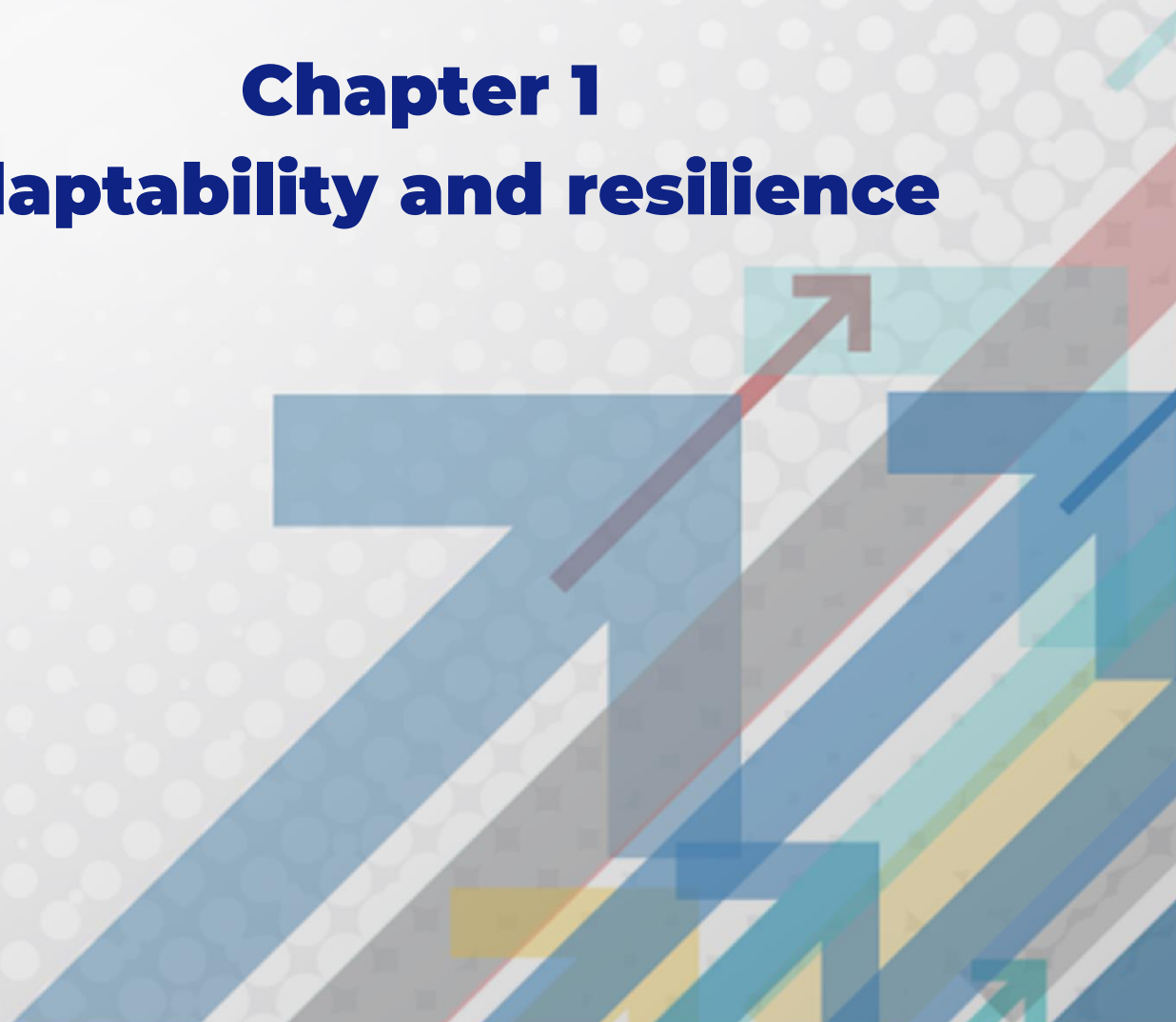




Professional reconversion to ensure a better professional future

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Chapter 1 Adaptability and resilience



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Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated thinking in many professional sectors about anticipating and preventing economic crises and their impact on the business world.

In an ever-changing world, characterised by rapid and unpredictable change, it is essential to develop adaptability and resilience skills to adapt effectively to new challenges and unforeseen situations. Adaptability and resilience skills are qualities that enable individuals to adapt to new or difficult situations, to rebuild, to recover from an ordeal and to keep moving forward despite obstacles. These skills are increasingly important in all areas of life, especially in the workplace, where employers are looking for workers who can adapt quickly to new technologies and market changes. In this context, it is therefore crucial to understand how to develop these skills in order to face the challenges of the modern world with confidence and resilience.

We will see that companies and employees who develop and integrate these skills will be better able to adapt to changing business environments. In addition, they will be significantly better placed to respond to and prevail in the post-COVID-19 world.

Learning Objectives

- Understanding the concepts of adaptability and resilience
- Recognising the different types of stress and their impact on overall health
- Realising the importance of coping skills
- Discovering how resilience can improve coping skills

1.1. What is adaptability and resilience?

1.1.1. Definition

In the human sciences, resilience is the capacity of a given system to overcome alterations caused by one or more disruptive elements, in order to return to its normal, initial state and/or normal functioning.

For an organisation (a company, a group of individuals, a society) resilience is therefore the capacity to adapt to internal or external disturbances.

This resilience is directly favoured in the context of companies by the need for a permanent adaptation process in order to prevent/surmount any crisis or unforeseen situation through appropriate methodologies.

Adaptation refers to the ability to adapt to and accept change quickly. In the business world, it also means facing one's fears and mistakes and preparing to accept new challenges.

An adaptable individual is able to react quickly to changes in ideas, responsibilities, expectations, trends, strategies and other processes in a company.

1.1.2. Characteristics

In psychology, the notion of resilience refers to all the processes that consist in an individual overcoming a psychological trauma in order to rebuild himself. It is built around 8 stages:

1. Defence-protection: preparing for / anticipating challenges
2. Balancing tension: identify the challenge and accept it (don't deny it)
3. Challenge: regulate your emotions and become aware of the ordeal
4. Recovery: change your perspective, question the challenge to see what it can teach you
5. Evaluation: evaluate the challenges so that you can adapt to them
6. Assessing the importance: the meaning and significance of the test
7. Self-positivity: trust yourself
8. Creation: adapting and coming up with new ideas to bounce back.

Adaptability is characterised by an ability to analyse the situation and the environment quickly, to hear and understand different points of view - sometimes totally opposed to one's own. It reflects a facility to accept new challenges, adopt new tools, behaviours, talents, deal with stress and times of crisis.

There are several skills behind a person's adaptability that enable them to deal with change in a positive and proactive way:

- Communication skills
- Interpersonal skills
- Ability to overcome difficulties
- Creative and strategic thinking
- Team spirit
- Organisational skills

Adaptability implies a sense of personal choice, of purposefully navigating—rather than being driven by—changing circumstances. Resilience is the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties. Resilience gives you the ability to bounce forward with new insights and learning you can carry into the future.

While adaptability involves changing to manage under new conditions, resilience, through 'bouncing back', implies the ability to revert to a previous, more positive state, after experiencing some difficulty or challenge.

1.1.3. Values

Resilience enables people to deal with failures and learn from them, to get through life's trials without letting themselves be defeated, and to find resources within themselves in difficult situations. In this way, it helps to rebuild self-confidence and self-esteem and develops flexibility and enthusiasm in the face of change. It also allows one to develop creativity through the perspective it invokes: looking back on the means and strengths used to overcome a situation allows one to realise the importance and existence of one's own creativity.

The ability to overcome difficulties shows, among other things, the direct link between resilience and adaptability. The ability to evolve, change, adjust and question is increasingly important in today's rapidly changing world, which is just emerging from the global crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Here are two concrete examples to help you understand resilience at work:

- An employee who has failed in a project is resilient if he can accept this failure, analyse it and understand it. He does not remain focused on his mistakes and is able to draw useful conclusions for their professional life. He carries out the project using a different method or preparation, or moves on to assignments more suited to their skills.
- An employee, in conflict with a superior or colleague, is resilient if he or she ensures that the conflict does not become an obstacle. He or she may choose to discuss, defuse and resolve the conflict, or ask to work with others.

1.1.4. The importance of these competencies in modern life

Professions are evolving at great speed. Some are disappearing, others are appearing out of nowhere. It is essential today to be able to learn and train continuously, to keep a wide-open eye on the world of work in its entirety, its complexity and its challenges. The acceleration of technological and digital resources and mass automation are elements that contribute to this rapid evolution in which it can be easy to feel overwhelmed, left behind.

More and more positions in companies are "blurred" and you have to be able to juggle different jobs in different environments. Sometimes you also have to be able to start again, to make 180° turns. By emphasising our ability to adapt, we show employers that we are willing to try new things and acquire new skills.

The acceleration of the interconnection and interdependence of different professional sectors, markets and countries can create, as we are experiencing today, sources of fragility that we will have to learn to overcome through constant attention and monitoring. One potential response is certainly to learn to set up a collective resilience process in order to be able to respond quickly to potential shocks and to open up other fields of response, solutions and improvements in order to better anticipate future ones.

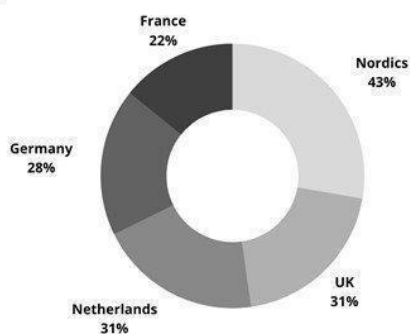
1.2. Teaching approaches

1.2.1. Challenges / Barriers

The idea that today practical skills and knowledge no longer tend to be central in the professional world, in companies and in the recruitment phases (CV, motivation elements, skills to be put forward in job interviews) is a modality that may lead to incomprehension or even repulsion among certain learners whose conceptions are still based on a system where purely practical experience is the only one that is rewarding.

Similarly, the idea of a long career in one and the same company, in which there would be potential for development, is becoming more and more eroded. The following representation gives us an idea of the percentage of workers in Europe who have already retrained:

Percentage of workers who have changed jobs



*according to the State of Hybrid Work Report by Owl Labs published in 2022

We can see that professional mobility is intensifying. Numerous links and bridges are being developed between related professions. In this process, it is necessary to train quickly and learn to mobilise and develop transversal skills.

Providing global solutions, taking into account the specificity of profiles, in order to respond to this intensification of needs, to this urgency on the part of both recruiters and workers, is a considerable challenge for the educator. Conveying the issues of this paradigm in a positive way can be just as complex to put in place.

Taking into account illiteracy and e-illiteracy must be an important part of the design of the learning content and in the reflection on the use of this or that type of pedagogical means to be put in place. The use of images, simple words and adapted digital tools (tablets, smartphone applications now more widely used than computers) can be solutions for developing skills that may be lacking in addition to those targeted.

1.2.2. The role of the educator

The educator needs to listen to be able to identify barriers on the participants' side. Observation, analysis and the ability to adapt will enable an effective response to needs.

Respect for individuality is essential: benevolence and empathy are essential to understand the person's life path, to guide learners while respecting their choices and privacy and to encourage them to progress.

The educator must encourage exchange within the group, around the experiences of each person in order to make the most of their skills with the aim of collective progress.

The educator must provide resources and additional tools to help participants develop their skills after the training, emphasising personal work and autonomy. This is to avoid a shift in his role to that of a facilitator. Participants should be the actors of their own learning process and should not feel "subjected" to teaching.

The training must be based on action, on the field and provide concrete solutions.

1.2.3. Characteristics of a class

- Set realistic, achievable objectives
- Start from concrete situations and experiences
- Use previous knowledge to discover new knowledge
- Exchange, question, look for solutions in a collaborative way
- To move from details, from different and particular elements to a coherent whole (to synthesise)
- Helping to think differently, to envisage novelty through questioning and the links it creates
- Develop autonomy and individual and collective responsibility
- Allow experimentation, trial and error, and progress through trial and error
- Propose something new, surprising
- Go beyond simple awareness raising

1.2.4. Assessment

- Oral and written questioning (true/false to test knowledge on the subject) at the beginning and end of the course to evaluate the evolution of representations and the acquisition of knowledge,
- Brainstorming to measure the level of knowledge at the beginning of the course and to adapt the content
- Feedback at the end of the training
- Analysis grid for the evolution of behaviour following the training

- Logbook according to the duration of the training to measure the positive impact in correlation with the learner's field experience.

Examples

- Which element of the activity helped you to better understand the concepts discussed?
- What was the most difficult concept for you to understand?
- Do you think that the skills of adaptability and resilience can be useful in your career? Why or why not?
- Do you think you will use the tools provided to further develop the skills discussed in the workshop? How do you plan to put them into action?
- Do you find the activities carried out insightful to the concepts discussed in the workshop?
- On a scale of 1 to 10 (where 10 is the best score), how would you rate this activity?

1.3. Good practices/applications in adult education

The COVID-19 crisis affected the lives of many employees, particularly during the trauma of the first wave of confinement. It is therefore necessary, for the return to work, to foster resilience within the company.

Several studies have been carried out to establish a barometer of the psychological and physical health of employees during the containment period. According to the results, it can be considered that: while 42% of employees are in psychological distress, more than half of the employees are resilient and have started a process of post-traumatic growth. Nevertheless, the end of lockdown was a factor of anxiety and fear for 1 in 2 employees. Supporting these individuals when they return to work is therefore essential for a successful recovery. Offering individual or collective discussion forums to exchange views on their experiences can be interesting for these employees, accompanied by their manager.

Resilience, or post-traumatic growth, allows for the development of several psychological benefits despite the emotional shock: 68% of employees say they have a better appreciation of the value of life, nearly 5 out of 10 employees have seen their priorities change, 46% have more compassion for others and 41% have learned that they can count on their colleagues in case of problems. These psychological changes are of great interest in dealing with future crises.

Promoting exchange groups and providing adapted practical tools can trigger the resilience process of employees. Indeed, social interactions are essential for post-traumatic growth and for recovering from a difficult event.

In addition to traumatic shocks, a good resilience capacity also allows one to adapt to minor stress situations, which are frequently found in the working world. Each individual can enter into a resilience process but it will depend on his or her personality, his or her liabilities, the context, etc...

Thus, the educator must be able to identify, evaluate or have evaluated the adaptation capacities and defence mechanisms used by the participants in order to give the best keys in line with the needs to obtain conclusive results in the field.

There is a need to raise awareness that working on resilience and adaptability can only bring new strengths and broaden one's skill set, including

- Social skills (responsiveness, cultural flexibility, empathy, caring, communication skills and a sense of humour);
- Problem solving (planning, help seeking, critical and creative thinking);
- Autonomy (sense of identity, self-efficacy, self-awareness, task mastery and adaptive distancing from negative messages and conditions)

The knowledge that everyone has innate resilience grounds practise in optimism and possibility, which are essential for enhancing motivation. Not only does this avoid potential emotional exhaustion for the educator working with severely troubled people, but it provides one of the key protective factors which, when internalised by them, motivates them to overcome risk and adversity.

Stimulating attitudes of commitment, control and challenge and encouraging their maintenance are important keys to building resilience and adaptability. This involves individual identification of ways in which each participant can work well, as part of a personal strategy to build resilience and adaptability at work or in retraining situations.

The focus on strengths, assets, elements of success should be put in place in order to create a distancing field, to step back and discover how the individual can grow through stress rather than bemoaning their situation, to continue to engage with events and people around them rather than withdrawing, and to continue to try to influence the outcomes on which they may depend rather than giving up.

Kumar 's CR8 model resilience (2014)

Kumar's CR8 Model of Resilience



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Ressources

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