

Teachers' roles in supporting careers of students

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- Teachers' different roles: Are these relevant and are they properly described?
- Consequences for teacher training: Where can we build on existing strengths, and where do we need to develop new competencies?
- Facilitating the mind-shift: What is possible in the VET structures?

Problem Statement

Career choice is demanding and it significantly impacts one's life:

- For students who have to orient themselves and make choices in a complex world.
- For teachers who are expected to support their students in this process.

Supporting a student in developing his or her career is a different task than teaching a subject matter like maths or language.

- What does this support look like?
- What are the biggest challenges for teachers?

Supporting a Career as a Teacher, Guide, and Coach

Challenges for teachers at

... the individual level

- be flexible in fulfilling different roles over time, and towards specific groups of learners
- be ready to «hand over» the responsibility to the students who must self-regulate and self-evaluate their learning, and decide about the goals and the timing of the career choice process
- reflection on tasks and professional identity as a teacher in career orientation

.. the social and school level

- resist expectations of parents and school principles who demand that all young people have a good-fitting follow-up solution (teachers are not a job placement service!)
- juggle with demands and handle time-constraints (teaching other subjects, networking with avtors outside of school, engagment in school activities)

Teacher as...

Instructor

Instruct and enable learning of career competencies
Aim: Students/learners know career options in their education system.

Teacher

Works with and enables students in their understanding and application of knowledge, concepts and processes.
He/she ...

- delivers learning about the world of work and career options;
- works on career competencies (knowledge, motivation, environment, activities);
- stimulates class discussions.
- needs to have sound diagnostic competence;
- can handle his own and the student's emotions;
- has the ability to develop solutions together with the student.

Guide

Match students to educations and jobs
Aim: Students/learners know that they need to engage in career planning and find a fitting education and job.

Teacher

Focuses on a student's objective resemblance to prototypes and occupational groups in terms of essentialist categories such as abilities, interests, and personality traits.
He/she ...

- creates opportunities to recognise interests and strengths;
- directs young people into specific occupations beyond their own often limited experience and their family background;
- Assures matching between students and follow-up solution.
- has a sound knowledge of post-compulsory educations and the world of work
- needs to have out-of school networks to place students in fitting education and jobs.

Coach

Empower students in developing their own life stories
Aim: Students/learners can design their life, and are able to justify their decisions based on self and social reflection.

Teacher

Supports a result-oriented self-reflection and increases the ability to self-regulate a career by considering the available resources.
He/she ...

- helps people understand themselves and their environment;
- supports students' reflective processes;
- accompanies people while they make and adjust plans to manage change and transition.
- can build a trustworthy relationship as a prerequisite to coach;
- must be ready to help students'in making sense of their career by listening and asking questions.

Discussion: Consequences for Teacher Education

Guiding and coaching: What matters is the process, not (only) the outcome. The students are «in charge», the teacher as guide and coach enables students to manage their own story, their on career.

Questions for teacher education:

- How can teacher students' be best prepared for their role as guide and coach?
- What kind of competencies do they need to acquire?
- How can they develop a professional identity beyond the role of instructing students?
- How can they be supported in developing the skill to handle potentially conflicting roles, and different expectations from school students, parents, and school principles?

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