



SILVER CODERS

IO3: INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT CONTENT

-

TERMS AND SCHEMES OF REFERENCE



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GENERIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Improving the digital literacy and coding ability of adults requires a coordinated effort by policymakers, educators, and other stakeholders, who can work together to provide training, support, and resources that meet the diverse needs and contexts of adult learners. To ensure that these are some generic recommendations to be followed:


 **Policy recommendations:** Policymakers can play a key role in promoting digital literacy and coding ability among adults by developing policies that support the provision of affordable and accessible training and resources. Policies could include funding for training programs, tax incentives for employers who provide digital skills training, and public-private partnerships to support the development of digital skills.


 **Educational recommendations:** Educators can contribute to improving digital literacy and coding ability of adults by developing and delivering high-quality training programs that are tailored to the needs of different learners. Training programs could be delivered through a variety of modalities, such as online learning, blended learning, and face-to-face instruction. Educators can also design training programs that focus on specific digital skills, such as coding, data analysis, or digital marketing, and that incorporate hands-on learning activities and real-world projects.


 **Industry recommendations:** Industry stakeholders can support the development of digital literacy and coding ability of adults by providing opportunities for experiential learning, such as internships, apprenticeships, and hackathons. Industry stakeholders can also support the development of digital skills by contributing to the design and delivery of training programs and by offering incentives for employees who acquire new digital skills.


 **Community recommendations:** Community organizations, such as libraries, non-profits, and community centres, can provide valuable support for the development of digital literacy and coding ability of adults by offering access to technology, resources, and training programs. Community organizations can also facilitate the development of peer networks and communities of practice that enable learners to share knowledge, collaborate, and support each other.


Improving digital literacy and coding ability of adults also requires careful consideration of the diverse needs and contexts of different populations, such as low-income adults, immigrants, seniors, and people with disabilities. This implies taking in consideration the different contexts and diverse populations:

 **Accessibility:** Training programs should be designed to be accessible to learners with different levels of literacy, numeracy, and digital skills, and to learners with disabilities. This may involve providing materials in multiple languages, using visual aids and multimedia, providing assistive technology, and offering flexible learning paths.

 **Cultural Sensitivity:** Training programs should be designed to be culturally sensitive and responsive to the needs and preferences of different populations. This may involve incorporating culturally relevant examples and case studies, using culturally appropriate teaching methods, and engaging with learners from different cultural backgrounds.


 **Affordability:** Training programs should be affordable and accessible to low-income adults, who may not have the financial resources to pay for training. This may involve offering scholarships, grants, or subsidies, and partnering with employers and community organizations to provide training.


 **Flexibility:** Training programs should be designed to be flexible and responsive to the needs of adult learners, who may have competing priorities such as work, family, and other commitments. This may involve offering self-paced learning options, evening and weekend classes, and online learning options.

 **Career Pathways:** Training programs should be designed to provide clear pathways to employment and career advancement, and to be responsive to the needs of different industries and occupations. This may involve partnering with employers to identify skills gaps and job opportunities, and designing training programs that align with the skills and knowledge required for specific jobs.


SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

The feedback collected during the SILVERCODERS implementation allowed to determine a very specific set of recommendations:

 **Training must be very practical:** When it comes to adult learners, practicality is key. Adults are motivated to learn when they see a direct application of the knowledge and skills they acquire in their daily lives. Therefore, training programs should focus on practical applications of digital literacy and coding skills. Training programs should incorporate hands-on learning activities and real-world projects that enable adult learners to apply their newly acquired skills in relevant contexts. For example, a coding training program could include a project where adult learners build a website or develop a mobile app. A practical approach to training not only keeps learners engaged but also helps them develop the skills they need to succeed in the digital age.

 **Training must be close to the interests of the adult learners:** Adult learners are more likely to be engaged and motivated to learn when the training is relevant to their interests and needs. Therefore, training programs should be tailored to the interests and needs of adult learners. For example, a training program designed for a group of teachers could focus on using technology in the classroom, while a training program designed for small business owners could focus on digital marketing. The training should be designed in such a way that it addresses the specific needs and interests of adult learners, which will increase their motivation to learn.

 **Guidance from other sources than family and friends:** Adult learners may benefit from guidance from sources other than family and friends. For example, guidance from a mentor, a coach, or a subject matter expert can provide adult learners with valuable insights and advice. These individuals can offer practical advice on how to apply the newly acquired skills in real-world settings, provide feedback on the learning process, and offer support and encouragement throughout the training. Having access to guidance from other sources can help adult learners stay motivated and engaged in the learning process.

 **Ensure a low threshold to learning new skills:** Adult learners may be intimidated by the prospect of learning new skills, especially if they have had little exposure to technology. Therefore, training programs should be designed with a low threshold to learning new skills. The training should be delivered in small, manageable steps, with plenty of opportunities for practice and feedback. The training should also be designed to be accessible to learners with different levels of digital literacy and coding ability.

Maintain learning motivation for adults over the age of 55 even if this is a challenge:

Maintaining learning motivation for adults over the age of 55 can be challenging. Adult learners in this age group may have a fixed mindset, believing that their ability to learn new skills is limited. Therefore, training programs should be designed to challenge this fixed mindset and encourage adult learners to adopt a growth mindset. The training should also be designed to be relevant and engaging, with a focus on practical applications of the newly acquired skills.

Constant appreciation of the seniors and the capitalization of their previous professional and personal experience:

The constant appreciation of seniors and the capitalization of their previous professional and personal experience is essential in maintaining motivation. Adult learners in this age group bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to the training, and their contributions should be recognized and valued. The training should also be designed to build on the existing knowledge and experience of the adult learners, which can increase their motivation and engagement.

Negotiate learning objectives and content:

Negotiating learning objectives and content is an important aspect of designing effective digital literacy and coding training programs for adults. By involving adult learners in the process of setting learning objectives and choosing the content of the program, trainers can increase learner motivation and engagement. Adult learners have unique learning needs, goals, and preferences, so it is important to work collaboratively with them to create training programs that are relevant, meaningful, and achievable. During the negotiation process, trainers should take into account the learners' prior knowledge, experience, and learning styles to ensure that the content of the training program meets their needs.

Focus on immediately applying new knowledge to real-life situations and problems:

Adult learners are most interested in learning subjects that have immediate relevance and impact to their job or personal life. Therefore, it is important to focus on immediately applying new knowledge to real-life situations and problems during digital literacy and coding training programs. By using real-world examples and scenarios, trainers can help learners connect the new concepts they are learning with their existing knowledge and experiences. This can increase learner engagement and motivation by demonstrating the practical value of the new knowledge and skills. Additionally, trainers should encourage learners to apply their new knowledge to real-life situations outside of the training program to reinforce their learning and build confidence in their abilities.

As a trainer, adopt the role of a taskmaster:

As a trainer, it is important to adopt the role of a taskmaster to ensure that the training program stays on track and meets the intended learning objectives. This involves tactfully cutting short irrelevant discussions, preventing detours, and maintaining a consistent level of detail throughout the session. Trainers should establish clear expectations for the training program and communicate them to the learners to ensure that everyone is on the same page. Additionally, trainers should be organized and well-prepared, with a clear plan for the session and a backup plan in case of unexpected challenges. By adopting the role of a taskmaster, trainers can help adult learners make the most of their training experience and achieve their learning goals.



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