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Career Guidance

Knowing and Coaching Your Students
Location/coverage
The Netherlands, Noord-Brabant, Rosmalen, Rodenborch-College with assistance of the city council of ‘s-Hertogenbosch.

Introduction: brief description of the best practice
Career Guidance, and especially the career guidance interview chart, is a tool of getting to know your student and your student getting to know himself reflection. Repeating this programme through the years in school results in a portfolio that show a young mind developing. This helps with career choices.
Young people (12-15) with motivational problems, due to lack of self-knowledge and resulting insecurities, threatening to drop out or repeat class, develop a portfolio about themselves. This will show growing insight in specific personal qualities, knowing where and with whom to find information about study and job opportunities. This is a continuous process, being facilitated by the management and carried by teachers in their role as mentors. The portfolio is digital and will grow over time until the student finishes school. He will take it with him to the next stage of his education. Parents are always involved. Parents reflect on the portfolios of their children, with the children. The feedback of this conservation is processed (in the portfolio) by the children themselves. Training is offered to a small nucleus of experienced mentors who divulge it to the rest of the team. This is a smart way of limiting costs. Ideally the (local) government or colleges/universities subsidies or help out.

Stakeholders and Partners
Stakeholders are first and foremost the students and their parents. Then the school board that makes it part of the school vision of ‘really seeing the student’. The school board looks for assistance by the city council, colleges and Universities. They all are convinced that a portfolio that leads to self-knowledge is the best way to success. For mentors (class leaders) it’s an easy way of teaching but especially coaching the student to success. Mentors are specially trained to monitor group processes.

Approach/Methodology (dim. C, D: analysis task)
The methodology is simple and consists in its purest form of five career guidance questions. Please look at the wheel (see below). The miracle is the interview, the conversation between mentor and student, in which the student is coached and will formulate the things that are most important to him. Students are always motivated to learn something (Meijers, Kuijpers & Bakker, 2006).
The other miracle is the repetition of the procedure. The portfolio is an important tool of information for the teachers and mentor. The career compass is the coat of the portfolio. All career activities are linked to the career compass. Not only motivational but also
personal and intellectual problems will come to light, by using this portfolio. The next step is to take action when necessary (mentor, parents, dean, care-team, school board etc.) Parents always reflect on the portfolio!

Success Factors (dim E: analysis task)

1. Mentors are trained but, especially, in order to respond to behaviour.
2. Repetition of procedure = not letting go of the student.
3. Shared conviction in the school about importance of portfolio and continuation of the process.
4. Checking with students; do they feel better informed about their opportunities.
5. Parents always reflect on the portfolio!

Impact/Results of the BP (dim A: analysis task)

The main result is that false (or lack of) images about self will disappear. Development of thought and insight into career possibilities will increase. This will strengthen self-respect, especially in girls.

Portfolio in the Netherlands will be necessary, together with good results, to enter the next step of education.
We asked students in the third grade (14-15 year) to answer the following question: Has the career guidance interview contributed to your career / to make choices in your study program? Their answers:

![Bar chart showing student responses]

**Validation (dim A: analysis task)**

The method was developed by Marinka Kuijpers ([m.a.c.t.kuijpers@hhs.nl](mailto:m.a.c.t.kuijpers@hhs.nl)) and is in our school being trained by CINOP ‘s-Hertogenbosch ([www.cinop.nl/cinop-en.html](http://www.cinop.nl/cinop-en.html)). The method is academically based and practically applied. We held interviews with various levels of the organization and beyond (testimonials with the municipality, headmaster of the Rodenborch-College, team leaders, mentors, trainers from CINOP and students). All of them say, that this way of working contributes to the development of students.

**Sustainability (dim B: analysis task)**

Once a group of mentors have been trained, they can train their colleagues. The interviews take place once or twice a year and are part of the tasks a mentor will perform apart from teaching. These tasks are part of the job description and are being paid for inclusively. Time investment for one interview is about 20-30 minutes per student. Students fill out their own portfolio document (digitally in word) that will be placed by the mentor in a digital portfolio in the national Deans network (secured with school key).
Replicability or up-scaling (dim F: analysis task)

The career Qompas can be used by other countries, because it is easily accessible. You can use the career competent card (toolkit 2young2fail) to transfer this method to your own organization.

Constraints (analysis task)

As with all things this programme has to be introduced carefully; mentors will be trained carefully, monitored by the team leaders. The interviews will take place in every year of the career in secondary school. A learning curve will have to become visible. Transfer from one mentor to the next is still important but the portfolio will help when this is not possible. The school board needs a long breadth and keep the process going year after year. Mentors need help with planning from the school board and the roster room. parents have in. Parents should reflect on the portfolio every time the interview has taken place. Their comments are in the portfolio as well. Lack of parental interest should not be tolerated. This can be done in several ways.

Conclusion/ Lessons learned

Get to know your students. Then they will get to know themselves. It's sometimes shocking to see how little they know about themselves and their qualities. Many times they will only hear criticism. Let them dream about a happy life with a job that fits.

URL of the BP and related Web sites

1. See the "Too Young To Fail" website: http://www.2young2fail.com/
2. Websites mentioned above (Marinka Kuijpers / CINOP)
3. Invitation to and description of career guidance training*
4. Career Compass (page 2)

*Invitation to and description of career guidance training

"Is career guidance training about coaching students in making the right choices of study?
Or is it about helping them in making the right choices over and over again in the future?
What does it take to properly construct a coherent process of career guidance and coaching?
In what way do the career guidance questions contribute to the individual development of a student?"

These and other questions will be answered in the training ‘career guidance questions and process’ being offered to you. We will be trained in skills that are necessary to conduct efficient dialogues with our students, follow them up and work towards a portfolio
that shows an increasing self-awareness. At the end of the training you will receive a certificate stating your experiences with career guidance questions and dialogue.

The career wheel chart

Developed by Marinka Kuijpers (2003)

1. **Quality reflection: Discover your talent.**
   - What are you good at? What do you want to be best at?
   - What am I proud of? How did you manage that?
   - What do others admire in you?
   - Which experience have you never wanted to miss? What has this done to you?
   What keeps you busy? Why do you put effort in that?
   - Which school activities give you a good feeling? Because of what?
   - What's an indicator that you are having a good time at school?
   - How can others tell that you are feeling alright?
   - Who is your hero, who do you admire and why?
   - What would it be like for you if you'd fulfil your parents' profession?

3. Work exploration: Discover your study and profession.
   Which challenges and dilemmas will you face?
   - What do I see when I see you studying? In which field?
   - What kind of work is it that you do with pleasure?
   - What do people who do this work worry about?
   - What do they enjoy most about their work?
   - What would you like to achieve in your profession?

   What are you going to discover, practise, or prove?
   - What are you going to do? Does that match your goals? Are you willing to choose?
   - What kind of support do you need? How will you get this support?
   - On a scale of 1-10, what are the chances of you performing this action?
   - How can you employ your qualities to take the next step?
   - When will this conversation be of use to you?

5. Networking: In conversation with…
   Who do you need to realise your wishes?
   - To whom could you ask this?
   - With whom do you talk about this?
   - Which people can you ask questions on this matter?
   - How can you become acquainted with more people?
Executing a career interview: this is how I do it!

The form of a career interview manifests itself through dialogue. It separates itself from conversations in which we very often find the monologue-advice, feedback and information structure (Kuijpers, 2008). In a dialogue, it's all about creating a safe space in which participant and guidant can share and explore personal experiences. A dialogue is not a method: take your time!

**Orientation phase**

*What am I going to do?*

- Welcome and make feel comfortable (being curious, handing out compliments)
- Clarification of aims of the conversation and the procedure (e.g. timing, possibility of a follow-up conversation and agreements on a report of the conversation)
- Exploring the contents (what is to be discussed?)

**Core**

*What am I going to do?*

**Questions that can aid me with this**

**Reflection on actions in the previous period**

- progress in career steps (open questions)
- progress in study results
- progress in well-being

**Problem addressing phase**

Clarification of study- or career questions and investigating which competence needs to be worked on:

- Quality reflection
- Motives reflection
- Work exploration
- Career control
- Networking

**Reflection on actions in the past period**

- What has happened?
- What have you considered important?
- What are your intentions or wishes that you have now?

**Problem addressing phase**

- What are you good at?
- What do you consider to be important at school and at work and why?
- Do you think this study will easily take you to a job? Why so/not?
- On what basis have you chosen for this study/job/internship?
- Who can aid you in achieving a clear picture of the study/job?
Constructive phase

• Make clear agreements on subjects from the problem addressing phase.
• Ensure study- or career activities are measurable, so the student can benefit from this.

Constructive phase

• How can you continue working on your study- or career questions?
• Which solutions can you think of?
• What does this mean for your development?
• Which activities are you going to undertake? When?
• Who are you going to ask for assistance in this?

Final phase

**What am I going to do?**

• Summarize the conversation (name the quality/value/repeat motive once again)
• Reflecting on their progress
• Making follow-up appointments (Targeted!)
• Rounding-up and farewell