



Social Farming for the Elderly

Module 3.1 Cooperation and Communication in the sector



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TUS

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ASSOCIAÇÃO DE DESENVOLVIMENTO
RURAL INTEGRADO DAS SERRAS DO
MONTEMURO, ARADA E GRALHEIRA



**BIOTEHNIŠKI
CENTER NAKLO**



**Eberswalde University
for Sustainable
Development**



ELO
European Landowners' Organization

**HOF UND
LEBEN**



društvo za socialno vključenost



SOUTH KERRY DEVELOPMENT
PARTNERSHIP CLG.

Module outline

Introduction

This module provides you with basic communication skills and shows you how to build a successful cooperation/partnership. This includes identifying needs, defining the area of cooperation and what is important when looking for a partner.

Learning objectives

After going through the slides, you should have a clear idea of what steps are necessary for good communication and successful cooperation. Examples should give you further opportunities to compare your specific situation, attitude and entrepreneurship with other farmers.



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1 Basic principles of communication on a family farm



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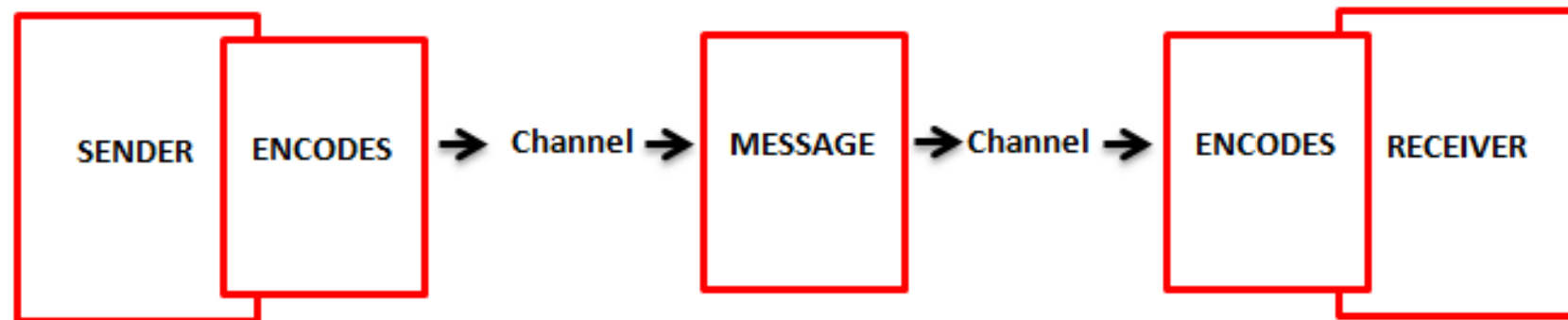
**Most conversations are simply
monologues
delivered in the presence
of a witness.**

Margaret Miller



Communication in a family business

THE COMMUNICATION MODEL



Communication, although essential, is not always easy. Individual differences in personality, communication styles, skills and expectations all play a part.

Sometimes the farmer will find it is best to let issues rest before trying to communicate. Other times, however, issues cannot be allowed to rest, because lack of communication can interfere with daily living.

After all, every family is a team and this is particularly true of families with family farms. They must communicate effectively to manage their farms effectively.

So, what is effective communication? The best way to answer that question is to break the concept down.

Effective communication involves;

- interpersonal skills
- rapport with others
- active listening.

“

**When people talk,
listen completely.**

Most people never listen.

Ernest Hemingway



Listening to others

Hearing vs. Listening

Hearing

- **Passive**
- **Involuntary**
- **Requires no effort**
- **Physiological perception of sound**

Listening

- **Active**
- **Voluntary**
- **Requires effort**
- **Intentional interpretation of sound**

Adapted from Gupta, 2023

Hearing

Hearing is a passive, physical act and purely sensory process by which sounds are perceived. We do not have to concentrate for it. We hear sounds and words all day long, even if we are not paying attention to them (Fuller, 2021).

Listening

Listening is about paying active attention to the words and sounds you hear in order to absorb their meaning and develop an emotional response.

Listening is an active and voluntary process that requires multiple senses. It is therefore up to the listener to decide whether or not to listen. Hearing without listening is an example of the common phrase "in one ear and out the other".

Active listening

Active listening is a communication skill that involves going beyond simply hearing the words that another person speaks but also seeking to understand the meaning and intent behind them. It requires being an active participant in the communication process.

(Cuncic, 2022)



Resolving conflict issues

Failure to communicate effectively often leads to conflict, which can harm personally and professionally. Poor communication can create conflict in a number of ways.

Conflicts can arise on family farms, mainly because we expect everyone to have the same values and goals and to interpret their roles in the same way. In the process, many things often remain unspoken and no one knows the "rules".

Causes of conflict:

- Values/personalities - family members are different and some habits of others can be annoying/frustrating.
- Goals - long and short term ideas for the future can be different.
- Different personalities - shy, assertive, aggressive, open, reserved, friendly, hostile, bossy. Siblings and different generations in the same family can be different.
- Responsibilities - What is everyone's job? Who is responsible for what?
- Organisation - who reports to whom?
- Struggle - between business and family for resources?



Image by John Hain from Pixabay



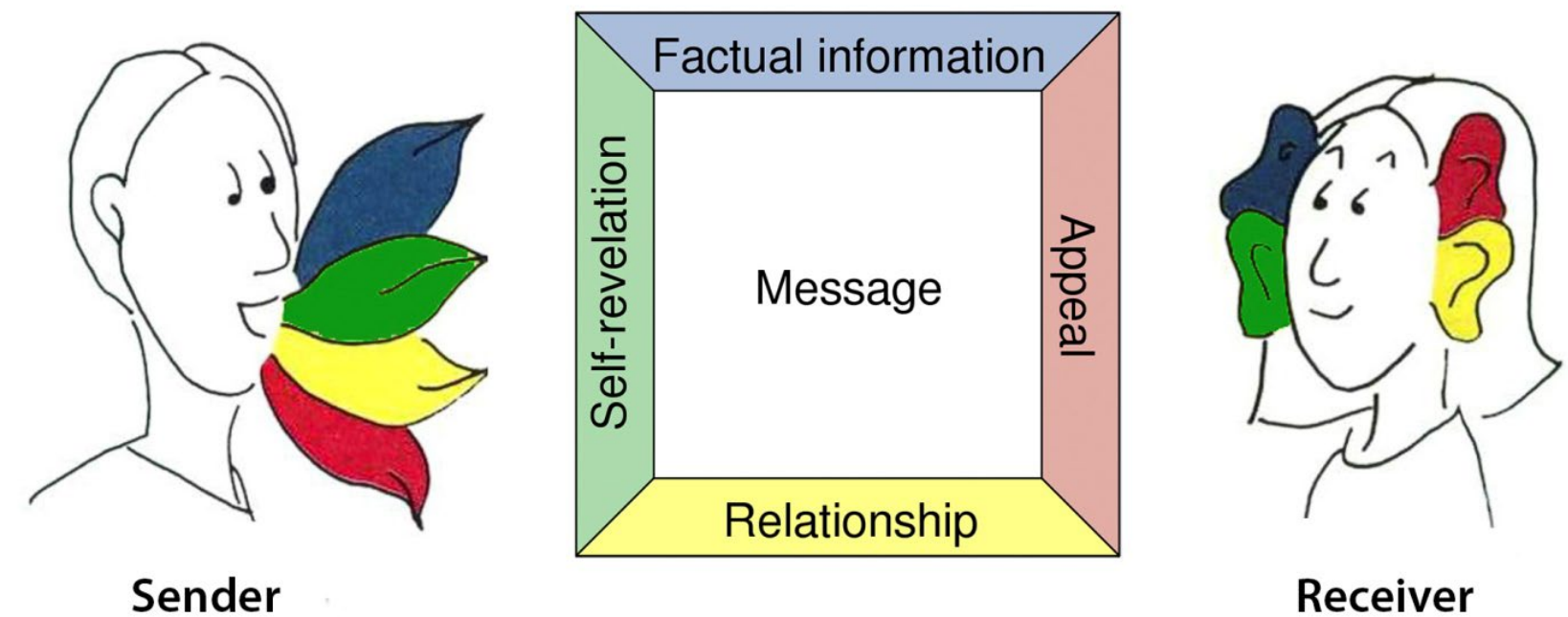
The communication square

The communication square is the best-known and now most widely used model by the German psychologist and communication expert Friedemann Schulz von Thun. This model also became known as the "four ears model".

The four levels of communication are not only important for private communication, but everywhere where people meet to communicate and exchange ideas.

When I make a statement as a human being, it has four different effects. Every statement I make contains, whether I want it to or not, four messages at the same time.

- Factual information (what I am informing about),
- Self-statement (what I show of myself),
- Relationship indicator (what I think of you and how I relate to you),
- Appeal (what I want you to do).



Adapted from <https://www.schulz-von-thun.de/die-modelle/das-kommunikationsquadrat>



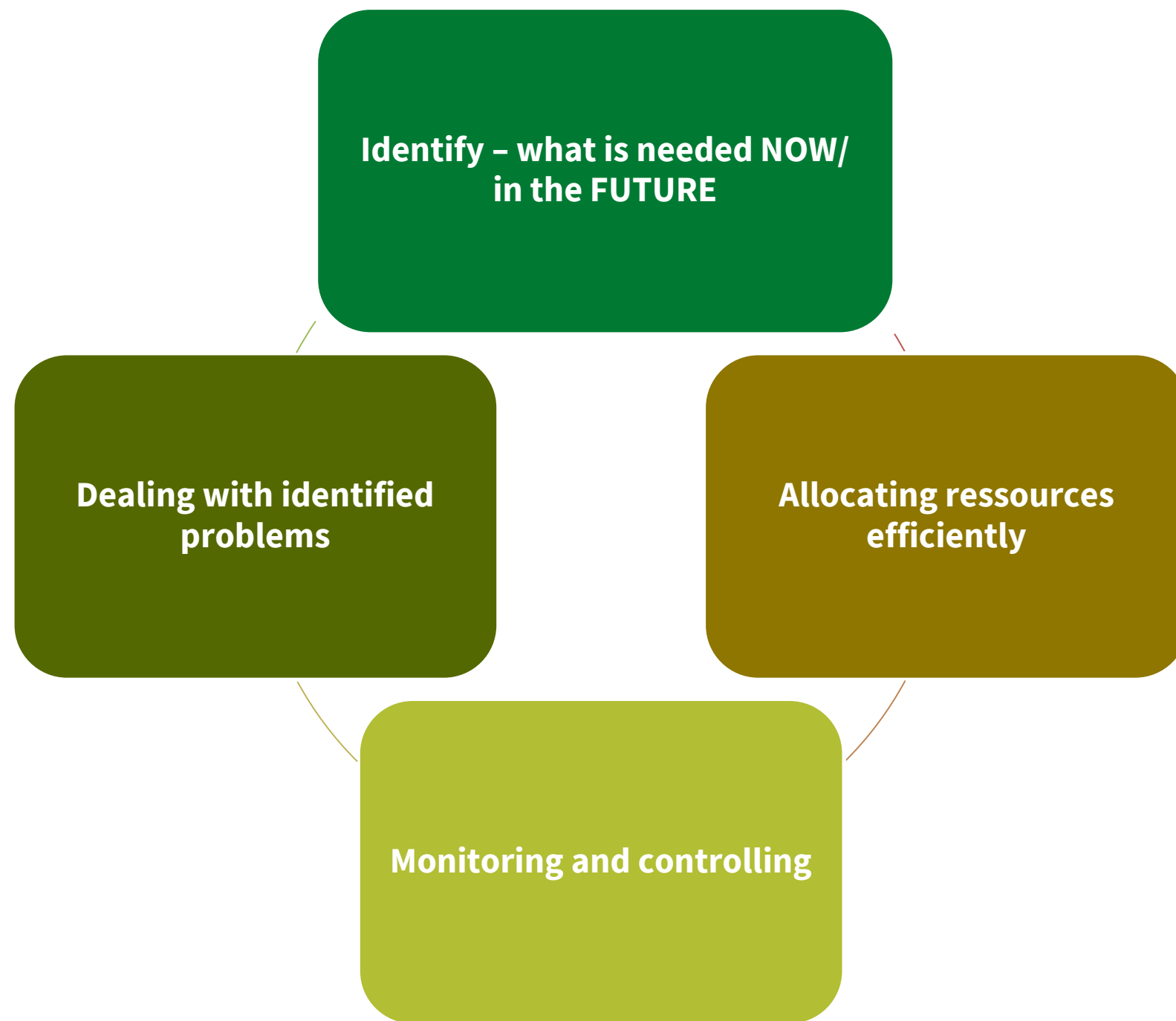
2 Basic principles of cooperation

**“
Coming together
is a beginning.
Keeping together
is progress.
Working together
is success.”**

Henry Ford



Cooperation as an option in your business



Are you considering a cooperation/partnership? Then ask yourself at least the following 9 questions to clarify whether you need a partner at all.

- 1) Why do I need a partner?
- 2) What will our distribution of ownership look like?
- 3) Do we even have a common vision/goal?
- 4) Am I willing to give up some control?
- 5) Does our cooperation/partnership have a chance of being stable?
- 6) How will we deal with a possible conflict?
- 7) How will colleagues, family members and other business partners perceive a partner?
- 8) What is our strategy for ending the cooperation/partnership?
- 9) What is the optimal number of partners?

After answering these questions, you should already have a clear opinion on whether you need a partner.



Are you willing and able to share work?

Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.

Helen Keller

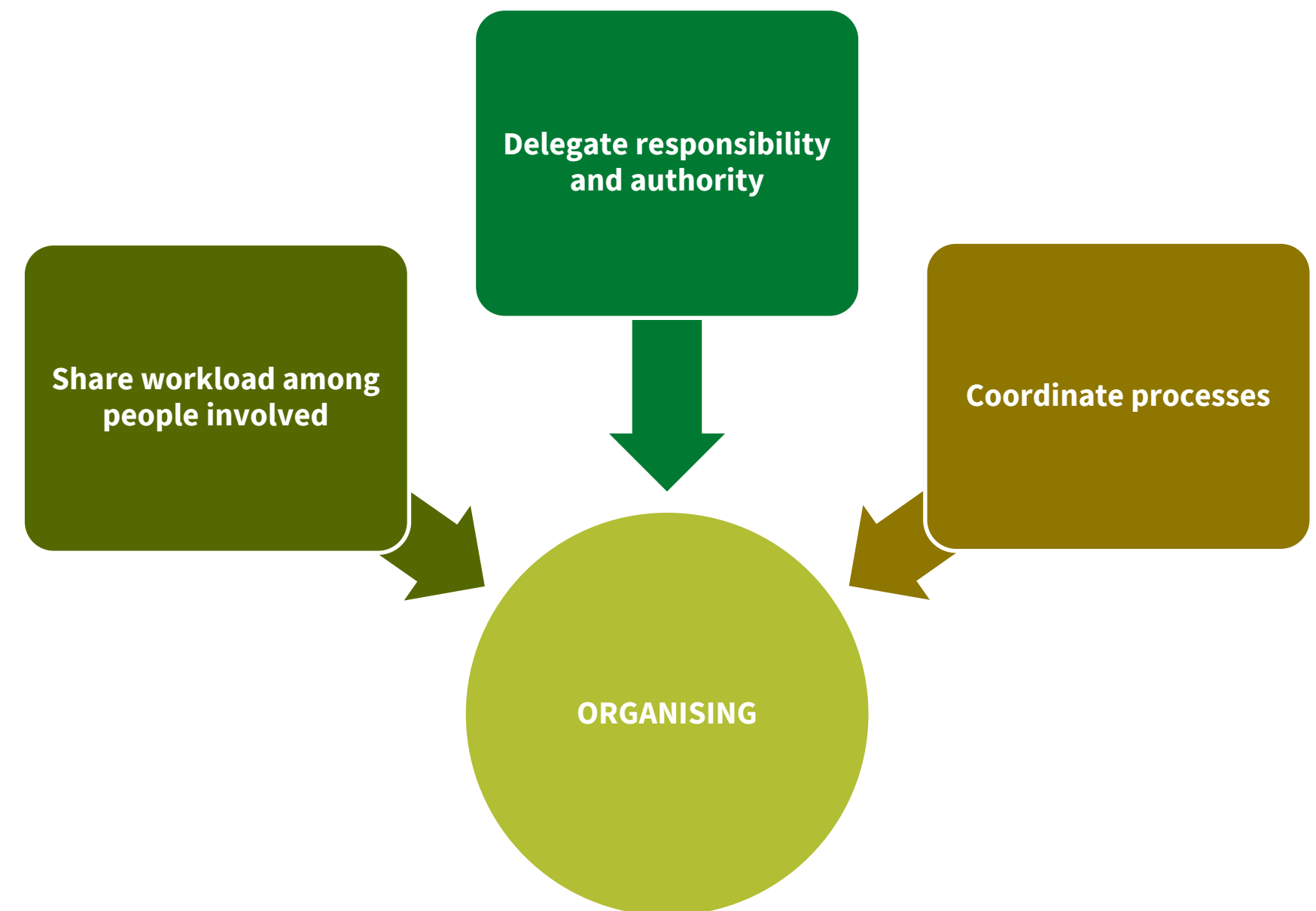
Leadership includes measures to:

- motivate your employees in the organization,
- communicate goals and objectives within the organization,
- resolve conflicts within the organization.

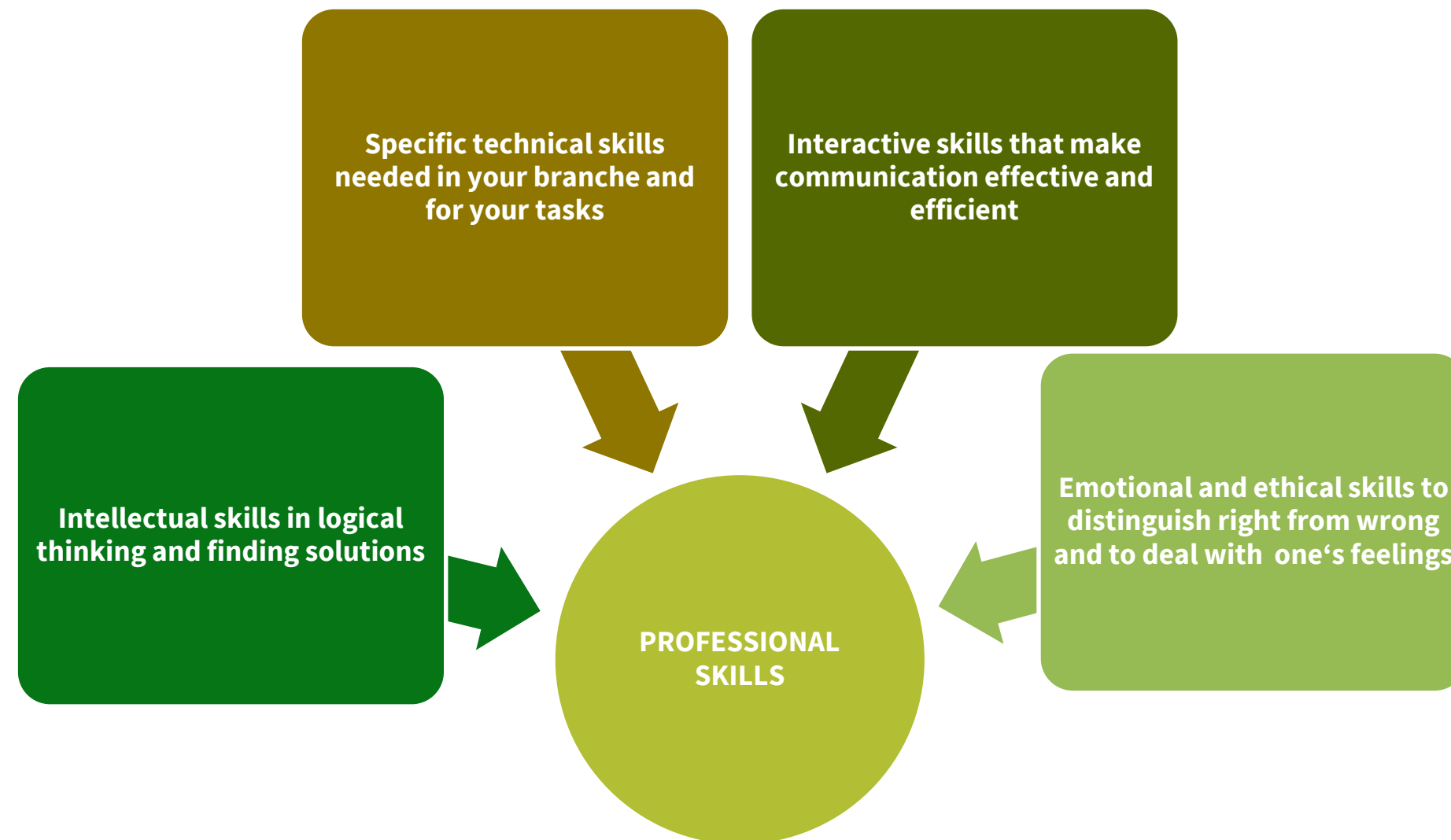
Workload: How can we manage all the work that needs to be done?

Team: How can we act successfully as a team on our farm?

Work sharing: Who will do what?



Professional skills training



No one can whistle a symphony. It takes a whole orchestra to play it.

H.E. Luccock

Being a farmer and a successful entrepreneur is challenging.

You will only be able to enjoy your work-life balance if you perform at a high level in the following skills:

- intellectual skills,
- technical skills,
- interactive skills,
- emotional and ethical skills.

Excellent partnerships and collaborations depend on you - as an excellent entrepreneur.



3 Finding partners along the value chain

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© Kerry Social Farming

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**Good is the enemy of great.
That's why so few things become
great.**

James C. Collins



What is your value chain?

No matter which business you follow, there are basic characteristics of a value chain.

Like in Porter's Value chain

One company's value chain is embedded in a larger stream of activities.

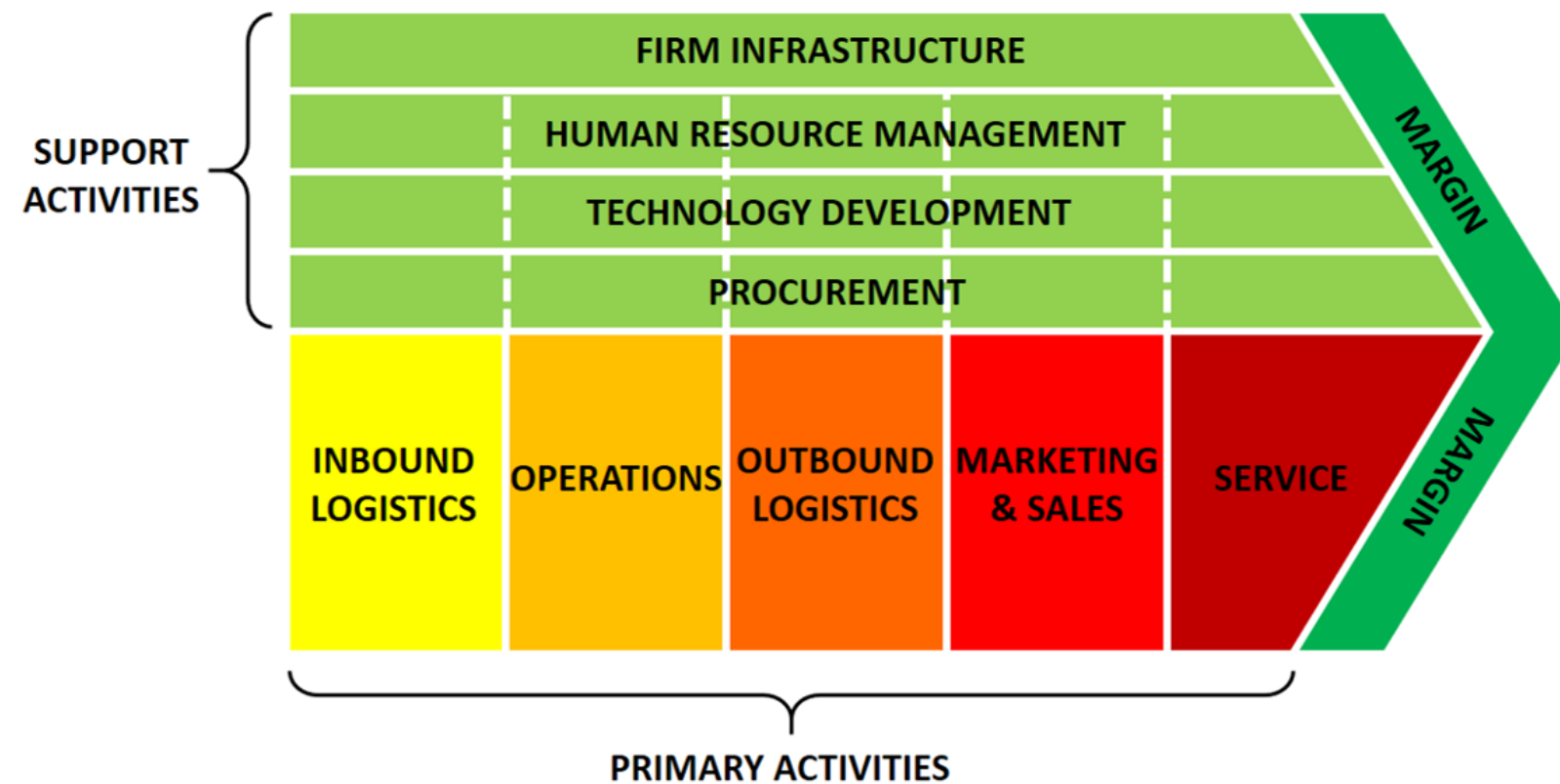
Suppliers have a value chain (upstream value) that create and deliver the purchased inputs.

In addition, many products pass through the value chain of channels (channel value) on their way to the client/ consumer/ buyer.

A farm's product or service eventually becomes part of its client's/ consumer's/buyer's value chain.

In this moment you reach the interest of the market.

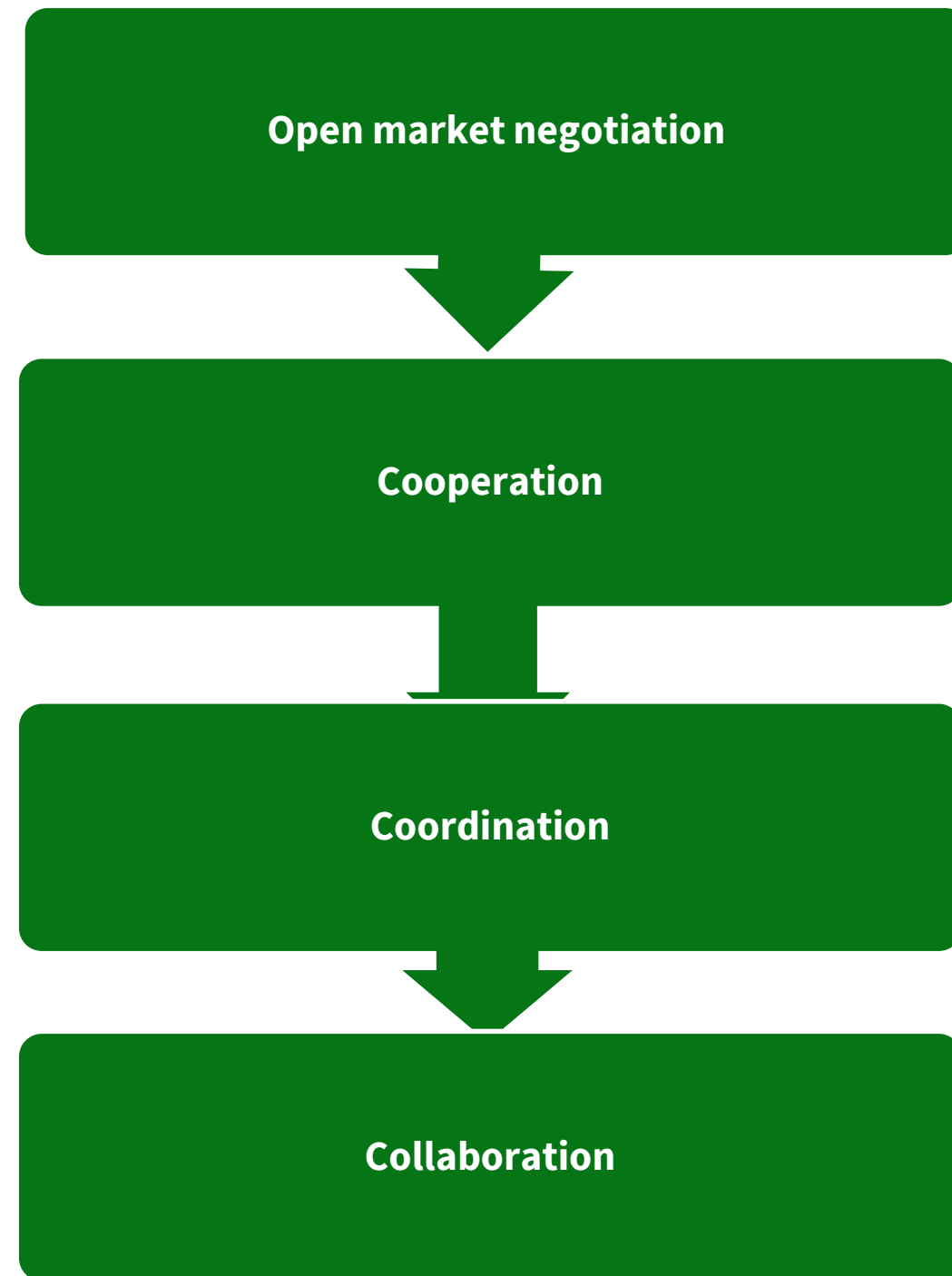
The value chain activities can be divided into two broader types; primary activities and support activities.



Adapted from <https://www.mindtools.com/ajhsltf/porters-value-chain>



Is there a win-win for you and partners?



Adapted from Spekman/Kamauff/ Myhr, 1998

It is important to check the possible constellations of your offer to the market.

Especially you should know and be aware of who is going to be offering the specific parts of the product & service.

Will it be you or will it be you with relevant partners?



A group of five men, likely farmers or social workers, are standing in the doorway of a rustic wooden barn. They are all smiling and have their arms around each other's shoulders. From left to right: the first man wears a grey cap and dark overalls; the second wears a red cap and a white t-shirt with a '50' logo; the third wears a red cap and a dark blue polo shirt with '38' and 'M' on it; the fourth wears a red and black striped cap and a grey long-sleeved shirt; the fifth wears a white t-shirt and blue overalls. The barn interior is visible behind them, showing wooden beams and some equipment. A red broom leans against the wall on the left.

4 Creating a USP in social farming for older people



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**When tillage begins, other arts
follow. The farmers, therefore,
are the founders of human
civilization.**

Daniel Webster





Potential to repurpose infrastructure

There is a chance for a win-win scenario.

Many farms in rural areas lack a future perspective for their original business: food production.

Therefore, in every village or small town in rural areas you will find farms or individual farm buildings that have the potential to be used or converted for other purposes.

At the same time, rural areas tend to lose important components of the infrastructure of daily life:

- Food,
- health, care, doctors,
- housing,
- education,
- Gastronomy.

They are all linked to social exchange.





Meeting the needs of elderly people

There is an opportunity for a win-win situation.

Many people do not want to live alone in old age, but want to be self-determined. And when their strength declines, they may slow down, but they can still do many activities. On the other hand, there are many small farms struggling to survive.

Questions that can be asked about the lifestyles of older people and that can help to learn more about them:

- **What are their time perspectives?**
- **What is their lifestyle (eating, cooking, shopping, etc.)?**
- **What are their personal circumstances and mobility?**
- **What are their housing, environment, services and communication like?**
- **What regulations are there for services for older people?**

Possible unique features (USP) on farms for elderly people

Natural surroundings

Being outdoors in nature

Diversity of the local landscape

Active place

There is always something going on.

Embedded in the local environment and community

You always have company

Interaction

Engaging with people and work

People coming and going

Creating memories

Fresh air

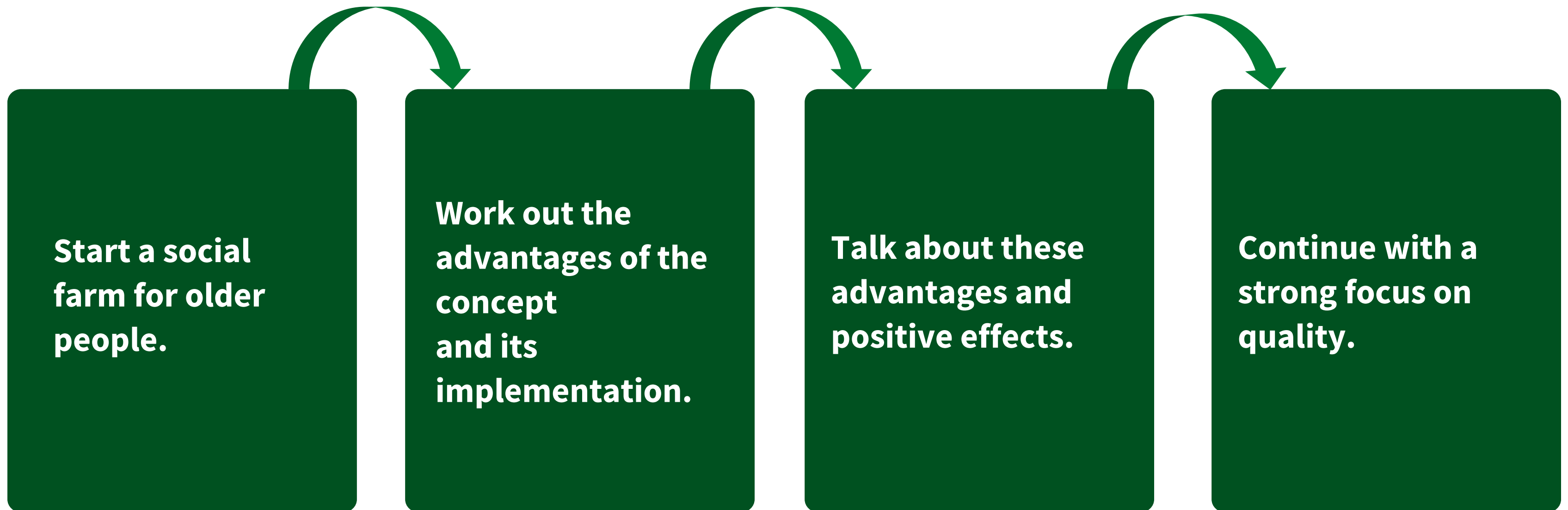
Being in the countryside

Having access to nature and biodiversity

Peaceful surroundings



Do something good and talk about it



A man with grey hair, wearing a blue sweater and a watch, is feeding a group of goats. He is holding a bunch of green leafy plants and offering them to the goats. The goats are brown and black, with some having small horns. They are gathered around a wooden fence. In the background, there is a wooden fence, a green tractor, and a forested hill under a blue sky with some clouds.

5 FarmElder case studies



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© Jarrod Ferguson

How to organise and start a cooperation?

The following FarmElder case studies give a picture of cooperation possibilities in connection with housing services.

Are other services offered in addition to housing?

Is it cooperative?

Is it an offer in the hands of the farmer? Or is it a collaboration between the farmer, social service providers and/or residents?

What kind of cooperation?

Do the residents help each other?

Are additional services to housing "bought in" or included as special services? Such as

- Household support
- Shopping assistance
- Emergency call system
- Driving service and leisure activities
- Care services



An example:

Mohorko Farm (Slovenia)

The Mohorko family farm has shifted from tourism to social farming for the elderly.

The owner of the farm, Matjaž, gained work experience in a small rural home for the elderly in Austria, where he learned about the specifics of elderly care.

By adapting the premises and introducing a service for older people to live on the farm, the Mohorko farm improved its occupancy rate and developed a range of new services.

Learn more about the Mohorko farm in the FarmElder case studies.





An example:

SOS Dorfgemeinschaft Hohenroth (Germany)

In the SOS village community of Hohenroth in Bavaria, people with cognitive impairments live and work.

For the older of them, a new "Centre" was built in 2021.

This residential house enables them to remain in their familiar surroundings even in old age, to be active in agriculture according to their abilities and to participate in the life of the village community.

Learn more about the SOS village community in the FarmElder case studies.

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**I would rather be on my farm
than be emperor of the world.**

George Washington



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