

## Chapter

### **Digital skills for people with disabilities**

A concept for a practice-oriented, blended online and face-to-face training for professionals working on digital inclusion in disability work

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# What do I have for you today?

- About the authors and organizations
- What is the chapter about?
  - Motivation, background and context
  - Main content of the chapter
- First practical experiences
- What's in it for you?

# About the authors

## **Marcus Flachmeyer**

- studied education, psychology and sociology in Frankfurt am Main and Münster (Germany)
- 1985 to 2000, managerial and executive positions in education, social services and health care
- since the mid-1990s, he has been active as an internal and external consultant of organizational change processes
- since 2001 research associate at HeurekaNet - Freies Institut für Bildung, Forschung und Innovation e.V. in Münster (Germany)
- 2006 to 2017, additionally lecturer at the Saxion University of Applied Sciences in Enschede (The Netherlands), department of Social Work, with a focus on management and research

## **Dr. Lutz Siemer**

- studied psychology at the Free University of Berlin (Germany)
- since 2005, lecturer at Saxion University of Applied Sciences (Enschede/The Netherlands), department of Social Work, engaging in teaching and research & development
- since 2011, member of the scientific staff at HeurekaNet - Freies Institut für Bildung, Forschung und Innovation e.V. in Münster (Germany), particularly in the project areas of digitalization, lifelong learning, and children, adolescents and young adults.
- 2020, received his PhD from the University of Twente (The Netherlands) on the topic of "Blended web-based and face-to-face addiction treatment"



# About the organization

- **HeurekaNet** - Free Institute for Education, Research and Innovation e.V.
- Founded in 2000 by professionals from education, management consulting, consumer protection and the third sector
- Headquarter in Münster (Germany)
- Project areas:
  - Lifelong Learning
  - Children, Youth and Young Adults
  - Gender and Diversity
  - Future of Work
  - Health and Care
  - Civic Engagement
- Multi-professional network structure and project-based work



# What is the chapter about?

## Motivation

- Covid 19 pandemic
- Importance of digitalization

## Background

- Trend study "Digital Participation of People with Disabilities"
- Further training of professionals in disability care

## Context

- Specific request for continuing training from a regional provider of care services for people with disabilities
- In-house training

# What is the chapter about?

## Main content of the chapter

- Introduction & context
- Objectives of the training
- Participants
- Didactic approaches
- Structure and forms of work of the training
- Activities, time schedule, and workload
- Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the training concept

DIGITAL SKILLS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES - A CONCEPT FOR  
A PRACTICE-ORIENTED, BLENDED ONLINE AND FACE-TO-FACE TRAINING  
FOR PROFESSIONALS WORKING ON DIGITAL INCLUSION  
IN DISABILITY WORK

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### Introduction

The Covid 19 pandemic has made the importance of digitalization particularly clear. It is therefore important that all people can use the possibilities of the new methods and techniques - even if they are mentally or physically limited." (Leibniz-Institut für Bildungsforschung und Bildungsinformation, 2020) However, this demand for digital participation for people with disabilities, formulated by the German Leibniz Institute for Educational Research and Educational Information in light of the Covid 19 pandemic, also exists independently of the particular pandemic situation. The trend study "Digital Participation of People with Disabilities" conducted by the German SINUS Institute (Borgstedt & Möller-Stawinski, 2020) already examined the digital participation of people with disabilities "on", "through" and "in" digital technologies and media in 2019 and identified a need for action. The study concludes that the opportunities presented by digitalization outweigh the risks for people with disabilities. The opportunities named are: (1) Compensation of impairments, (2) new access to areas of society, (3) autonomy and self-determined living, (4) expansion of skills and competences, and (5) networking. These opportunities are offset by the risks of (1) a lack of digital skills among users and professionals, (2) high costs, and (3) growing inequality.

Regarding the need for further training of professionals in disability care, the SINUS study emphasizes that the currently still insufficient digital competence of people with disabilities is "particularly linked to the caring, teaching and accompanying staff, who themselves have to establish professionalized access to digital media in the first place". In addition, "competences must be acquired to provide these accesses for people with disabilities, to carry out appropriate training and to be able to monitor and accompany their use in a

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# First practical experiences

- We started in-house training in September of this year.
- About half of the training has been completed.
- At the beginning, it was difficult for the participants to estimate the planned workload for the training, so there was slight resistance due to the expected overload combined with the already high daily workload.
- With further familiarization with the learning projects, participants were able to overcome this resistance and are motivated to implement their learning projects.
- From the trainer's point of view, the designed training is going very well.



# What's in it for you?

The chapter offers you a training concept for professionals working with people with disabilities,

- that addresses a relevant training need (i.e. digital inclusion);
- that has been developed with the involvement of relevant stakeholders;
- that is elaborated in detail;
- that uses a variety of methods (online & offline modes, synchronous and asynchronous teaching, individual and group work) in a targeted manner;
- that can be economically implemented in the training practice; and
- that is promising both in its theoretical basis and in its initial practical experience.

