activism, community forum or public debate.
6. Safety and online responsibility, where actors are called to reflect on their own conduct and communication behaviour by applying social responsibility and ethical principles.

Since these essential digital skills are more relevant in the present-days than 20 years ago, media literacy in non-formal adult education becomes thus a lifelong learning goal which requires adult educators to facilitate adult learners' learning and performance in strengthening digital skills through practice in combination with subject knowledge. This is important because the older learners are more used, and accustomed to traditional model of learning-teaching in the classroom which is subject based. It is thus easier and more interesting to search for, select, digital process new information and visual content when an adult learner already possesses knowledge and many years of lived experience, allowing the learner to use life skills to navigate or investigate different fields. That is, adult education should shift its focus from content knowledge-based to helping adult learners gain essential digital skills to access, analyse, evaluate, process, or create multi-media content as a means to participate interactively in society using information technology tools and solutions to meet needs, close gaps, or use opportunities, within community, or create new opportunities.

## 2.3. Advantages and impact of social media

The advantages of social media sites are that they are designed to be easy to use and are usually free of charge. Users do not need any particular skills to create a profile and start posting content and interacting with other users. Social media makes it easy to keep in touch with people or networks or find other users with similar interests. Because social media sites facilitate users to make connections, they can be used to find useful contacts, information, or sources. Many users are more active on social media where they can create their own platform to tell their stories, discuss or debate about different social issues. This has a huge impact on society as it facilitates people to become more engaged with the media and with the developments in society as any user can access information, post comments, or link information to different social media sites, and therefore, attracting and reaching to a wider online audience. The time it takes to produce, re-produce, and distribute, re-distribute such a content is usually short, often starting from a few seconds. Social media has had a great impact on overall human interactions that has shifted online, and thus, has an effect on the way people communicate with each other.

Therefore, media literacy as an intercultural competence for adult learners then becomes indispensable in the context of non-formal adult education. It enables the celebration of connectivity across cultures, renewing sociological theories of knowledge and learning such as connectivism, and social constructivism. Social constructivism since, celebrating connectivity across cultures calls for a deeper understanding by all citizens of how knowledge is created, that knowledge is created collaboratively in groups for one another. And that as we engage deeply within a culture or cultures, we are learning all time. Thus, adult educators should be able to facilitate adult learners to critically evaluate how subjective meanings become social facts. Further, celebrating connectivity across cultures recognises the need to illuminate citizens' understanding of the social and cultural context of learning, or connectivism. So, adult learners should have a basic understanding of the relationship between their working experiences, their social experiences, their learning, and knowledge. That learning defined as actionable knowledge or a change in attitude, or in behaviour can reside outside of ourselves, for instance within organisation or databases. In this sense, learning is focused on connecting a specialised set of information where the connections that enable learning take more significance than one's present states of knowing. Media and information literacy is about lifelong learning and knowing how we know or learn.

## 2.4. Perception of social media among generations

How generations use and interact with social media and their ability to improve their media and information skills differs among generations. Older generations use computer mediated communication (social media, weblog) mainly to keep up to date on the news and to discuss social issues. Social media offers them also information regarding different subjects they particularly might be interested in, and thus, having easy access to the information. So, social media gives them the opportunity to have access to desired information, easier, faster, with additional reliability, because the information is often categorised, updated, and it can be source checked with basic fact-checking or verification skills. In addition, various web blogs and social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter arise certain interests among this generation that can be considered as a motivation to get them more engaged in the online interactions and thereby, strengthening their digital skills and reaching a desired development of media literacy among adult learners.

The young generation on the other hand, is in a period of life in which individuals explore and acquire basic values and views about what is important in life for them and society. How young people use social media and web blog can often influence the values they develop. That is, social media activities are related to the social development among the young people based on:

1. hedonistic and self-focused values: looking good, having a lot of money, being free to do as one wishes, etc.
2. humanistic and self-transcendent values: equality, social justice, helping others, etc.

Hence, for this generation, media and information literacy does not only mean developing essential digital skills, but also developing computational skills such as coding literacy, algorithmic literacy, data analytics, fact-checking skills, content verification skills, etc. Fact-checking, content verification skills are more relevant today in the social media world to think about or create solutions to the types of information polluting our social media streams and stopping them from flowing into our traditional media outputs. Thus, there is a need to start thinking about the problem much more carefully by encouraging the young users to think about the people who are creating this type of content, and what is motivating them to do so. The types of content they are producing, how are they being received by audiences, and when those same audience members decide to re-share those content without a critical analysis, what is motivating them to do so.

This is because media and information literacy is an umbrella concept used by different people and institutions to stress the inter-relatedness of competencies regarding information broadly, and the media in particular. These cover human rights literacy; especially the right to freedom of expression as each person's right to seek, receive and impart information and opinion; news literacy, including literacy about journalistic standards and ethics; advertising literacy; computer literacy; understanding of the economy; intercultural literacy; privacy literacy; etc. It includes understanding how communications interact with individual's identity and social development. Therefore, media and information literacy is increasingly becoming an essential life skill needed to know what is co-shaping one's identity and how one can navigate information. Media and information literacy informs our consumption, production, discovery, evaluation and sharing of information, and our understanding of ourselves and others in the information society.

It therefore, primarily, gives individuals insight into their own identity, who they are, and who they are becoming, and how this affects their engagement with social media, information, and other kinds of communications. Hence, such an empowerment enables individuals to be responsible of their own identity and use of social media, and to recognise and resist when they are being manipulated in relation to misinformation and disinformation masquerading as accurate information on social media. This awakens the individuals' critical thinking skills to develop a framework of purposeful reflective judgment which involves using analysis, interpretation, evaluation, self-regulation, inference and explanation.



# CHAPTER - 3

Interpersonal skills and digital education

### 3.1. Interpersonal skills & digital education

An effective, inclusive, and diverse working environment requires interpersonal skills. Though some working environment might rely on or often demand strong interpersonal skills more than others, for example teaching and training through non-formal learning practices in the context of adult education. Adult educators need strong interpersonal skills in order to work collaboratively with their adult learners who have many years of learning, life experiences of their own, then an emotional self-aware, empathic, patient, cultural aware adult educator effectively creates an interactive learning experience that meets the needs of adult learners. And by combining traditional face-to-face teaching, learning, training methods with digital education, more can be accomplished collaboratively, in a short time. So, digital education requires adult educators to adopt a variety of teaching and training methods, shifting from traditional top-down knowledge transmission.

Though for this to work, it requires interpersonal communication skills: a process of face-to-face exchange of thoughts, ideas, feelings, and emotions between two or more people. This includes both verbal and nonverbal elements of personal interaction. But it also requires the capacity to both consider and value the needs, emotions, social barriers, cultural differences, and the characteristics features of adult learners. These are the skills an adult educator relies on when transmitting knowledge, communicating, and interacting with adult learners, both individually and in groups. So, these interpersonal skills are the foundation for a successful adult education, and adult educators with strong interpersonal skills tend to work well with adult learners in different classroom interactions. So, digital education becomes the ability to transmit knowledge, communicate, and interact with adult learners in support with information technology tools. Thus, digital education is the innovative use of digital tools and technologies during teaching, training, and learning processes which heavily relies on interpersonal skills. Digital technology gives adult educators the opportunity to design engaging learning opportunities in the form of blended learning; combining traditional face-to-face teaching with digital-based learning.

### 3.2. Advantages of digital adult education

Today's computer mediated teaching and learning in adult digital education is an educational experience that both resembles and differs from traditional face-to-face interactions. Technology modifies social interactions; generating specific social behaviours and emotional atmospheres that define how specific groups or a targeted group of users perceive and experience the world. In the context of adult education, computer mediated communication and interactions facilitate class communication, increase, and facilitate collective information sharing, a fact that is of a great importance in the overall digital educational process. Yet it also generates a highly overwhelming emotional atmosphere, where learners can be swept away by and immersed in the rhythms and raptures of the constant flow of instant messages, visual content, notifications, opinions, and assumptions that demand their attention. That is, though digital education does facilitate the adult

educators to meet and address the learning needs and knowledge gaps among adult learners, the human social vulnerability to check messages or notifications, scroll, like or share material can be a challenge to adult digital education.

On the hand though, adult digital education has both a teaching and learning aspect. It offers a teaching experience where learning is facilitated to be accessed at any time, in any place either on in an online or offline mode. That is, it does not require adult learners to be in the classroom all the time to learn and interact. Further, it offers a learning experience where adult learners can learn, improve, or strengthen their media and information literacy, offering them new ways to create, produce, receive, access, and disseminate information in different format. That is, adult digital education encourages the learners to celebrate connectivity across cultures to counter discrimination and intolerance by drawing attention on social media to share and inform others how individuals, in a given context, make sense of their experiences in their cultural setting. This is important because indeed many adult learners are always experiencing discrimination and exclusion not perhaps because society is evil but because people lack space, and capacity to understand, celebrate, and appreciate cultural differences. That is, today more even the phenomenon of intercultural, interreligious, and interracial conflicts; the phenomenon of inequalities, climate change, freedom of expression, privacy, and other related human rights are being mediated by libraries, media, technology, and the Internet. Digital adult education enables both adult educators and adult learners to critically use the new dimensions media and technology bring to their teaching-learning experiences.

### 3.3. Blended learning in adult education

Blended learning is generally applied to the practice of using both online and in-person learning experiences when teaching, learning, or training. In a blended-learning course, for example, adult learners might attend a class delivered by an adult educator in a traditional classroom setting, while also independently using online components of the course outside of the classroom. In this case, learners might have access to the course material online and have the opportunity to interact with other learners using online communication platform to further explore the materials or help each making the online learning experiences, and then learners would interact with the same course material during face-to-face class time Hence, the online and in-person learning experiences complement one another. However, blended-learning experience varies widely in course designing and delivering. Often online learning might be just a minor component part of a course such as video-recorded lectures, live video, learning modules, and other digitally enabled learning material or activities might offer a primary interaction.

In present-day, digital-based learning is widely used in adult education, although many adult education institutions have been reluctant to adopt new technologies for number of complex reasons, ranging from inadequate funding, technologies, and lack of computing networks as general resistance to change. For many, given the fact that the internet and most digital learning technologies are still relatively

new, instructional alternatives such as blended learning could be seen as a reform strategy in the overall adult education, and incorporating blended learning, adult education institutions, and adult educators would then be obligated to change the ways in which they have traditionally instructed and interacted with learners. Even though this fear and resistance to change make sense because this means that most adult educators with low previous digital skills would go back to learn, blended learning offers many potential advantages:

1. Blended learning gives adult learners the benefits of both online learning and in-person instruction. For example, adult learners can work independently and at their own pace online, but still have access to the personal attention of an adult educators and all the assistance, knowledge, and resources such an educator would normally provide. At the same time, the adult educator can structure courses and deliver instruction more flexibly or creatively than in a traditional classroom setting.
2. Blended learning may also allow an adult educator to spend less time giving class lessons, and more time meeting with adult learners individually or in small groups to help them with specific concepts, skills, questions, or learning problems.
3. During their independent work in the blended learning process, adult learners would also be learning skills such as self-discipline, self-motivation, and organisational habits they will need and use in everyday life.
4. Because adult learners are required to use digital and online technologies in blended-learning situations, they naturally acquire more technological literacy and greater confidence using new technologies.

One challenge to blended-learning is whether such a teaching, learning, training practice can provide adult learners with enough personal follow-up, guidance, and assistance from adult educators, especially for adult learners who might not have interacted with information technology learning tools from before to learn effectively without regular class interactions. Another challenge is to whether the adult educators themselves have received, would receive adequate training, how and when. This becomes very important to make sure that adult educators know how to instruct adult learners effectively in a blended-learning context, given that the practice requires them to use new technologies, possibly, more sophisticated instructional practices than what they used when they were still in school.

### 3.4. Models of Blended Learning

It is important to note that many adult education institutions do not rely on just one of the below models. An adult education institution, an adult educator may implement more than one model or pull components from the models they find most effective to create a more digitalised and interactive learning environment based on how they aim to meet the needs of their adult learners.

#### 1. Rotation model:

Where adult learners within a single class can rotate between different learning activities. In this model at least one of the activities should be an online learning activity. Other activities might include one-on-one time with the adult educator, peer group interactions, educator-led lessons, or independent learner-time. In the Rotation model, adult learners are expected to learn at an adult education institution's facility, in a classroom with their adult educators. These can be done through:

- **Station Rotation:** Here, adult learners within a single classroom would rotate through learning activities on the class schedule, when prompted by either their teacher or the clock.
- **Lab Rotation:** This is similar to Station Rotation, though here, adult learners would rotate to a computer lab for online learning activities instead of staying within the classroom.
- **Flipped Classroom:** Here, adult learners would spend their time away from classroom learning to learn the course's content independently through online video lectures and class time is used for homework.
- **Individual Rotation:** Here, an adult educator, often in support with a digital-based programme would set a daily schedule for each adult learner which would allow the adult learners to rotate to some, but not all, of the learning activities based on their learning needs.

#### 2. Flex model:

Here, adult learners would benefit from both learning at their own pace online and from direct adult educator's guidance in their classroom. Since adult learners would spend more time learning basic content online, this would then allow the adult educator to spend more of their class time helping adult learners on complex subjects or going deeper into the course's content that the adult learners feel they have a good knowledge about. An adult educator would then facilitate by integrating small group learning activities through problem-based learning for example.

#### 3. À La Carte model:

Here, adult learners would have the option to pick, choose courses to take online as a way to supplement their existing courses at their adult education institution. This model is most commonly when an adult learners could choose to enrol in a course not currently offered by their adult education institution. While some courses are online, others are taken in class, so learners benefit from interaction with an adult educator and peers.

#### 4. Enriched Virtual model:

This would allow adult learners to spend most of their time completing coursework online remotely, supplemented by the required in-person learning sessions with their adult educator. While online learning is fundamental to the Enriched Virtual model, it differs from full-time virtual classes because face-to-face learning is a required component of the coursework in Enriched Virtual model, not optional as in full-time classes.



# CHAPTER - 4

Step by step guide on weblog writing

## 4.1. Understanding Web Log

A weblog (blog) is a website that contains a log or diary of information, specific topics, or opinions. A blog author (blogger) can also link the blog to stories or other websites with relevant and interesting information. These links are typically segregated according to the blog's topic and written in reverse chronological order, meaning that the most current links display at the top of the blog's home page. The terms web log (or weblog) and blog are not necessarily synonymous. Bloggers post fresh content related to their thoughts or opinions about specific or various topics, while Web loggers refer to information, they find relevant and useful. However, with the rise of various type of blogger and new web-based technologies, the line has blurred between personal websites, blogs, and larger online publishers. That is, in modern Web, there are many content management systems that allow easy editing and publishing for non-technical users. Hence, this becomes so important in media and information literacy because any adult educator or adult learner can easily use web log to promote interpersonal skills.

In the chapter-1 of this manual, we have covered the most relevant topics about media and information literacy that come in handy when one decides to create, produce, and disseminate information, visual content. That is, writing, publishing a blog as an adult educator or adult learner comes with certain responsibilities, and it is good to keep that in mind. The other relevant thing to consider is being able to understand, research, and define the targeted audience before starting to write the first blog post. Ask questions like:

1. What do I want my audience to know or learn about or how do I want my audience to engage?
2. What content are they interested in or what message will resonate with them?

These questions help the blog author to consider what they know about their targeted audience and their interests while they are coming up with a topic for a blog post. For example, the blog author might want to provide their targeted audience with information about how to adjust their social media approach; for example, from what may be a casual, personal approach to a more networking-focused approach. These kinds of strategic questions are what helps the blog author publish content about the topics their audience are interested and can resonate with. After understanding the responsibilities that come with publishing information, on visual content online and defining the targeted audiences, the other most important thing to consider the blog name and the main blog topics. Topic can be any from:

1. Life experience: everyone has lessons they have learned through life experience. Sharing this knowledge can be helpful to others in similar situations.
  - For example, an adult educator with immigrant background that has experience about the challenges to learn a new language might

share content on how to overcome those challenges, and this might help adult learners in similar situations with them.

## 4.2. Creating a personal blog

A personal blog is a blog about a person, and this can be any person who choose to create, produce, and disseminate information, or visual content entirely about themselves. This includes a variety of topics, from things a person does on a daily basis, to random thoughts. This is a great way to for person to share their views, thoughts, opinions, perspectives with the world without having advanced writing, editing, or publishing skills. So, hobbies or other interests a person is passionate about are a great place to start. Cooking, travel, fashion, sports, and cars are all classic examples. But even blogs about more obscure hobbies can be successful, since the audience can literally be anyone, anywhere with the internet.

After having ideas about the main topics, it is time to choose the blog name, that eventually forms a part the blog domain name. A good blog name should be descriptive so that potential visitors can instantly tell what the blog is about just from the name. If the blog is about one specific topic, then it would definitely be ideal pick as blog name and include it in the domain name. For example, a cooking blog does not necessarily have to have the word cooking in its domain name. The words food, recipes, and meals would also let people know that the blog is about cooking. In case of a personal blog about discussions on a variety of topics about personal views, thoughts, opinions, or perspectives it is then ideal to use a personal name, or some variation of it, since the blog is all about this person.

### 4.2.1. Creating a blog domain

With some blog name ideas, it is the feasible to choose a domain extension for the blog. A .com domain extension is the most preferred, but .net or .org work as well. It is also important to note that for the purposes of a blog domain there cannot be any spaces between words. For example, the domain name for a blog with the name interpersonal skills becomes interpersonal skills.com. This requires choosing a content and a website domain hosting service. The content helps to create a website domain where the blog is actually published. Content platforms help to manage domains (where a website is created) and subdomains (where a webpage that connects to an existing website is created). So, the first thing to do is to choose a web hosting service. This means registering domain with a website host. The blog domain will look like: www.yourblog.com. The name between the two periods is up to the blog owner or author to choose, and if this domain name does not yet exist on the internet.

### 4.2.2. Customising a blog theme

Once the domain name set up and hosted, the next thing to do is to customise the appearance of the blog to reflect the theme of the content the blog author plans on creating. For example, if the blog author is writing about sustainability and the environment, green might be a colour to keep in mind while designing the blog layout. In case there is already a website, so writing the first post for that existing

website, the blog author would ensure the article is consistent with the website in appearance and subject matter. Two ways to do this are including:

- The main website name and/ or logo: it will remind the blog readers of who is publishing the content.
- The About Us page from the main website on the blog.

Each post should be lengthy, informative, and engaging. It is not always easy to come up with new blog post ideas on a regular basis, though the blog author is always free to mix up the tone and even the subject matter to keep things lively and interesting. It is a personal space after all. But there are a few elements that each and every piece of content should try to include.

### 4.2.3. Creating blog content

Create an alluring post title that stimulates curiosity and encourages clicks. Use the first paragraph of the post to clearly define the topic of the article and provide a possible hook to keep the reader reading.

The longer is not always the better as we current live in word where people receive and interact with a lot of information and visual content online. So being precise, straightforward, and to point is an added value, and a great skill for blog writing: the less information but well detailed, the better. This is because visitors would begin losing interest if the content is lengthy. Keeping paragraphs shorter with spaces in between, using lists and standout quotes, using images, including headings and sub-headings make it easy for visitors to find what they are looking for.

#### 1. Engage the reader:

at the end of each post, a common tactic used to engage visitors is posing a meaningful question to audience and asking them to reply in the comments. This simple measure can increase engagement.

#### 2. Original content:

the content should always be original. the content should come from the heart, brain, knowledge base, or experience. Though it could also be great to get topic ideas from others in the field of interest, and do the research, writing, and editing work.

#### 3. Original visual content:

while it is easy to include stock images or videos from free sites, it is even better to include the author's own photos, videos, or graphic works.

#### 4. Editing the content:

the blog content should be sufficiently edited, grammatically correct, fact-checked, and verified.

## 4.3. Publishing and promoting a blog

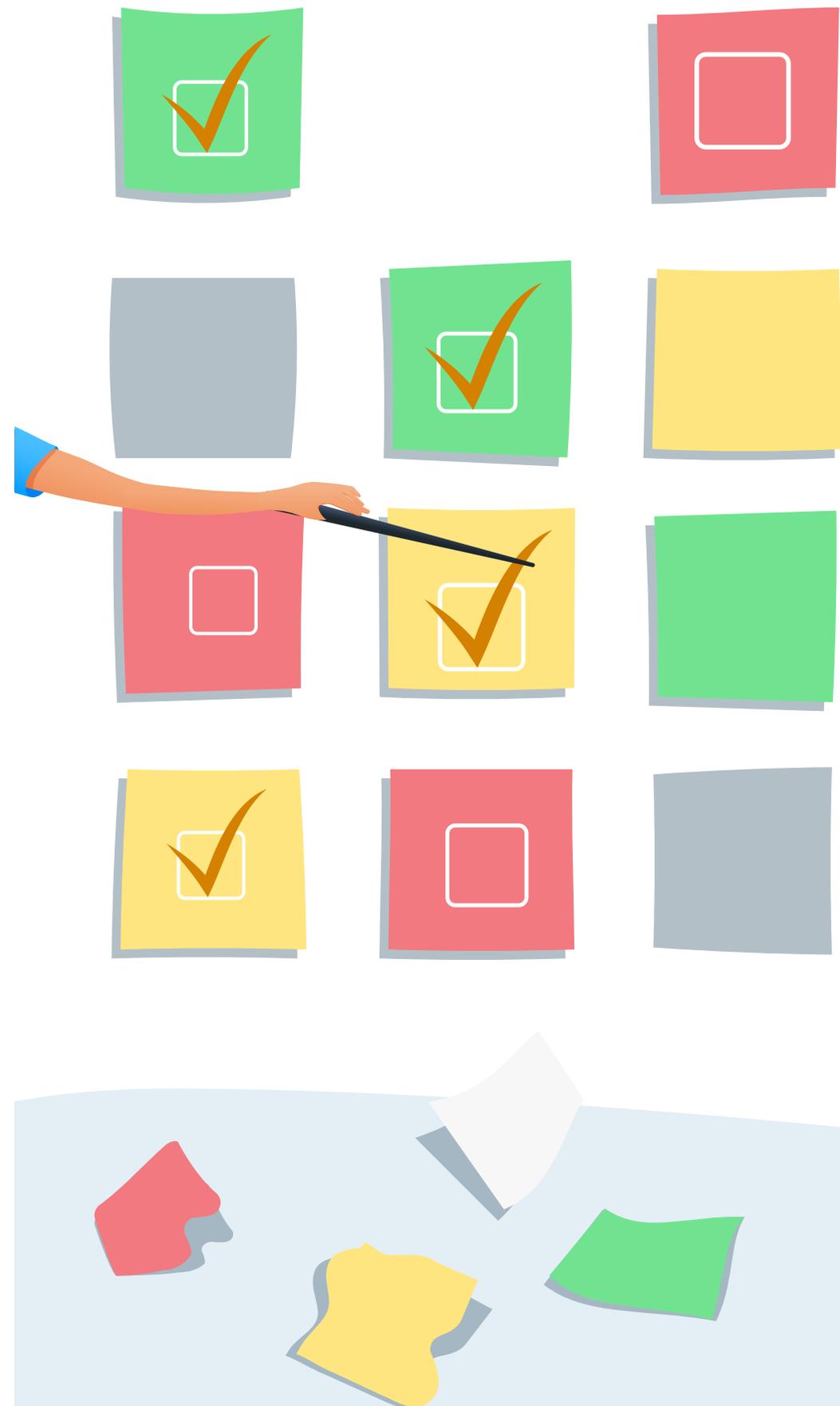
This can happen in different ways based on experience, domain hosting, and in house skills. If we are to consider publishing a blog using WordPress, the blog can be easily published for a first time, just by clicking the "Bluehost" menu at the top left of the menu of the dashboard then click the blue "Launch" button to remove the placeholder page and launch the blog.

Creating a well-designed blog, writing great content, and publishing it, is just the start. Get visitors to visit and interact with the blog requires spending some time promoting it, especially when is the first blog. There are some strategies that can help to get the blog in front of many readers. The very first people to reach out are perhaps those in the inner circle. This includes family, friends, peers, or the colleagues within a particular field. It is more or less easy to ask these people to become followers, comment on the blog or simply share on mention the blog on their social media sites. Beyond this, and with the free access to social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Pinterest, Instagram, etc. it common to further re-produce or disseminate a newly published blog via these social media platforms by simple posting the blog URL-link, and make it more engaging by using hashtags to reach different followers. This is great, because not only do friends see the link, if they would share the link with their friends, it would automatically multiply visitors.

Another way to re-produce or further disseminate a newly published blog could be finding other similar blogs in the community and engage with them. Using the comment section, it is possible to introduce one's views and leave engaging and constructive comments. Many blogs allow audience to leave a link to their blog. After creating relationships with prominent bloggers in community, it then easy to expand the network, and thus, reaching many people. So, reaching many people can be easy, but keeping them engaged and interested require some work and know-how. When the readers leave comments on a post, it is always important to engage with them. Replying to their comments and questions, give them likes and affirmations require good communications and interpersonal skills. The more a blog author cares about and understands the thoughts, views, and emotions of the audiences, and interacts, engages with them, the audiences will certainly come back.

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