



Media and information literacy

A practical guidebook for trainers

Supported by the



Imprint

PUBLISHER
Deutsche Welle
53110 Bonn
Germany

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PUBLISHED
January 2021
Third edition

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6. Internet and social media

6.1 Internet safety and privacy

6.2 Disinformation and filter bubbles



You can download the guidelines and worksheets from this chapter here:

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6. Internet and social media

6.1 Internet safety and privacy

6.2 Disinformation and filter bubbles



GUIDELINES

Game — post scramble

“Post scramble” is good for an introductory session. It provides insights into trainees’ current questions and prior experience and can be adapted to different topics and questions.

EXPLAINING THE GAME

Put chairs in a circle and have everyone sit down, forming a big social media user group. All the seats should be taken. Standing in the middle of the circle, explain that the person in the middle is the only one who can “post” something (a message, piece of information, or a comment) by saying it out loud. “Posts” should use the kind of language that is commonly used in social networks. Say your “post” out loud, then ask the social media users to react to it. Everyone who wants to react has to get up from their chairs and find a new one at least two chairs away from the one they were sitting in. You, as the person posting, try to grab one of the free seats quickly so one person is left without a seat. This person now has to react to the original post with a “like” or “dislike” (thumbs up or down) and “post” a new comment or reaction to the original post. The others react again, and so on.

You or the person in the middle can stop a running “conversation” at any time and replace it with a new “post.” End the game if you think trainees are getting bored or if the game is getting out of hand.

Possible post to start the game:

“That’s what I love about money: no emotions, no tears, just reality.”

Variation:

Vary the game by instructing the “poster” to ask questions or make statements that address the group’s experience with and knowledge of social media. All questions should be worded so they can be answered with a “yes” or “no,” and statements worded so trainees can “agree” or “disagree”. All trainees who respond with a “yes” or “agree” have to get up and find a new chair, while the others stay seated.

Possible questions to ask about experience with social media:

- Do you post pictures?
- Do you hate it when someone else posts a picture of you?
- Do you have more than 1000 friends on Facebook?

Possible statements to make about social media:

- It’s good that you can get all your news through Facebook.
- Cyberbullying is on the increase.
- It’s good that WhatsApp shares data with Facebook.



WORKSHEET

Facebook: private or public?

Targets	Examining the characteristics of social media; speaking about the wide range, sustainability, dynamics of social networks; drawing conclusions for one's own social media behavior
Duration	2 hours
Preparation	Check the computer and the internet; prepare examples from Facebook that illustrate privacy and publicity (images, posts, content); download and print or copy worksheets
Materials	"Profile check" worksheets A–D, flip chart paper, pens
Methods	Brainstorming with entire group, group work, online research, presentation
Technology	Computer, internet, smartphones, USB flash drive, projector (if possible)

BRAINSTORMING — FACEBOOK AND ME | 30 MIN., INDIVIDUAL WORK, ENTIRE GROUP

Prepare four sheets of flip chart paper with questions about trainees' prior knowledge and their opinions of Facebook, and hang them up in different corners of the room.

- Why do you use Facebook?
- What activities do you like most on Facebook?
- What kind of content and what specific content do you share on Facebook?
- What things do you hate on Facebook?

Instruct trainees to write their answers on each poster, but not to talk as they do so. When they are finished, ask trainees about their answers:

- Can you explain this statement? Can you give examples? Why do you feel that way?

You can add additional questions during the discussion about issues that interest you, e.g.:

- How many friends do you have on Facebook?
- How do you decide whether to add somebody?
- How often are you on Facebook?
- How old were you when you joined?

FACEBOOK: PRIVATE OR PUBLIC? | 20 MIN., ENTIRE GROUP

Introduce a discussion by asking trainees:

- Do you consider the content you share on Facebook to be "public" or "private"?

Trainees will discover that the question is not so easy to answer because there is no one single answer that applies to everyone. Whether something is considered private or public depends on the person answering the question, personal privacy limits, number of friends, privacy settings, and other factors.

Ask trainees to define their own personal privacy boundaries. Feel free to show examples of Facebook profiles, pictures and comments to get the discussion going.

Tip: Since this is a personal and sensitive topic, all the examples from Facebook should be from users nobody knows personally.

FACEBOOK: CHECKING PROFILES | 40 MIN., GROUP WORK ON DIFFERENT TOPICS

Divide trainees into four groups. Each group researches one of four specific topics about Facebook: private pictures, shared content, user information, and network dynamics. Give each group a worksheet for their topic and have them log in to Facebook. You can let groups choose their topics or ask them to draw lots. Walk around during the group work phase, offering trainees individual support for their research and additional help where needed.

PRESENTATION: CHECKING PROFILES | 30 MIN., PRESENTATION

Each of the four groups presents the results of their online research. For larger groups, a projector is helpful to project examples onto the wall. Very small groups can just look at the same computer screen instead. Ask the other groups to give feedback, ask questions, and add their opinions after each presentation. Please remind trainees that feedback always starts with a positive aspect.

After the feedback phase, ask trainees what conclusions, if any, they have come to about their future Facebook activities.



WORKSHEET

Station A | Profile check: Private pictures

TASK

Please log in to Facebook. Now look through various Facebook user profiles that you have never seen before. Check out the private pictures that they have posted or shared. Try to identify different categories of pictures (such as selfie, friends and family,

party, food, work, landscape, memes and political messages, humor, other). Save and rename one meaningful or impressive example of each category to present to your fellow trainees.

What categories for private pictures did you identify?

What messages can you discern from these private pictures?

TASK

Now analyze in detail the pictures you saved. Because all pictures have meaning and transport information without using language, each private picture on Facebook provides information about the person and their surroundings to anybody who is on Facebook (if the profile is set to “public”)—often without that person’s knowledge. Fill in the table. What information and message can you deduce from the photos? What was your

emotional reaction? Score your examples, rating the emotional quality and privacy level. The higher the score, the higher the (unintentional) information quality of the picture, and the more private the content and message is.

Sample picture	Message (brief)	Our emotional reaction (brief)	Emotional quality score (1-10)	Privacy score (1-10)
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>



WORKSHEET

Station B | Profile check: Shared content

TASK

Please log in to Facebook. Now look through various Facebook user profiles that you have never seen before. Check out personal information that they have posted or shared. Try to identify different categories of content (such as love, lifestyle, food,

travel, social issues, politics, economics, tech, etc.) Select one impressive example for each category to present to your fellow trainees. Save your examples by enlarging the view, taking a screenshot, and saving the screenshot under a unique name.

What content categories did you identify?

What messages can you discern from that shared content?

TASK

Now analyze your examples in detail. Shared content always provides information about the specific interests of the person who posts it and can be seen by anybody who is on Facebook (if the profile is set to “public”)—often without that person’s knowledge. Fill in the table. What information and message can you deduce from your examples? What might the user’s pur-

pose have been in posting this information? What meaning does it have for you? Score your examples, rating how interesting the content is to you as an outsider and the privacy level. The higher the score, the higher your interest in the content and the more private you consider it to be.

Sample content	Message (brief)	What might the purpose be?	Interest level score (1-10)	Privacy score (1-10)
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____



WORKSHEET

Station C | Profile check: “About”

TASK

Please log in to Facebook. Now look through various Facebook user profiles that you have never seen before. Check out the information you can find in the Facebook member’s “about” section where Facebook asks users to provide personal infor-

mation in different categories. Please complete the table below by listing what information Facebook asks its users for and rating how interesting that information is to you.

Facebook categories	Interest level score (1-10)	Facebook categories	Interest level score (1-10)
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Every piece of information Facebook users provide in the “about” section is like a piece of a puzzle. Taken together, these pieces reflect the user’s personality (pleasant, humorous, aggressive, etc.), life (school, hometown, education, friends, sexual orientation, etc.) and specific interests (politics, sports, film, games, etc.) Anybody on Facebook can use or sell this information to get a more or less detailed idea of the user (if the profile is set to “public”)—often without that person’s knowledge.

TASK

Now find some notable examples of Facebook users whose information in “about” gives you a clear idea of who they are. Choose three profiles that show big differences in work/locations/music/books/likes, etc. Save these profiles (or profile links) to present them to the other trainees. Describe the impressions you have of the users and give scores. The higher the score, the higher your personal interest in the user’s profile is.

Username	Our impression of him/her, his/her life and interests	Score (1-10)
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____



WORKSHEET

Station D | Profile check: Network dynamics

TASK

Please log in to Facebook. Now look through various profiles, conversations, likes, and comments of Facebook users you have never seen before. Examine the various dynamics that can arise through the network character of Facebook after some-

one has posted or shared a picture, video, message, or link. Try to identify different categories of dynamics, for instance the number of likes, shares, comments, arguments, disagreements, or insults and how quickly they were posted.

What kinds of dynamics did you identify?

What do you think might cause the different types of dynamics?

TASK

All content that is posted on Facebook can be shared and can develop a dynamic of its own. Try to find examples of content that have led to a lively exchange among users. Search for all kinds of content: conversations, images, links, videos, etc. How many likes did each type of content get? How many comments? What types of comments?

Fill in the table and score your examples. Sometimes posts get very dynamic reactions, but these reactions are destructive, such as insults, threats, or bullying. Here, the quality of the dynamic is low. Other posts get reactions that develop the topic further in a positive, creative way. This is a high quality dynamic that brings added value to the post. Assess the quality of the dynamics for the five examples you chose. The higher the score, the higher you consider the quality of the dynamic of the comments to be.

Choose five different examples that you want to present to the others. Save your examples by enlarging the view, taking a screenshot, and saving the screenshot under a unique name.

Example	Topic of the content (briefly)	Our emotional reaction (briefly)	Reasons for the quality of the dynamic	Quality score (1-10)
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>



WORKSHEET

WhatsUp? Why are we on social media?

Real name: _____

Facebook name: _____

Instagram name: _____

Twitter name: _____

Real name: _____

Facebook name: _____

Instagram name: _____

Twitter name: _____

Additional social media profile names: _____

Additional social media profile names: _____

1. Why do you use social media? Highlight the two most important reasons.

1. Why do you use social media? Highlight the two most important reasons.

2. How do you communicate on social media (private messages, posts, status updates, creating stories, liking, commenting, sharing other posts)? Highlight what is most important for you.

2. How do you communicate on social media (private messages, posts, status updates, creating stories, liking, commenting, sharing other posts)? Highlight what is most important for you.

3. How important are your social media friends to you? What kind of gratification do they give you?

3. How important are your social media friends to you? What kind of gratification do they give you?

4. How many social media friends do you have? How many of them do you know in real life? How many of your social media friends would you really call friends?

4. How many social media friends do you have? How many of them do you know in real life? How many of your social media friends would you really call friends?



WORKSHEET

Risky?! Storyboard – photostory

Social media risk: _____

Title: _____

Close up
 Medium shot
 Wide shot

Where: _____

Who: _____

What: _____

Caption: _____

Speech bubbles: _____

Close up
 Medium shot
 Wide shot

Where: _____

Who: _____

What: _____

Caption: _____

Speech bubbles: _____

Close up
 Medium shot
 Wide shot

Where: _____

Who: _____

What: _____

Caption: _____

Speech bubbles: _____

Close up
 Medium shot
 Wide shot

Where: _____

Who: _____

What: _____

Caption: _____

Speech bubbles: _____

Close up
 Medium shot
 Wide shot

Where: _____

Who: _____

What: _____

Caption: _____

Speech bubbles: _____



GUIDELINES

Facebook expert

Settings	Learning objectives
Security settings	How do I log in and out securely and keep other people from logging into my account?
Privacy settings and tools	Who can see my stuff? Who can contact me? Who can find me?
Timeline and tagging	Who can add things to my timeline? How can I manage tags?
Blocking	How can I block certain users or their invitations?
Reporting	How can I report other users to Facebook?

Information	Learning objectives
Friends	How do I divide friends into groups? What rights do they get?
Pages and feeds	How can I find information via pages and feeds?

Creating	Learning objectives
Pictures	What pictures can I share? What about the other people in the images?
Pages	How can I create a page and what can I do with a page?
Events	How can I create an event and how do I manage this event?
Groups	How do I create a group and control who has access to it?



CERTIFICATE

Facebook expert

Name _____ Facebook profile name _____ On Facebook since _____

Settings	These are/this is important because ...	Level of knowledge
Security settings _____		<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
Privacy settings and tools _____		<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
Timeline and tagging _____		<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
Blocking _____		<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
Reporting _____		<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3

Information	This is important because ...	Level of knowledge
Friends _____		<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
Pages and feeds _____		<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3

Creating	This is important because ...	Level of knowledge
Pictures _____		<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
Pages _____		<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
Events _____		<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
Groups _____		<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3

Date _____ Signature _____



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WORKSHEET

My Facebook news feed #1

TASK

What information shows up on your Facebook news feed? Take this worksheet to examine what kind of posts have appeared recently, where they came from, or who shared them with you and what kind of information they contain. To avoid seeing only Facebook’s “top stories” in your newsfeed, change your pref-

erences to “most recent” in your settings. How this is done changes frequently, so we suggest you search online how you can do it now. Facebook will automatically switch your settings back to “top stories” after 24 hours or the next time you log on. Evaluate one post after another.

How do posts appear in your news feed? Please look at your last 50 posts and count:

	From friends	Via groups or pages	Sponsored
Direct posts	_____	_____	_____
Reactions (like, comment)	_____	_____	_____
Shared	_____	_____	_____
Tagged	_____	_____	_____

What kind of posts appear in your news feed. Please count.

	From friends	Via groups or pages	Sponsored
Private posts, pictures, ...	_____	_____	_____
Promotions, advertising	_____	_____	_____
Fun, humor	_____	_____	_____
Tabloids, gossip	_____	_____	_____
Public interest/news	_____	_____	_____

What stories or topics of public interest appear on your news feed? Please describe.

	From friends	Via groups or pages	Sponsored
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

After you have examined these posts about topics of public interest, which three are most important for you and why (your “Top 3”)?

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____



WORKSHEET

My Facebook news feed #2

TASK

Examine your “Top 3” news stories and fill out one form for each story as outlined below. For each of your “Top 3” stories, write down the answers to these questions: What topic? What kind of post is it? How did it get on your news feed? Why is it news-worthy to you? What point of view does it reflect? Do you agree or disagree with this view? How trustworthy do you think this post is?

Example:

Topic: <u>Election</u>		Kind of post: <u>News article</u>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> via a friend	<input type="checkbox"/> via a group or page	<input type="checkbox"/> sponsored	
Newsworthy for me because of ...			
<input type="checkbox"/> timeliness	<input type="checkbox"/> impact	<input type="checkbox"/> conflict	<input type="checkbox"/> novelty
<input type="checkbox"/> proximity	<input type="checkbox"/> consequence	<input type="checkbox"/> prominence	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> human interest
Viewpoint: <u>Pro government</u>			
<input type="checkbox"/> disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> neutral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agree	
Trustworthiness for me: (1=low 5=high)			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5

Story 1

Topic: _____		Kind of post: _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> via a friend	<input type="checkbox"/> via a group or page	<input type="checkbox"/> sponsored	
Newsworthy for me because of ...			
<input type="checkbox"/> timeliness	<input type="checkbox"/> impact	<input type="checkbox"/> conflict	<input type="checkbox"/> novelty
<input type="checkbox"/> proximity	<input type="checkbox"/> consequence	<input type="checkbox"/> prominence	<input type="checkbox"/> human interest
Viewpoint: _____			
<input type="checkbox"/> disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> neutral	<input type="checkbox"/> agree	
Trustworthiness for me: (1=low 5=high)			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5

Story 2

Topic: _____

Kind of post: _____

- via a friend via a group or page sponsored

Newsworthy for me because of ...

- timeliness impact conflict novelty
 proximity consequence prominence human interest

Viewpoint: _____

- disagree neutral agree

Trustworthiness for me: (1=low | 5=high)

- 1 2 3 4 5

Story 3

Topic: _____

Kind of post: _____

- via a friend via a group or page sponsored

Newsworthy for me because of ...

- timeliness impact conflict novelty
 proximity consequence prominence human interest

Viewpoint: _____

- disagree neutral agree

Trustworthiness for me: (1=low | 5=high)

- 1 2 3 4 5



WORKSHEET

The filter bubble

TASK

Compare the results of your news feed evaluations. To what extent are social media networks like Facebook suitable information channels for people who want to be up to date? Use the questions below to guide your discussion. Write down your answers and formulate short statements.

Question 1—Information gateway | How or through whom does most information reach you on social media? Who determines what shows up in your news feed? How does this differ from other information sources, like traditional mass media?

Question 2—Types of stories | What kinds of stories show up the most in your news feed? What makes your “Top 3” posts especially newsworthy and important for you?

Question 3—Friends, topics and views | How do the pages you have liked and your choice of Facebook friends influence what information and opinions appear in your news feed?

Question 4—Rumors and trustworthiness | How often are you confronted with information that you do not trust compared to trustworthy information? Is a post that a friend shared with you more trustworthy than other posts?

Question 5—Filter bubble | What are the possible consequences when social media users only get information that is filtered by their digital networks and merely confirms their own interests and beliefs? What precautions should be taken if you want to be well-informed?



WORKSHEET

Credibility range of sources on social media

Examining the following type of social media source: _____

Interests

What are the main interests of the people in this group? What topics does the information they post mostly cover?

Purposes

Why are the people in this group publishing information on social media? What are some of their possible intentions?

Professionalism

How qualified and professionally trained are the people in this group to create information and distribute it to the public?

Financial interest

Do the people from this group earn money for publishing information? Do they get paid? If so, for what?

Credibility range

 Trustworthy source

 Inconclusive source

 Untrustworthy source



GUIDELINES

Check it! Source verification

Choose a source from your social media news feed, examine and verify it. Take notes on the flipchart.

- Name of source on account?
- Verified account (see badge)?
- Profile and header picture?
- What message do the pictures convey?
- What do you find in the about section? Contact data? Address? Telephone number? Website?
- Check the website and its "about" section
- Google the source to find out more about its trustworthiness

Station A

Trustworthy source? Check it!

Station B

Inconclusive source? Check it!

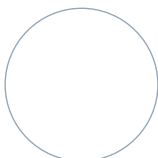
Station C

Untrustworthy source? Check it!

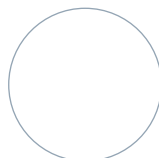
How does information from these kinds of sources make you feel?

Draw a smiley, a puzzled face or an angry face in the circles to reflect your emotions.

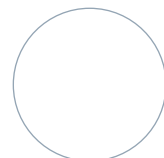
Station A



Station B



Station C





WORKSHEET

Quiz on disinformation

Statement

1. The phenomenon of disinformation is nothing new. Disinformation has appeared in tabloids and even in respectable news outlets. True False
2. Disinformation is usually not created intentionally or with a specific purpose. True False
3. When social media users spread false information, they are usually aware of it. True False
4. Disinformation has the power to shape public opinion and even sway democratic elections. True False
5. Ordinary people can earn money by creating disinformation websites and spreading false information in social media. True False
6. When false information is debunked, it no longer influence beliefs and attitudes. True False
7. Rumors that are ultimately proven to be false tend to disappear faster than those that turn out to be true. True False
8. Articles shared by friends that look like they are from a legitimate news website can most likely be trusted. True False
9. Getting facts to prove that a doubtful piece of information is false is considerably more effective than just saying it is not true. True False
10. A study conducted in the US summed up young people's ability to judge information on the internet with one word: "bleak." True False



WORKSHEET

Fact or fake?

TASK

Current issues

Use one box for each issue: Write down the headline or give key words to describe the topic; cut out and sort the pieces of paper according to "true", "false" or "half-true."





GUIDELINES

Debunking disinformation

Care about what you share!

- Before you start debunking fabricated stories, make sure you are not sharing false information, disinformation, and rumors.

Who is behind the information?

Source analysis

- Odd domain names are usually an indicator of information that is equally odd and rarely truthful. If the domain name is a slight variation of a well-known news website, it is usually a sign that the website you are on is a fake version of the original trusted source. For example, the US media organization ABC's website has the url <http://abcnews.go.com>. A disinformation website was created with the URL <http://abcnews.com.co>. It has been deleted in the meantime. If the words "blogger", "tumblr" or "wordpress" appear in the domain name, the website is probably a personal blog rather than a news site.
- Check the "about" section on a website or use a search engine to look up information about the website. You can also check sites like Wikipedia.com for more information about websites or news sources.
- If a website has no "about" page or section, this could indicate that it is not a legitimate source of information. If the names of the authors are not mentioned and there is no proof that they exist, this should cast doubt over the accuracy of the news story or the credibility of this source. It demands further research.

What is the content like?

Content analysis

- Evaluate the content. Do you think the reporting is accurate? Are facts, names, and numbers correct? Is the story reported without bias? Are all relevant aspects and sides of the topic presented?
- If the reporting evokes strong emotions of anger or fear, the author might be trying to provoke an emotional response. Professional journalists usually do not try to play with the audience's emotions. Check whether other sources have reported the same information independently of one another.
- Analyze language use. If the text contains many spelling mistakes, words that are very emotional, or even curse words, it probably was not edited by a professional journalist.
- Analyze the web design. Bad web design or a website that uses ALL CAPS can indicate that the source is not trustworthy and that the information needs to be verified.
- Do the headlines and stories use sensational or provocative language? If so, they may be clickbait.

What do others say?

Compare and verify

- Use search engines to research whether the information is true or false.
- Check whether reputable news outlets also carry this information. Normally, there should be more than one source reporting on a topic or event independently of others. This means these sources probably did not copy each other. It is always best to have multiple sources of information to get a variety of views and angles on a story.
- Verify a photo by dragging and dropping it into Google Images or check it using tineye.com. This will show whether the photo has been published by other media and if it possibly was taken in a different context or has been used to illustrate another topic.

Website recommendations for verification

Check if these or similar websites work in your country or region

- en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_fake_news_websites
- snopes.com (validating and debunking stories)
- truly.media (collaborative verification platform)
- politifact.com (fast-checking of statements and stories)
- hoax-slayer.net (debunking hoaxes and analyzing stories)
- tineye.com (reverse image search to check a photo's origin)



WORKSHEET

Talk show: Scenario and roles

The scenario

In the “Republic of Ebonia” (ROE), the two major political parties are preparing for the upcoming presidential election. The ruling party is the “Centrist Party” (CEP). Its candidate, H. Lee, is a new face on the political scene. The candidate of the opposition party, the “Anti-Poverty Party” (APP), is A. Miller. Opinion polls show that both parties are equally popular with the electorate. This creates fears among CEP members that their candidate won’t be able to convince voters and that the CEP will be voted out after having been in power for many years.

The people of Ebonia eagerly discuss the election campaign on social media. Some users vehemently support the CEP, others the APP. But since last week, the discussion has changed. Allegations have surfaced on social media that A. Miller secretly supports paramilitary units in neighboring “Aladia.” According to these reports, he plans to mobilize these paramilitary forces to overthrow the government if the APP loses the election. Over the past few days, these stories quickly went viral.

While the CEP remains silent on this issue, the APP claims that the reports are disinformation and people shouldn’t believe them. This morning, the mainstream media outlet “C11” debunked the reports. C11 provided evidence that the allegations were false and that the audience was being tricked. But many people still do not believe the allegations are false. They keep spreading conspiracy theories and using social media to express their fear of a military coup.

Since this is such an explosive issue, C11 has decided to produce a talk show tonight on disinformation in social media. The station has invited representatives of the two opposing political parties, social media users, media makers, and a social scientist to join a discussion. C11 hopes they can explain the rapid spread of disinformation on social media, discuss possible consequences for society and outline individual responsibilities to the public.

The roles

Politician of the government party CEP	Denies that the CEP has fabricated the story, although it benefits from the spreading of the disinformation. Calls on users to be critical. Emphasizes that there is no proof that the story is false.
Politician of the opposition party APP	Denies that the story is true. Says it is fabricated to discredit the party and to prevent it from winning the election. Suspects members of the government party have instructed its supporters to spread the fraudulent reports.
Mass media journalist	Emphasizes the differences between disinformation and real news. Demands that social media users stop sharing without thinking. Says people should follow the same ethical standards on social media that professional journalists use, like verifying information before publishing it.
Social media user who supports the government	Says that these reports just strengthen his/her resolve to vote for the government, regardless of whether they are true or not.
Social media user who supports the opposition	Says the reports are fabricated and that the government party is behind them. Argues that the fraud is obvious and that only fools believe it. Demands that media outlets debunk the story.
Owner of a social media network	Emphasizes that social media are just a platform for citizens to express themselves freely without any censorship. Admits that it is easy to misuse social media to spread rumors, propaganda, and disinformation. Expresses willingness to combat disinformation.
Social scientist	Says that disinformation is nothing new and has always been used to gain power and make money. Explains why disinformation targets emotions like anger or fear and is booming on social media. Calls on people to become media literate.



WORKSHEET

Moderating the talk show

Topic	“What damage does disinformation do?”	
Guests	Pro government	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Politician- Social media user
	Pro opposition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Politician- Social media user- News journalist- Owner of social media network- Social scientist
Host	Preparing the show	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Learn about the topic- Learn about your guests- Plan and structure your show (key aspects, time)- Prepare key questions for each guest
	During the show	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Be neutral and never express your own opinion.- Let everyone speak, manage time, and interrupt if a guest speaks too long or doesn't answer.- Be polite but persistent.- Don't be afraid of controversy among your guests
The talk show	Beginning: Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Welcome the audience, introduce yourself and the topic of the talk show
	_____ minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Welcome and introduce your guests and quickly explain why they were invited to join the discussion
	Round 1: Q&A	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Give everyone a chance to speak by asking every guest a short question.
	_____ minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Plan whom you want to ask about what aspect of the topic. Start with simple aspects and guide the audience along as you move to more complex issues.
Round 2: Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Let your guests discuss among themselves. Ask opponents to defend their opinions.	
_____ minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Don't interfere too often, but make sure you don't lose control of the situation. Make sure all relevant aspects are covered.- Listen closely, ask follow-up questions, or introduce aspects that lead the discussion to its next phase.	
End: Conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Make it clear that the talk show is coming to an end.- Wrap up the different aspects of the talk show.	
_____ minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Try to wrap up issues that may still be unresolved.- Ask guests for a final statement/conclusions/tips.- Thank your audience and your guests.	

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