



Module 5. Social media for social responsibility and its role in tackling climate change: heroes to the rescue!

Session 1. “We could be heroes”: what’s social responsibility?

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Call to adventure

Let's start this module with a bang! Enjoy M83's legendary music video *Midnight City* (on the right). Watch carefully — it has a message.

Activity 1.1 for an individual or group (10 mins): So what is the message for you? How do you feel about the video? Please share your comments on YouTube under the video. If you're in a group, you can talk about the video together instead.



Understanding social responsibility 1/5

In recent years, there has been a mantra of “be the change” or “be the change you want to see in the world”.

Social responsibility is the term for people acting in a way that is a benefit to society and participating in activities that complete their civic duty. Another way to define social responsibility is for people to act humanely. Social responsibility is not a one-time action, but a series of actions over a time period.

Understanding social responsibility 2/5

Social responsibility involves increasing our knowledge and understanding of decision-making and of the society in which we live. It also involves reflection and criticality.

Individuals can fulfill their social responsibility through charity work (donating time, money, and resources), volunteer work, supporting key issues (political, environmental, social), and simply acting with integrity and honesty.

Understanding social responsibility 3/5

The **Social Responsibility Theory** (SRT) encourages people to become responsible and caring citizens.

One needs to be willing to critically look at their society and to engage in complex discussions about controversial issues. One needs to be willing to reflect on their own actions and the impacts their action or inaction may have on others.

It is our responsibility to consider how others in society may experience the world differently than we do.

Understanding social responsibility 4/5

According to SRT, before making a decision or completing a task, one must ensure the decision or act is ethically sound. This is especially true for the decisions or actions that affect others. It is every person's responsibility to behave in a way that benefits society or to act morally and ethically right. There are several assumptions of the Social Responsibility Theory, including:

- everyone should individually work for the good of society
- everyone is able to make a change for the better
- one person can make a difference.

Understanding social responsibility 5/5

Activity 1.2 for an individual (5 mins): Outline 3 elements of social responsibility which are most important for You.

Activity 1.3 for an individual (5 mins): Create a symbol that you think will help your friends understand social responsibility.



Examples of social responsibility 1/3

A **generic example** of social responsibility is recycling. Recycling gained popularity in the 90s and has only grown since then. Recycling has become a norm in many societies with recycling centers and services offered for communities.

Most people believe recycling is good, as it helps all of society by reducing the amount of trash in landfills. Recycling fulfills the obligation of Social Responsibility Theory for people by completing an action based on the benefit to society.

Examples of social responsibility 2/3



As a **specific example**, *The Story of Electronics* video (see left) presents you with an idea of how electronics impact the environment and individuals working in e-waste communities. Furthermore, the video takes you into mines and factories where electronic devices are assembled to the areas of the world in which those devices may end up. The video ends by calling businesses to design long-lasting and toxic-free products.

This video engages you as it explains issues in a clear manner and presents its information in an entertaining way.

Examples of social responsibility 3/3

Activity 1.4 for an individual (10 mins): Share the previous video in some social media forum and include in the post your thoughts on it. Comment questions:

- What environmental issues are present in the video?
- What actions could businesses and consumers take in order to help the issues concerning e-waste?

Social responsibility as heroism 1/2

We're asking You to redefine your conception of a hero and what a hero does. Making a significant difference doesn't require you to become a superhero relying on super powers, or a celebrity relying on fame, fortune and good looks. We challenge the myth of "the one in a million" hero who makes the biggest difference in the world.

Let's realize that "hidden heroes" are found in our families, communities and schools. Heroes are ordinary people who are extraordinary role models. They are people who have much to teach us by the way they lead their lives, consistently doing small positive things that other ordinary people could do in similar circumstances — actions that benefit their own lives and those of others. Could You be one of these heroes? It's up to you!

Social responsibility as heroism 2/2

Heroes / role models are important because they set examples from which people can observe and pattern positive behaviours. As people increase positive behaviours they also increase their feelings of self-worth. Patterning our behaviours after positive role models can also help us build positive attitudes and teach us how to set and achieve attainable goals. These heroes provide a sense of hope and act as an example to prove that dreams and goals can be fulfilled “one step at a time”.

The bottom line here is that small things can make a big difference, and each of them can impact the world, one person, one family, one community at a time. Through the ripple effect, these small actions can end up having significant consequences. Often the people who benefit most are individuals the hero will never meet.

Who is a hero? 1/3

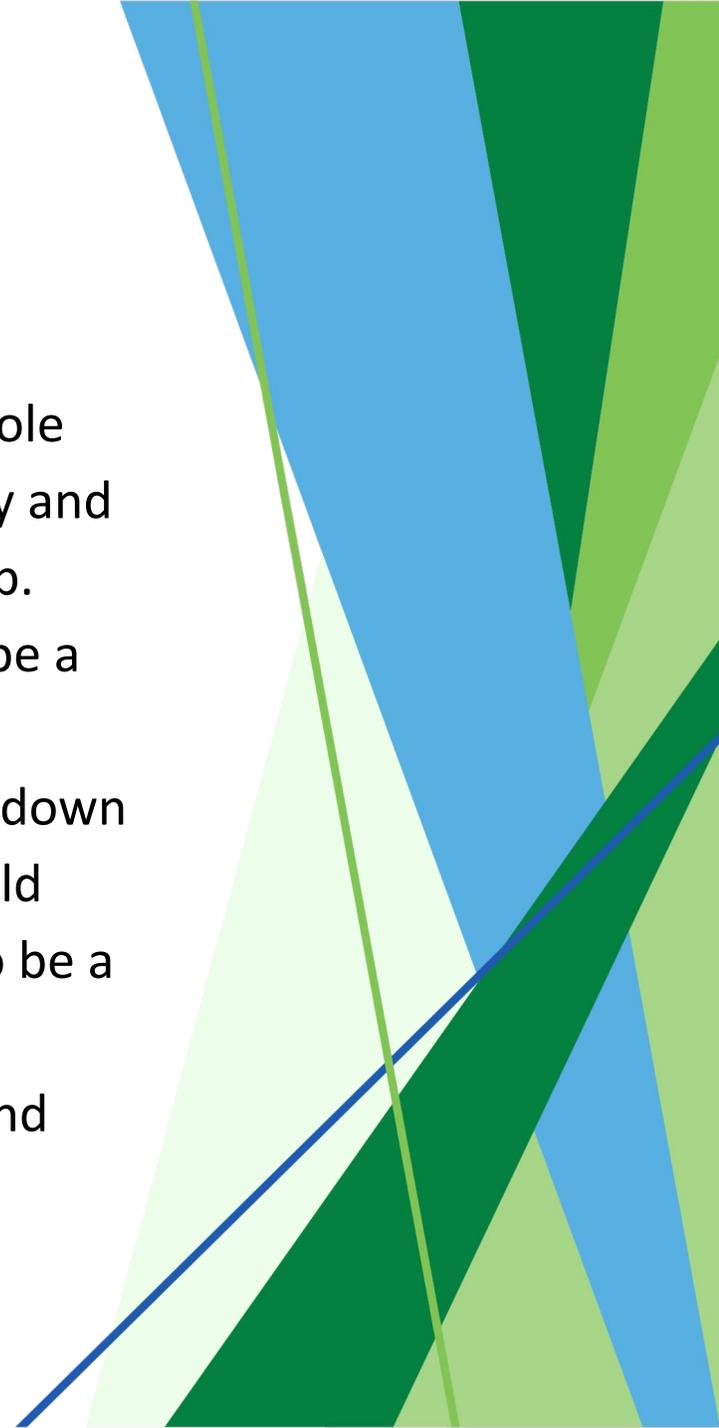
Remember, ANYONE can be a hero — a teacher, a parent, a friend, an athlete, a relative or pet. The question then becomes: what characteristics or qualities constitute a good hero / role model?

Activity 1.5 for a group (30 mins):

- Organise into small groups and pose the following questions orally or on a board. Allow the participants to brainstorm their ideas within their group using a paper provided:
 - What is a positive role model?
 - What qualities or characteristics do you think a positive role model should/would possess?

Who is a hero? 2/3

- Create a class list of qualities and characteristics shared by positive role models / heroes. The list could be created using a pair/share strategy and then further taking it into a jigsaw activity to involve the whole group.
- Next consider your lists and think of someone you know who could be a positive role model.
- Spend a few minutes on your own to choose a role model and write down the characteristics/qualities that your role model possesses. You could first provide the others with an example of someone you consider to be a positive role model.
- Allow the participants to share their examples within small groups and then with the whole group.



Who is a hero? 3/3

Activity 1.6 for an individual (10 mins):

To ensure that you understand this session's objectives of being able to identify and list qualities and characteristics of a hero, please write in journal format on one or all of the following topics:

- What does it mean to be a positive role model / hero?
- Give an example of who you see as a hero / role model currently in your life.
- Why did you choose that person?
- What qualities/characteristics does that person possess?

Strengths and weaknesses 1/2

In Social Responsibility Theory



Strengths:

- Evokes a feeling of personal satisfaction.
- Leads to a positive reputation.
- Leads to the good for society as a whole.
- Enables individuals to be involved with the community.
- Promotes acceptance among different groups.

Weaknesses:

- Can lead to people being taken advantage of for the greater good or agenda.
- Can lead to too much responsibility for one person.
- Can lead to some confusion and differences of opinion, since ethics and morals are subjective.

Strengths and weaknesses 2/2

In you 🦸 🦹

Every hero has special powers, but also special vulnerabilities.

Activity 1.7 for an individual or group (10 mins): Consider yourself as a hero. What are your strengths and weaknesses? Take notes of your discoveries, or discuss them with others.



References

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