



RISKREAL

*Virtual Reality & Digital Tools for the Evaluation and Training
of Psychosocial Skills within Industries with Psychosocial
Occupational Hazards*

Project N°: 2020-1-ES01-KA204-081847



IN THIS ISSUE

- Introduction..... Pg 1
- The Role Social Skills Play..... Pg 2
- Social Skills & The Workplace..... Pg 2
- Under the Spotlight..... Pg 3
- Project Partners..... Pg 4

FOSTERING INCLUSION & COMPETITIVENESS THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

Introduction by Keith Coleiro (MECB Ltd.)

Welcome to the second newsletter for the RISKREAL project. This issue will delve deeper into the importance of social skills, both when discussing the employability of workers, but also in relation to the economic competitiveness of their employers. Moreover, the newsletter will also explore and put under the spotlight the methodology used within the project in order to identify the psychosocial skills necessary and most relevant to the sectors specifically targeted by the project.



THE ROLE SOCIAL SKILLS PLAY

HIGHLIGHTING THEIR IMPORTANCE IN ACHIEVING ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS AND JOB SUCCESS.

2

The drive for effectiveness or efficiency, particularly in relation to organisational success, is an ambition that is commonly shared. Whilst technological solutions can aid a great deal in achieving a greater level of productivity, they can also be easily adopted by other companies. Human resources are often that unique factor that distinguishes one organisation from another, it is a source of competitive advantage and remains a central ingredient towards organisational success.

Organisational processes are largely dependent on individual communications. Social skills encompass the ability for employees to effectively interact with others. Whether these interactions are internally among the team, externally with suppliers, or even with the clients themselves; the outcome of such exchanges greatly influences the organisation. Effective social skills allow social interactions that are predictable and which can consequently be more easily understood. The more established and harmonised interactions are, the clearer the level of communication and the easier it is to minimise misunderstandings.

SOCIAL SKILLS & THE WORKPLACE

Studies have shown social skills to be related to the **likelihood of holding jobs, increased employability, enhanced job performance, augmented productivity** and are also related to **career success**. In addition, unlike other predictors for career success, such as mental ability and conscientiousness, social skills can be more **easily developed and cultivated**.



UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT: THE DELPHI METHOD

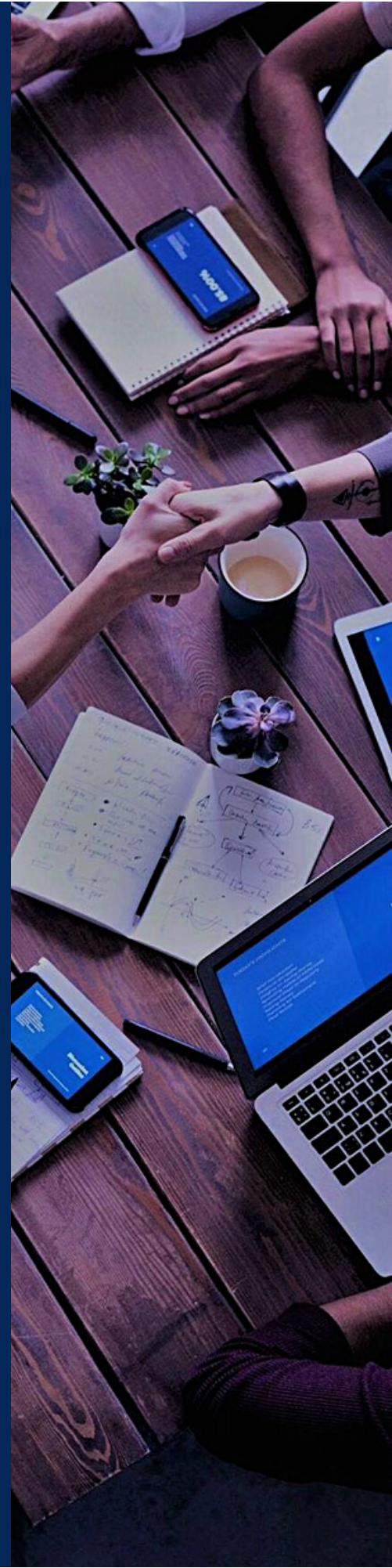
How can one identify the most desired and relevant psychosocial skills for a particular industry, especially when the body of literature pertaining to the subject matter is very limited?

In response to the above challenge, the **RISKREAL** project relied on the Delphi technique. This method involves uniting a group of panelists or participants that were especially sampled due to their expertise in a field or a subject matter. Consequently; the project brought together a group of participants from each of the four partner countries; consisting of psychologists, HR specialists, trainers, educators, employers, industry representatives and policy makers.

THE DELPHI PROCESS

This often takes place across a series of two or more consecutive rounds or questionnaires. In the first round, panelists are asked to generate and identify the most salient issues. As a result, a larger reliance on open-ended questions is employed at this stage, in order to facilitate brainstorming. The information extracted from the first round is then assembled and used to inform the survey instrument that will be circulated in the following round.

An evaluation phase follows the initial generation, where participants are provided with the cohort's collective responses and are invited to re-evaluate or narrow down the initial responses. Here a more quantitative style is adopted in order further concentrate the discussion towards a specific outcome. The end goal behind the process is the formation of consensus and agreement among the panelists over the questionnaire items in order to generate new conclusions.





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