

“It takes a village” to develop character

- Designing learning activities to promote the integration of 21st Century Skills in part-time education

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Background:

- The project originates from Business Academy Aarhus' work with integrating 21st Century Skills in the field of full-time education. Based on these experiences, this project expands the endeavor to part-time educations.
- The aim is to integrate 21st Century Skills and character development into current and future learning activities – thus, it is a question of adapting the didactics of educations to support the students' opportunities to match the demands of the 21st century labour market, which demands more than just technical skills.

Purpose:

- Examine the most feasible ways to work with 21st Century Skills in a part-time education, including how these skills are **best integrated into learning activities** (didactic initiatives).
- Examine how facilitators of part-time educations can optimally design learning activities, which can promote **the integration of 21st Century Skills or character development**

Methods and literature search:

- Discussions, workshops, and interviews with teachers and a manager from the part-time department at BAA
- Research articles, focusing on part-time education of managers at universities and business schools
- Expert interviews with stakeholders from the project: Program on character formation in vocational education (Aalborg University, UC Syd, Pluss Leadership, and Center for Youth Research).

How can facilitators design learning activities?



Figure 1: Character formation, own make 2022 – with inspiration from Louw et al., 2020

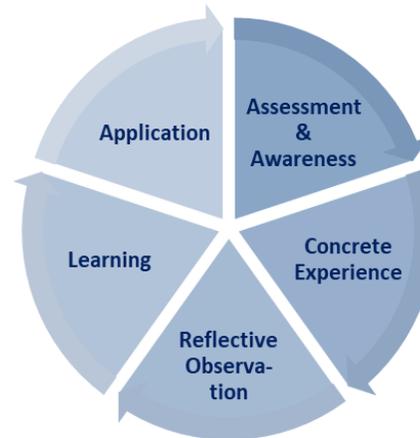


Figure 2: Kiersch & Gullekson (2021)

Conclusion:

The ancient African proverb "It takes a village to raise a child" implies that raising a child is a communal effort, and it is a good summary of how to integrate character development into part-time education and programs.

It is necessary to **understand, relate to, and involve the context** when integrating character development in Part-Time Educations.

Learning activities (figure #2 & figure #3)

- "Guided self-reflection" (#2) and "Give voice to the values (#3)"
- The purpose of these learning activities is to provide tangible suggestions on how facilitators **can help individual students discover their own dominant behavioral preferences and at the same time develop their character**. Let the students work together and share reflections and experiences. This creates the opportunity to self-reflect and recognize other people's feelings, thoughts, or behaviors - in a safe learning environment.



Figure 3, Mary C. Gentile (2012)

Selected references:

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