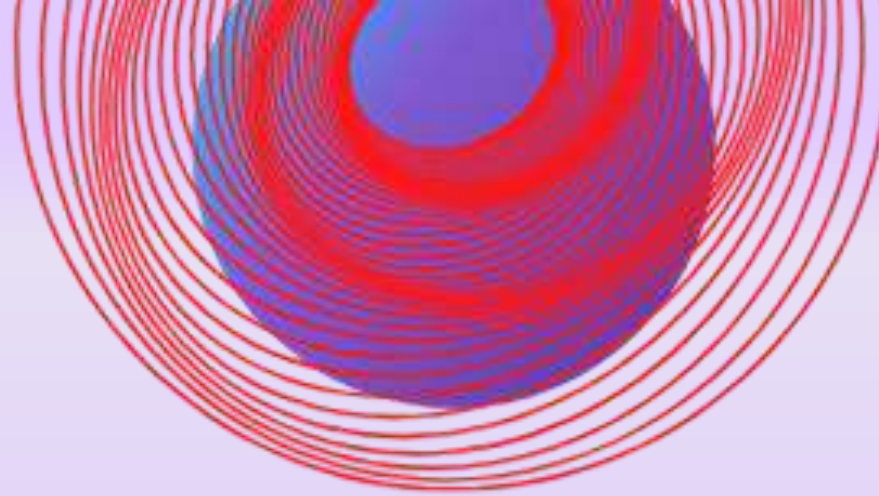




DigiENTAid

Digital First Aid Kit ENTreprenneur's for
recovering from COVID-19 pandemic

CONSULTANT TRAINING TOOLKIT-WORKING ON MENTAL BALANCE CHAPTER 9

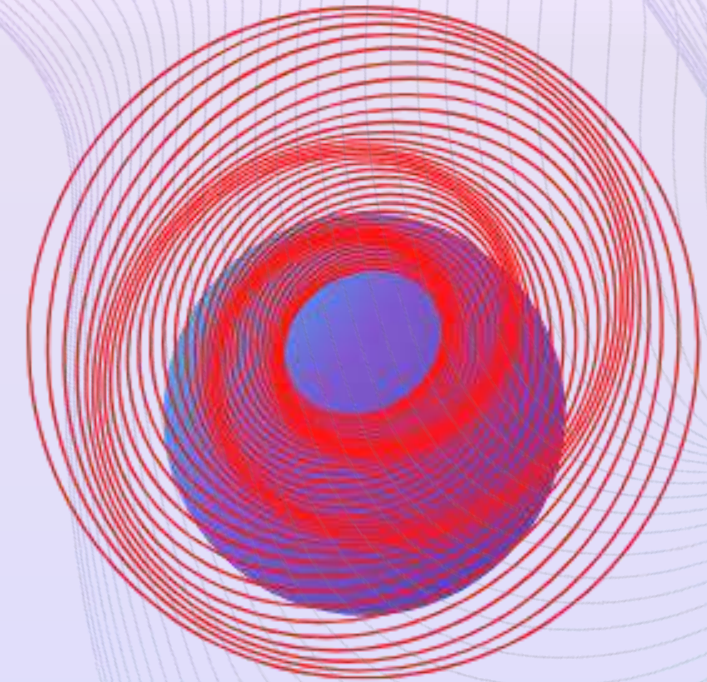
DigiENTAiD

CONSULTANT TRAINING TOOLKIT

CHAPTER 9

Working on mental balance and determination

in time of crisis, getting back on track, but don't fall back!

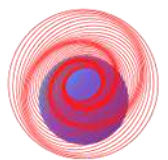


DigiENTAiD

Digital First Aid Kit ENTrepreneur's for
recovering from COVID-19 pandemic

Table of Contents

- 1. Importance of time management in SMEs*
- 2. Strategies for implementation of time management in SMES for business owners*
- 3. Landscape in EU – examples of companies based on work-life balance*
- 4. Communication between employer and employees in SMEs*
- 5. Communication strategies in SMEs*
- 6. Good practices*
- 7. References*

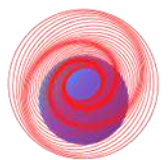


DigiENTAid

Digital First Aid Kit ENTrepreneur's for
recovering from COVID-19 pandemic

Skills to implement time management strategies

- 1. Importance of time management in SMEs*
- 2. Strategies for implementation of time management in SMES for business owners*
- 3. Landscape in EU – examples of companies based on work-life balance*



DigiENTAid

Digital First Aid Kit ENTrepreneur's for
recovering from COVID-19 pandemic

1. Importance of time management in SMEs

What is time management?

Personal time management is the set of measures aimed at achieving a balance between work, relaxation and fulfilling family obligations

The importance of time management in organizations

Organizational time management is the set of rules, practices and principles that allow work to be made more efficient by controlling the time allocated



The main factors that make us waste time:

- Procrastinating and postponing tasks unpleasant or too complicated - we tend to avoid dealing with it, hoping in vain that it will vanish somehow
- Attending long and unnecessary meetings - answering the following questions:
 - What would happen if we didn't hold this meeting?
 - Why are we meeting?
 - What is the purpose of the meeting?
 - How long should it last?
 - Who should attend?
 - Is this the best time to hold it?



The main factors that make us waste time:

- Clutter in working documents

Don't know where you put the report for the meeting that starts in 10 minutes? Can't find under the pile of maps on the desk some important notes?

Messy is wasting time! You better spend 10 minutes a day filing and tidying up documents than spend an hour a day looking for different maps.

- Inability to set clear priorities
- Every employee should know what are the goals and targets they have to achieve in their work



CONSULTANT TRAINING TOOLKIT

CHAPTER 9

The main factors that make us waste time:

- Visitors who keep us talking too much

Discussion can be often sterile, redundant or ineffective

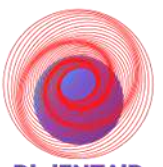
- Spending too much time on the phone or internet

Check on the phone's internal apps how much time you spend on average per day and think about whether this time is really justified

- Perfectionism

The more time you spend trying to make things even better and detailed, the more valuable time you waste

Pareto's theory : 80% of the results are achieved with 20% of the effort



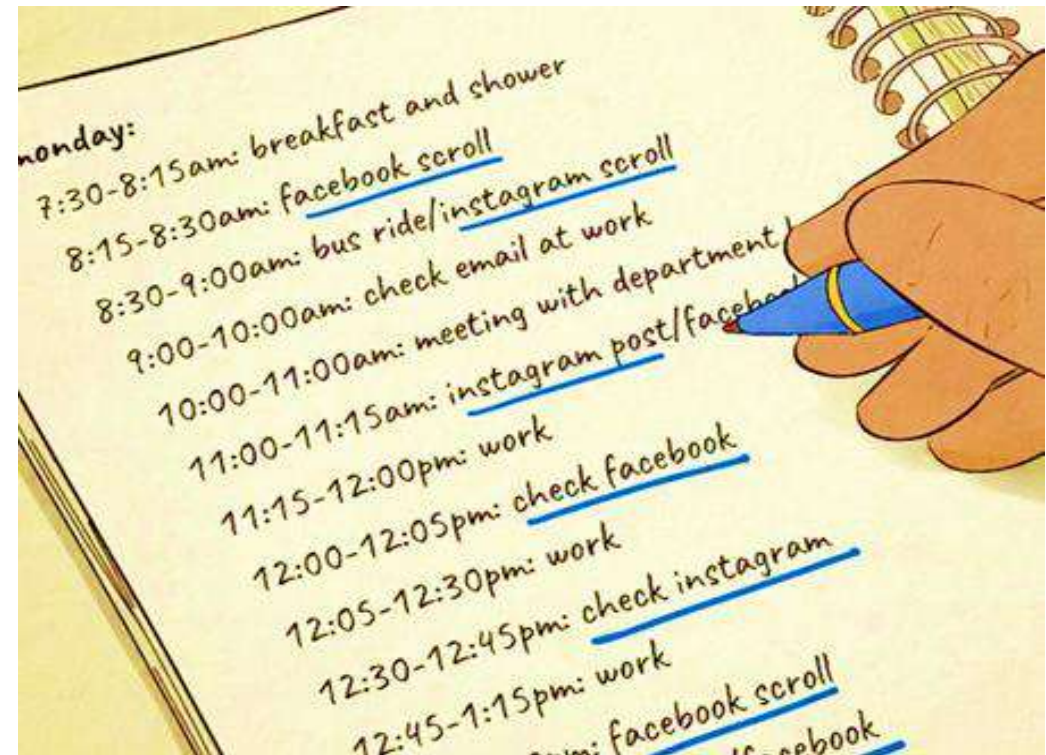
DigiENTAid

Digital First Aid Kit ENTREpreneur's for
recovering from COVID-19 pandemic

2. Ways to improve time management for employees

What are the time-consuming factors in your case?

- Make a detailed diary of what you have done for a day or two; writing down absolutely everything you have done and the duration of each activity, even if it is only 10 minutes.
- Analyze which activities are unnecessarily time-consuming: What should you give up? What should you reduce? Would it help if you would do things differently or in a different order? Could you link your activities in such a way as to save time?



Ways to improve time management for employees:

- Make lists of what you need to do each day

The duration of our activities can be an estimate and draw up a realistic schedule.

It is better to allocate extra 15 minutes for each activity than to run around excusing yourself for being late!

- Don't try to multitask

Allocate time to deal with only one activity and take breaks between

- Establish and stick to a daily routine

Routine gives us stability in life, helps us understand how we spend our time and gives us milestones for each day.



Ways to improve time management for employees:

- Prioritisation of activities

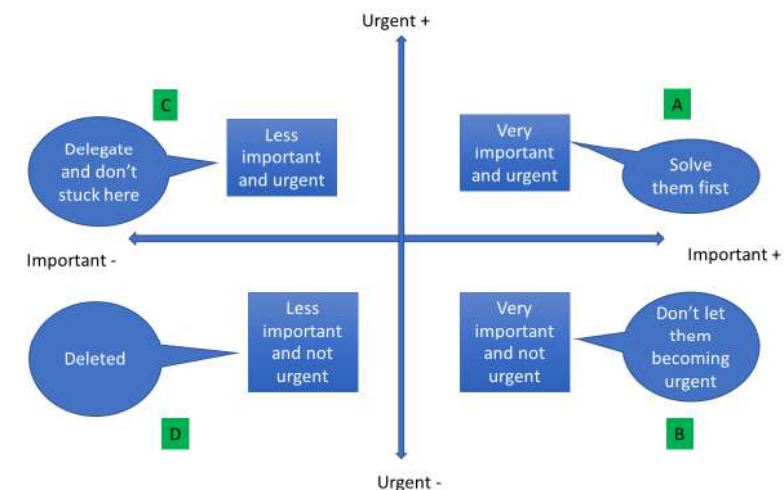
Do not let the important things become urgent!
Get them done early!

- Limit the number of tasks you take on
Learn to assess realistically what you are able to take on, and learn to say NO

There are three elements that should be involved in a refusal:

- Expressing regret that we cannot help
- Clearly stating the refusal
- The reasons for refusing

Priority Action Matrix



Ways to improve time management for employees:

- Stop delaying things that annoy or overwhelm you

Dealing with an unpleasant task?

- Allocate a short period of time for this activity, just enough to get started, and promise yourself a reward

Having a large task that requires days and weeks to complete?

- Spread the work over several days but with a small number of hours/day

Afraid of failing?

- Redefine the expectations and set more realistic and achievable goals

Dealing with a new task that involves unexpected elements?

- Take some time to explore, to make a list of problems that might arise

Having a very far away deadline?

- Divide the task into subtasks and set closer deadlines for each of them



Ways to improve time management for managers and entrepreneurs:

- Setting SMART objectives

Set and explain measurable and tangible goals to employees, establish priorities and drawn up an activity plans

- Plan by year, by month, by day

Plan activities at the level of the company, department or team, explain it and get the agreement that the planning can be followed.

- Set and communicate very clear deadlines

Each task must have a deadline: "The sales report must be completed by Monday, 15 March this year"

Gantt Chart



Ways to improve time management for managers and entrepreneurs:

- Delegate tasks to competent persons

There are four factors to consider:

- How important is the quality of the result? Is the result vitally important to the company and would a failure lead to disaster?
- How skilled is the person to whom we delegate, how much experience and competence does they have?
- Do we have the capacity to help those to whom we delegate, acting as a coach?
- Is there enough time for employees to learn/get used to what they need to do?

For effective delegation, managers need to:

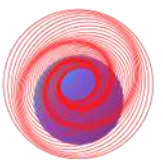
- Clearly define the task to be delegated (what, how and by when needs to be done)
- Define the limits of responsibility in solving tasks (does the employee have full freedom or are there certain constraints, procedures to which he should conform?)
- Choose appropriate methods (ask employees to periodically present the state of the work or fragments of the work already done)



Ways to improve time management for managers and entrepreneurs:

- Prioritise activities - use Priority Action Matrix!
- Use time planning tools - Microsoft's To Do, Milk's Remember, Trello, Todoist ...
- Learn employees to use time management instruments - provide clear job descriptions, duties and responsibilities, describe relationships between employees.

Encourage employees to make a daily to-do list, to use IT tools for scheduling and impose rules for keeping order in the workplace.



Ways to improve time management for managers and entrepreneurs:

- Organise and conduct meetings efficiently
- Why to meet - objectives (to inform, to decide)
- What to discuss - draft the topics to be discussed
- Who is coming - nominate participants, check availability, costs involved
- Where to meet - prepare a large enough room with lighting, technical equipment, sound system
- What to work with - prepare and make available background materials for the topics to be discussed

The mediator role is clearly defined:

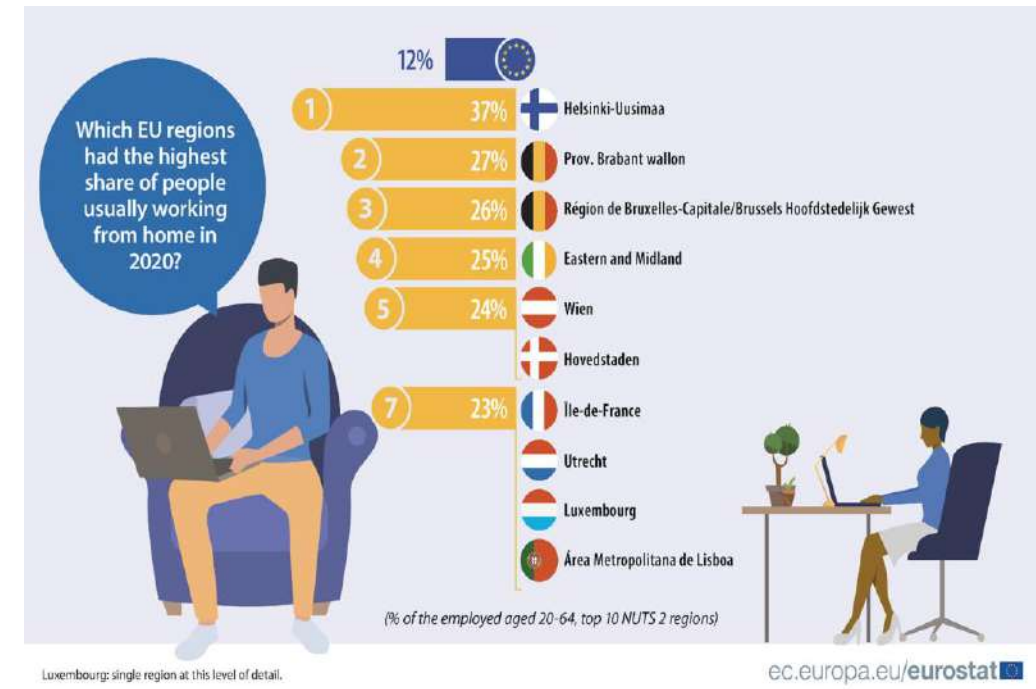
- Puts items on the agenda
- Ensures that all participants are equal engage in discussions
- Ensures that the meeting agenda is respected
- Avoids interruptions and deviations from the topic
- Ensures that the meeting is fruitful and achieves its objectives (e.g. insists to be adopted an decision)
- Close the session (a resume of the meeting will be sent to all participants in one or two days)



3. Landscape in EU – examples of companies based on work-life balance

Companies have the power to promote a flexible program, which allows achieving a balance between professional life and personal life:

- Working remote
- Hybrid working model
- 4 working days/week
- Flexible working schedule
- Part-time program
- Job sharing



Communication skills

4. Communication between employer and employees in SMEs

5. Communication strategies in SMEs

6. Good practices



What is interpersonal communication process?

A relationship between individuals that involves the transmission, whether intentional or not, of information or feelings, intended to inform or to influence an individual or a group of individuals

How many communication types exist?

Verbal communication

Information is transferred through words

- Two sensory channels are used: auditory for oral communication, and visual for written communication.

Paraverbal communication

Information is coded, decoded and transmitted by voice

- It inevitably accompanies verbal communication and used auditory channel

Nonverbal communication

Information is transmitted through body movements and posture and through facial expressions

- The information is transmitted through visual channel



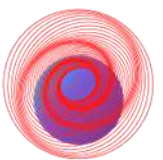
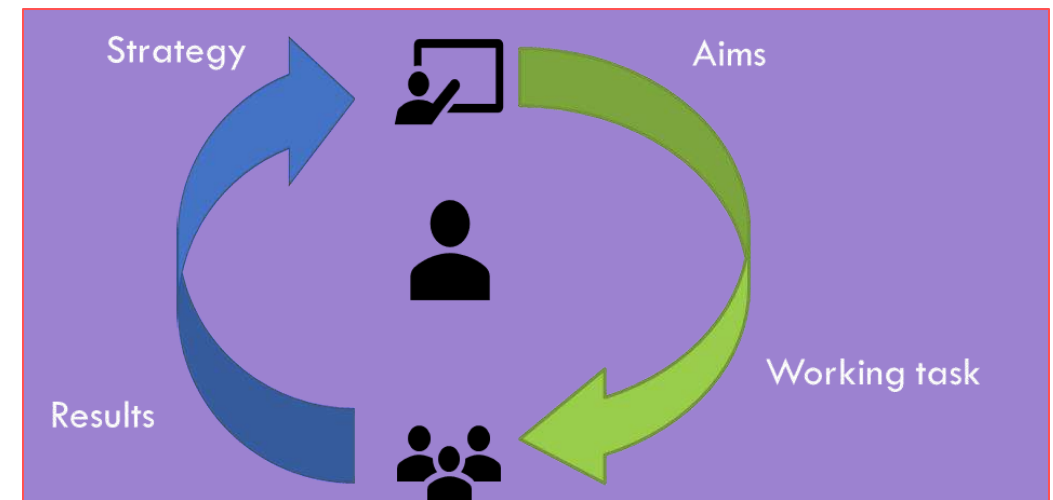
Organizational communication is carried out according to the same principles as interpersonal communication, except that in this context, communication strongly emphasizes hierarchical relationships and the status of functions

4. *Communication between employer and employees in SMEs*

- Managers "translate" organizational objectives for employees, but at the same time they collect and summarize the results obtained.

Internal organizational communication:

- Top-down
- Bottom-up
- Horizontal
- Informal Networking



Communication between employer and employees in SMEs

Disruptive elements in organizational communication



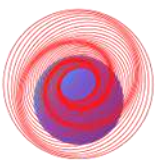
- Excessive filtering of information, omission of important information
Solution: "open door policy"



- Slow transmission of information from management to employees and back
Solution: organizing direct meetings with employees



- Informal communication, rumours
Solution: building a transparent communication relationship with employees





- Conflicting role requests, support and control at the same time
Solution: clearly establish the responsibilities and role attributions through job descriptions, especially for managers



- The effect of spoiling, bad news are avoided
Solution: the messenger should not be punished



- Effect of job status, managers do not value communication with subordinates
Solution: establishing mandatory deadlines for organizing meetings with subordinates



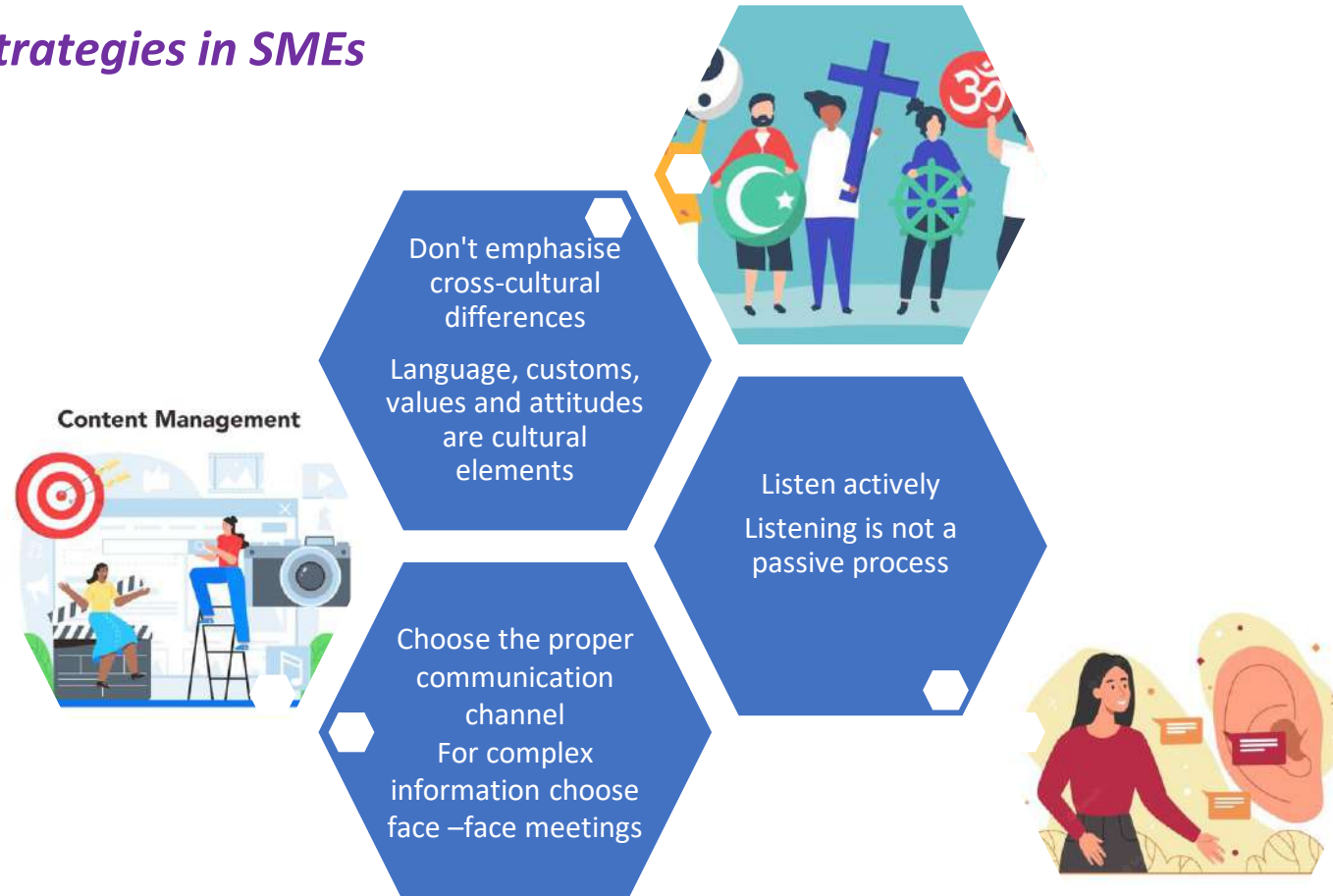
- Short time allocated to discussions with subordinates, few minutes per day
Solution: diversification and identification of the most effective communication channels with subordinates



5. Communication strategies in SMEs

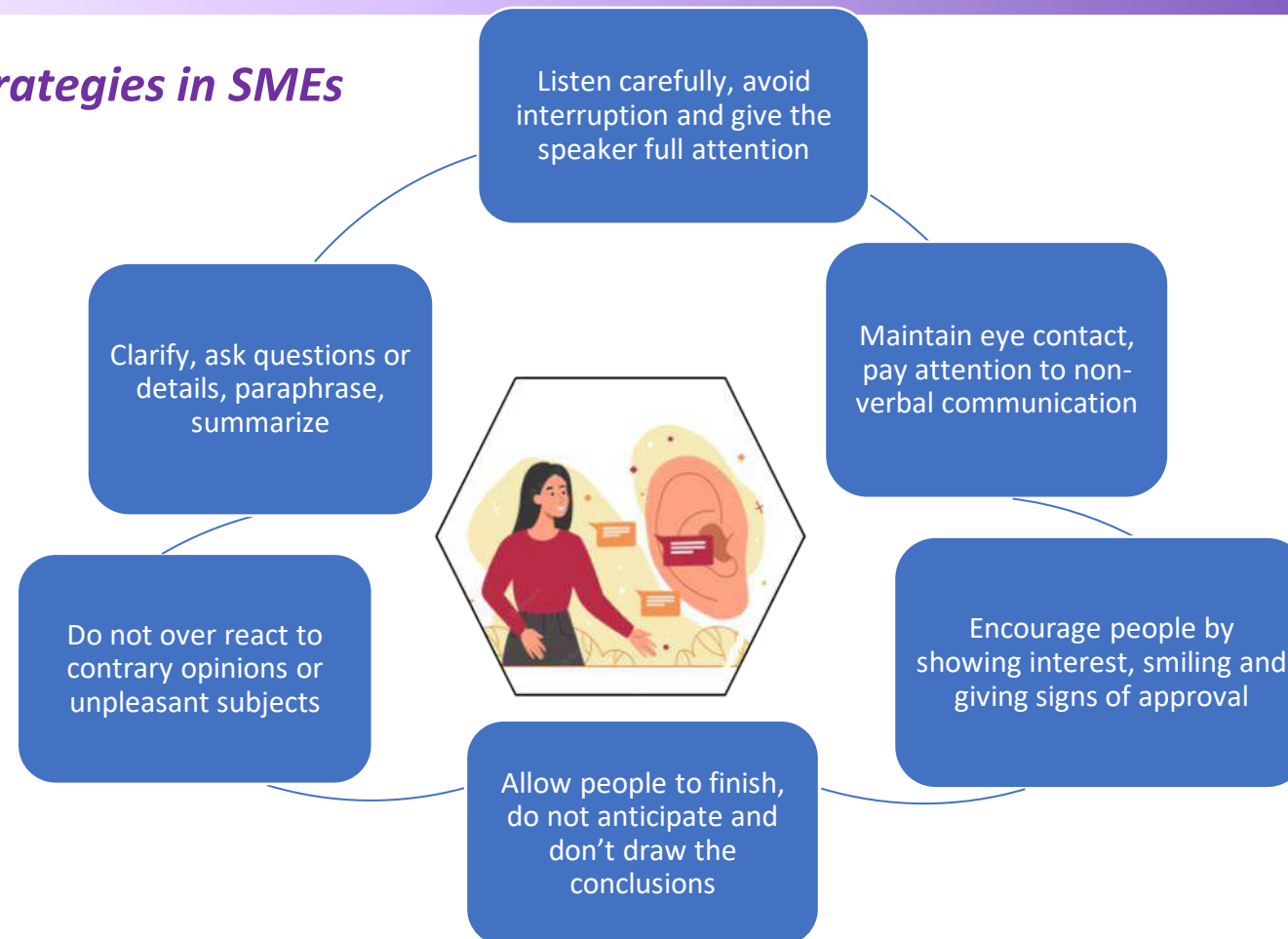


Communication strategies in SMEs



Communication strategies in SMEs

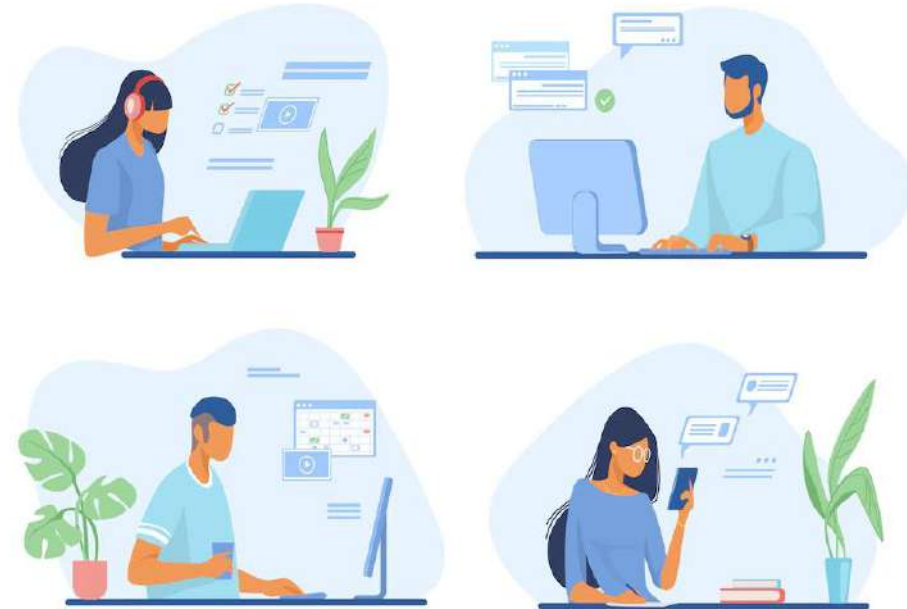
Active listening



6. Good practices

Improving online communication:

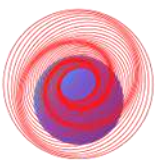
- *Choose the proper communication channel*
 - *Email – for lengthy messages*
 - *Chat - for instant message / conversation*
 - *Audio/ video calls - inexpensive real-time interaction with single / group of people*
 - *Social media – for communicate with many people at a time*



Good practices

Improving online communication:

- *Respect the Digital Etiquette:*
 - *Be polite and friendly as in real life*
 - *Acknowledge cultural differences*
 - *Use humour and set a positive note*
 - *Do not involve in confrontational discussion*
 - *Do not use too many abbreviations, take time to respond*
 - *Use images and videos (emojis)*



Good practices

Improving online meetings:



Choose an online platform that works for everyone - Zoom, Microsoft Team, Google Meetings

Make sure that the team is prepared: has downloaded the same platform, selected the appropriate settings and has functional microphones and cameras



Learn to use the platform tools in advanced to be ready to offer solution advices to the team

Arrive early for meetings to have time for iced-breaks discussion



Learn how to integrate into discussions: identify yourself, use the microphone properly, use chat to avoid interruption

7. References

Business Communication, Raymond V. Lesikar, College of Business Administration University of North Texas
Professional Development, Mary Wilkes and C. Bruce Crosswait, South Dakota State University
Management Skills and Application, Paul N. Keaton, University of Wisconsin
Eu ca manager, CODEX – The Open University, Bucharest
<https://www.zenefits.com/workest/7-types-flexible-work-arrangements/>
<https://www.ehealthinsurance.com/resources/small-business/flexible-work-hours-in-a-small-business>
<https://www.shiftthework.com/blog/6-best-practices-for-effective-communication>
<https://www.getmailbird.com/online-communication/>
<https://entreresource.com/online-communication-tips/>

