



Riportiamo un interessante articolo apparso sul sito Bridgewinners il 24 novembre 2015, scritto dal danese Morten Bilde. L'autore propone alcune significative azioni per un adeguato rilancio del bridge.



[www.bridgewinners.com](http://www.bridgewinners.com)

<http://bridgewinners.com/article/print/the-image-of-bridge/>

## The Image of Bridge

by Morten Bilde (Denmark)

The purpose of this article is to address one of the main problems the Bridge community is facing in most of the world.

Nothing about cheating or TD rulings, read on safely ...

### The average age of Bridge players is rising.

Today, if a 40 year old starts in a Bridge club the next youngest player will probably be his father at 65

There are a number of ways to change this:

- get more young people interested in the game
- catch the interest of the 40-60 years old (when they have thrown out their kids and are looking for something more interesting)
- get in more 60+ players (the natural and obvious group to find new players from)

The reward is larger from the two last groups if you look at pure numbers, but my passion has always been for youth bridge so I will stay with that for now.

I will focus on the situation in Denmark where I know what is going on, and I am aware that some of the facts about school systems might be very different in other parts of the world.

Interesting issues are (danish facts stated):

- How long time are the kids in school (8.00 – 15.00)
- Do the schools take in other things than the classical subjects (yes)
- Do the schools allow external (Bridge) teachers (yes)
- And probably other country-specific issues

For some years we have tried to get Bridge into the schools in Denmark, and since summer 2014 things are beginning to look better. Our schools have opened up for subjects like bridge, and we have formed the Danish School Bridge Association with the purpose of getting Bridge into the schools. 7 Volunteers with different skills are on the board, and in cooperation

with our federation and many of our Bridge clubs we have a good base for moving forward.

Most of 2015 I have spent trying to figure out the best way to work with the schools, and I found 3 important steps (In what I then thought was the order of priority)

- 1) Convince the schools to take up Bridge as a subject
- 2) Induce the kids to choose Bridge (Subjects like Bridge are often offered as a choice)
- 3) Make Bridge a cool game for kids (to help 2)

Fortunately it turns out that a lot of schools like the arguments for Bridge:

**Concentration** – training the ability to concentrate on a task

**Cooperation** - partnership cooperation in bidding and defense

**Solving new types of problems** - every hand presents a new problem to solve

**Communication** - communicating useful information in bidding and defense

### Social qualities and abilities

Many of these are abilities that young people (in fact all people) need, in order to do well in life. It starts in the education system, and continues when you get a job, establish a family and a social network.

This paves the way to 2)

If you get the chance to tell kids about Bridge (or better let some Bridge playing young people do it) there is a good chance they will choose Bridge when they get the chance in the school.

Which brings us to (3), what I now think has the highest priority

### The image of Bridge

Put very shortly the image of Bridge is something like "It is a game for old people, with funny hair colors", or variations on this.

Not exactly an image that makes young people (or others) want to try the game.

We are looking for something like:

**fun**

**competitive**

**exciting**

**social**

**available on their platforms**

In other words, it has to be cool to play Bridge, especially if you are young.

The way the world works today, if we can make this image change for Bridge, social media marketing can help us spread the news about this great, cool game and make many youngsters want to try it.

How then, can we work on this image change ?

It was easy to work out the message to the schools (concentration, cooperation etc)

But what about the kids ?

Most kids love to play games, but what could (in their eyes) make bridge more interesting than other games ?

What happened to the Yoyo, Rubik's Cube, Pokémon, and whatever was fun before the internet age ? Why did so many kids love these things?

Competition ?

Collection ?

Status (cool game) ?

Your friends like it, so you like it ?

Whatever the secret, we have to find a way to make Bridge more cool, more attractive - a cult game.

I am pretty sure that if we can succeed with this image change for Bridge the following will happen (at least in countries where you can convince schools to take up Bridge)

1) More kids will learn about the game. Some will keep playing, some will take it up later, and some (most of them) will never play again.

2) The game will be more visible and attractive to the 40+ group, helping us to get more players from that group too. (I have pupils borrowing cards and bidding boxes to teach their parents and grandparents bridge).

3) Eventually giving us new Bridge players at younger ages.

Many countries are working - more or less successfully - on School Bridge projects, but I am sure that whatever your possibilities in the school systems are, the benefit from a better image of Bridge will gain worldwide.

Why am I posting all this stuff here ?

I am looking for

- input and ideas to the image of Bridge
- stories from young players about WHY Bridge is fun
- any opinions on my thoughts, suggestions and ideas for improvement

Meanwhile I will continue to

- contact schools with Bridge, and get it popular in Denmark
- develop a youth concept that I hope can be used in other countries
- get input from the kids who play (why do they think Bridge is fun ?)
- get this info on Instagram, facebook, youtube, twitter
- get good stories in TV, radio, news channels ...

My hope with this is to start something that will help getting Bridge into young people's mind as a cool and great game, and this way get more (young, but any newcomers are welcome) people into our game.

It is never too late to learn Bridge, but just like cycling and skiing, it is a lot easier to learn while you are young.

*Commenti al post dell'autore:*

<http://bridgewinners.com/article/print/the-image-of-bridge/>

*Il parere di Maurizio di Sacco (tratto da Facebook)*

**Maurizio Di Sacco** Il thread ripropone, dettagliandolo molto bene, il concetto di base applicato da molti anni dalle federazioni che hanno avuto grande successo nell'incrementare soci. In sostanza, lasciar perdere la fascia di età 25-45 perché quella impegnata nella creazione di una famiglia e nel perseguimento di una carriera. Al tempo stesso, insegnare il bridge ai giovanissimi nella speranza che vadano sì via ad un certo punto - perché impegnati nelle attività di cui sopra - ma poi ritornino. Francia e Olanda, le prime a battere questi sentieri, hanno numeri di soci a cinque zeri, ma anche tutte le scandinave sono in crescita grazie allo sesso meccanismo. Inoltre, Bilde analizza con grande cura quali siano i meccanismi che possono attrarre i giovani. Molto ben fatto.

25 novembre