

EU Neighbours in action: Knowledge across borders

# Cooperation **works,** **Skills needed** to create and maintain good and lasting partnerships

Marko Ruokangas & Phil Heaton | Interact | 19.05.2026

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# Cooperation works – skills needed to create and maintain good and lasting partnerships

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## Session objective:

Showcase how you can actively in your role, with your behaviour and daily decisions, strengthen trust and impact the building and maintaining of good relations – and impact the long term success of your programme

# Outline



Opening and introduction



**Grounding in reality**

Where partnerships struggle



**What would you do?**

Working in groups with different scenarios



**Connection to diplomacy skills**



**Closure**

# Grounding **in reality**

- Think of a difficult moment in cooperation and identify 2 - 3 examples
- Write your answers / examples on the paper on your table

# What would you do? **Work in groups with real cases**

- Each table gets one scenario
- Discuss of your scenario and answer to the question:

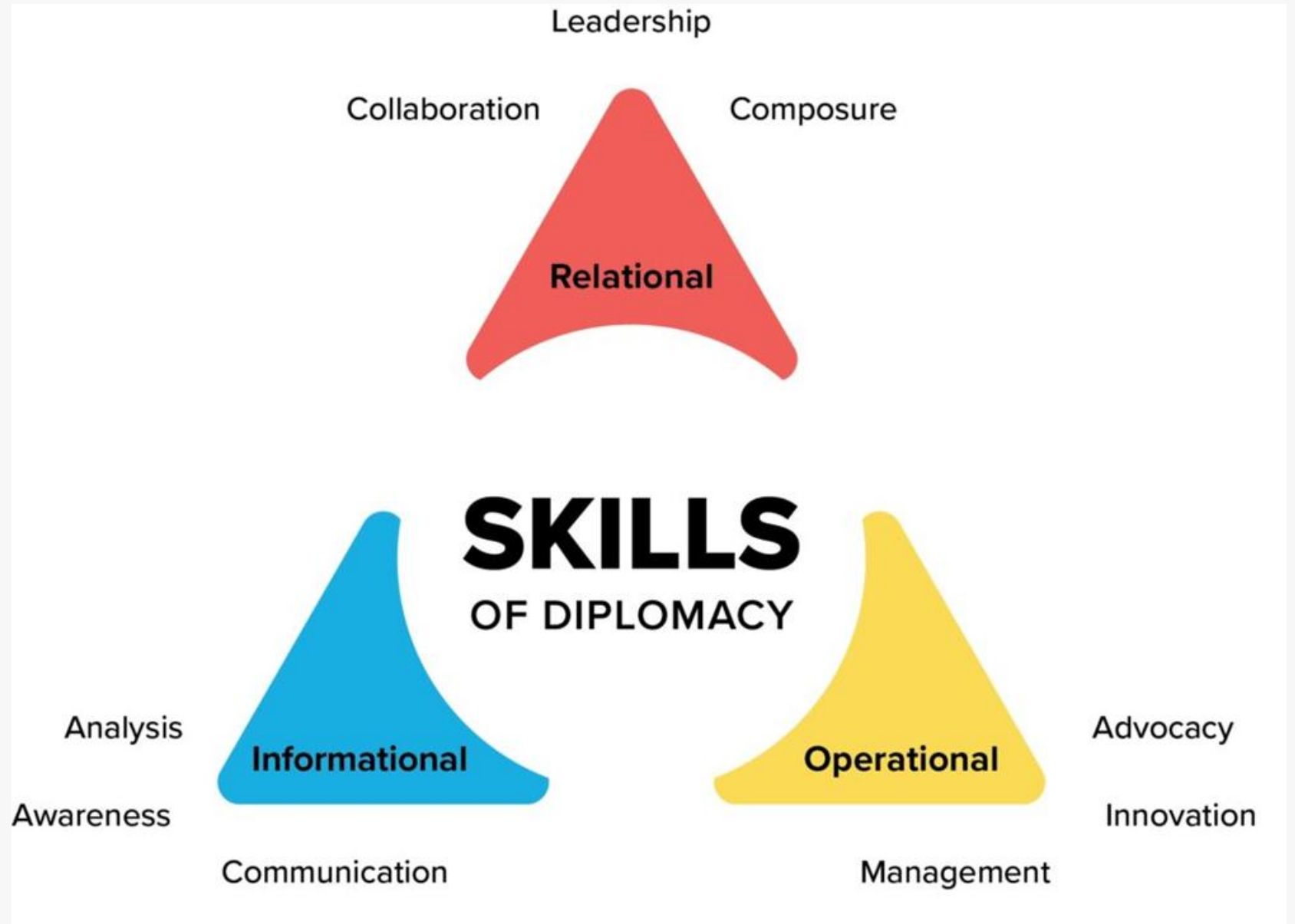
**What would you do to solve the situation?**

# Review with colleagues

- Share your scenario with other group
- Review the scenario you have received
- **Consider what would you add or do differently (10 minutes)**

# Exchange on **what was identified**

# Skills of Diplomacy



Source: National Museum of American diplomacy  
<https://diplomacy.state.gov/discover-diplomacy/the-skills-of-diplomacy/>

# Informational Skills

**Informational skills are required to determine how to approach the situation**

## Analysis

Ability to study and think critically about situations

## Awareness

- Ability to respect different cultures and customs
- Recognize when situations and circumstances are changing
- Being aware of what you do not know or understand

## Communication

Ability to articulate your position and listen openly to others' viewpoints.

Source: National Museum of American diplomacy  
<https://diplomacy.state.gov/discover-diplomacy/the-skills-of-diplomacy/>

# Relational Skills

**Relational skills are what is required to work successfully with others**

## Leadership

- Ability to take decisions keeping the big picture in mind
- Take steps to fill gaps in knowledge and understanding

## Collaboration

- Ability to incorporate the ideas of others and find common ground.

## Composure

- Ability to work with others in a professional manner
- Deal with the range of attitudes and behaviours

# Operational Skills

Operational skills are what is required to take action

## Management

Ability to use the skills and strengths of team members

## Innovation

Ability to formulate alternatives and be flexible in responses

## Advocacy

Ability to speak on behalf of and pursue the goals

# Connection to **skills of diplomacy**

- Connect the relevant diplomacy skills to the actions you suggested with your scenario
- Use sticky notes and add them to your scenario flipchart

# Connection to **skills of diplomacy**

- Back to the difficult situations you identified in the beginning
- **What skills would be needed to solve the situations you identified and why?**
- Use sticky notes and add them to your flipchart

**When a diplomat says “yes”, he means “perhaps”.**

**When he says “perhaps”, he means “no”.**

**When he says “no”, he is no diplomat.**

Ambassador Raimundo Bassols

# Cooperation works

**All materials will be available on:**

**[Interact.eu/Library/EU Neighbours in action: Knowledge across borders](https://Interact.eu/Library/EU%20Neighbours%20in%20action%3A%20Knowledge%20across%20borders)**

**Want to discuss it? Join our MS Teams environment!**

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# Disclaimer

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