career guide

Education and Culture

Index

Career Guide
News Letter Nr. 1/2006
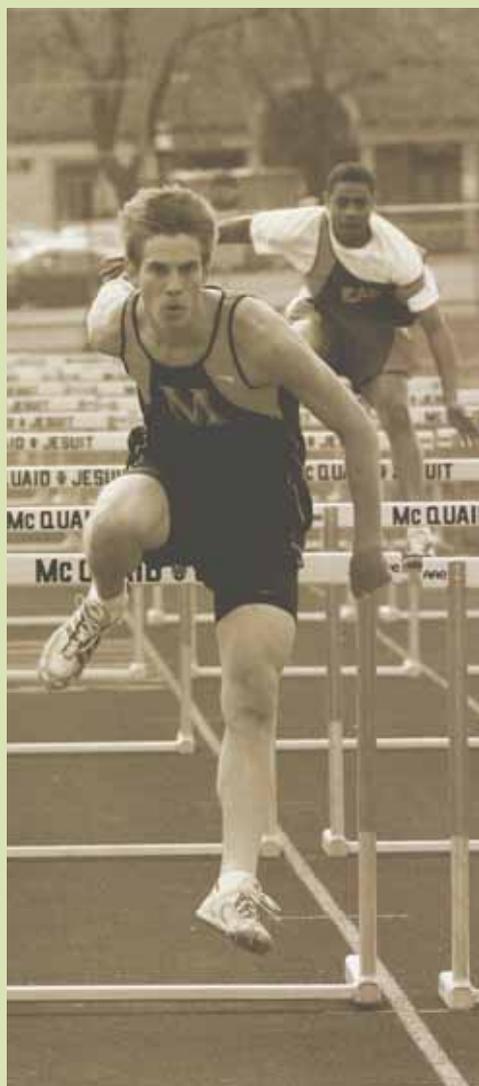
Welcome

Dear Career Guiders,

Welcome to Career Guide Network, a Comenius European network that deals with career guidance.

Career Guide has started on October of 2005 and will be completed in three years. It is a network and not a project, as far it includes the collaboration of schools through Europe!

But let's talk about our topic. What exactly is Career Guidance and who concerns? Which topics includes? Who does provide career guidance and with which method-ologies? Is it really necessary? Why?

What exactly is Career Guidance?

"......North, east, south or west
Which direction is the best
If the choosing gets confusing
Maybe it's the map you are using......"
Lewis Carroll, Alice in Wonderland

Career guidance refers to services and activities intended to assist individu-als of any age and at any point throughout their lives, to make educational, training and occupational choices and to manage their careers. Such services may be found in schools, universities and colleges, in training institutions, in public employment services, in the workplace, in the voluntary or commu-nity sector and in the private sector. The activities may take place on an in-

dividual or group basis and may be face to face or at a distance (including help lines and web based services). They include career information provision (in print, ICT-based and other forms), assessment and self-assessment tools, counseling interviews, career education programmes (to help individuals develop their self awareness, opportunity awareness, and career management skills), taster programmes (to sample options before choosing them), work search programmes, and transition services.'

What else?

Career Counseling is an internal experience of unique traits' discovery, traits that each one conceals inside him.

Why?

Improving your self awareness, getting to know yourself and knowing how effective your soft skills are in today's workplace, as well as improving your career transition skills are all crucial to your success in the New Millennium world of work.

In order to be competitive in today's market and ensure continual

career growth and development, you must be pro-active and take control of your career path. Your career needs to be managed and you need to do it! If you're not managing your career, then no one is !

Our vision

To see career guide in a different dimension.....
....as far as education and career comprise a really important

part of personal happiness and influence the whole daily life..
...to convince students and parents that some times has no matter how much " knowledge" you get at school but which is the best way to redeem that knowledge on personal satisfaction and happiness...
...to understand that choosing a job, you choose the way of your life...
...to understand the meaning of words, like... alternative choice, adaptability, change, long life learning, self-awareness, self – assessment, assertiveness, life skills, positive thoughts, planning, problem solving, career change, promote my self e.t.c
...and converts their meaning into action!!!!!!

"this is a drawing of me...i would like to live under the rainbow..."

And all these ideas...
....to be embodied in the schools' curriculum as an open wide plan!!!!!!

Main Topics of Career Counseling

The procedure of career guidance is been based on specific functions that indicate the steps a counselor make during a session. The basic functions of career counseling have been presented at the lines below.

Personal Development
• recognize values and motivations
• recognize personal skills &abilities
• develop required skills

Take information for education & labor market
• collection of information
• what labor requires
• skills required

Make a career decision
• setting goals and a career plan
• see beyond typical certifications
• create alternative choices
• match your personality with careers

Transition from school to labor market
• construction of curriculum vitae (cv)
• first interview
• promote yourself
• deal with rejection

Work placement
• self – satisfaction
• collaboration
• assertiveness
• adaptability

Changing career path
• resetting goals
• reorganize the career plan
• reassure your values

Career Guidance at School

School's counselors deal with the most of the topics above, giving, although emphasis at personal development, information and career decision. However, students can be prepared in a more superficial way, for the rest relative topics.

What is "careerGuide network"

CareerGUIDE for schools
Network for career guidance in Schools

Socrates Programme
Comenius 3 (Comenius Networks)
225936 -CP -1-2005-1- GR - COMENIUS-C3PP

The **CareerGUIDE for Schools** network's main aim is to promote career education and awareness in European schools. The network collaborates with experts in pedagogy, labour market, career guidance, school to work transitions and technology in order to contribute in offering substantial orientation to school children as well as to those who support them in this process. The partnership of the **CareerGUIDE for Schools** network will form collaborative working-groups throughout the entire network's lifetime.

CareerGUIDE for Schools network has developed a Network of Schools across Europe in order to implement the partnership's research results and activities, as well as to use the CareerGUIDE Web Portal. Disseminating the network's results and activities, a virtual career guidance European Community will be formed highlighting the significance of Career Guidance in schools. In addition, support and useful resources will be offered to teachers for implementing Career Guidance in schools and new curriculum guidelines will be developed.

More details….
• Partners from whole Europe create exercises and activities which are strictly related with the main topics of Career Guidance and addressed to schools' counselors.
• Schools' counselors from a lot of countries in Europe, implement these exercises in the classroom
• Schools' counselors evaluate the exercises and activities
• Network consortium evaluate the exercises, in order to choose "the best practices"
• Best practices will be uploaded at the Web Portal and every counselor will be able to use them.

Anyone who is interested in career guidance can become a member of CareerGUIDE network through a free subscription in the CareerGUIDE web portal.

What are the benefits of a CareerGUIDE Member?
• Access to CareerGUIDE web portal with info on career guidance
• Information exchange with other professionals and schools across the E. U.
• Opportunity to present your school or institution (info & link)
• Opportunity to publish and publicise your own work

and activities related to Career Guidance in schools (EU project or other iniative)
- Invitations to CareerGUIDE network's national and international conferences
- Gather ideas and information on planning your own project on Career Guidance
- Immediate access to fellow professionals who share your interests and endeavors
- CareerGuide for schools Newsletter

Working Groups' Thematic areas

The working groups represent the three essential steps in a student's career path:

1. How to find out about yourself

Personal development is an essential hard continuous process, vital part in the procedure of Career Guidance. Helps pupils to understand and articulate all aspects of their personality and to make specific plans for a stable future achievement. Personal development connects their emotional, educational and the vocational aspects of self. Actually, It is student's first step in a long life path, in a path of realizing and acting…..
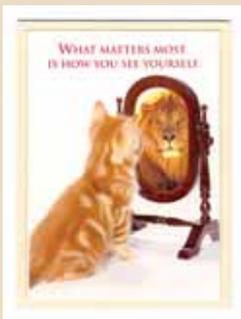
↳ **key points**

as a councelor, you could say…

- Look carefully at your achievements in school or at work to identify your abilities. If you are a student, for example, which subjects have you done well in, or not so well in? What does this tell you about your abilities -- mechanical, verbal, numerical, artistic, and people skills? Be careful not to overlook, or leave out, your abilities.

- Examine how you use your leisure time, your hobbies, community projects, activities with social, political, or religious organizations.   For

each one, write down three headings: Abilities, Interests, and Values. And, under each heading write down your thoughts.

- Talk with a friend or family member who is a good listener.
- Talk with a professional counselor; learn about career counseling
- Take tests or inventories that measure your abilities, interests, values, and personality. Write out your reactions to the results.
- Identify your skills. You will learn what the different types of skills are and how to identify those you have. For example, some categories of skills are the learning skills, social skills, technical skills, managerial skills, communication skills e.t.c
- Write an autobiography and identify the themes that represent who you are.
- Write a personal mission statement. In it write: what you want to be, what you want to accomplish in life, and what values or principles you want to guide you.

2. How to find out about the labour market

Labour market for most students is "a terra incognita", an inaccessible area! What is very helpful for a student is to learn how to collect information about market and employment possibilities

↳ **key points**

what kind of knowledge, skills, aptitudes or values might be required for a profession of own interest?

Employment possibilities:

- Check the employment possibilities in other countries;
- meet representatives of professions;
- participate in different activities after school – accept a work on voluntary basis, try temporal employment, or learning-work programme, or internship, etc.
- Approach career guidance specialists (they may provide more detailed information regarding marketable and non-marketable professions or first steps to start own business)
- Regard labor market tendencies

3. How to make a good career decision
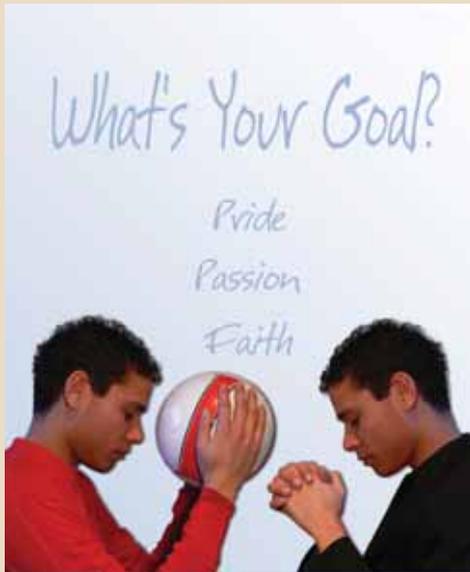
This can be an intimidating task. Sometimes decisions can be as easy as choosing a TV channel or picking a flavor of ice cream. These decisions have little impact on the way you live your life. Other decisions have a bigger influence on your life and so you may be hesitant to decide, feeling nervous that if you pick incorrectly you will end up feeling unhappy. Examples of these types of decisions include choosing a spouse or determining what you want to do with your life in regards to work.

Career decision is one of the most important functions of Career Guidance that depends on the two previous steps, as the student has to match his/her personality with the characteristics of specific careers, to narrow down his/her options and make a decision!

↳ **Key points**
Step One: Identify the Decision to be Made
Step 2: Know Yourself (Self Assessment)
Step 3: Begin Identifying Options (Career Exploration)
Step 4: Gather Information and Data
Step 5: Evaluate Options
Step 6: Select One of the Options Decision
Step 7: Make a Plan and Implement the Decision

Schools' network

At the list below you can see some of the schools and institutions that our network consisted of until now.
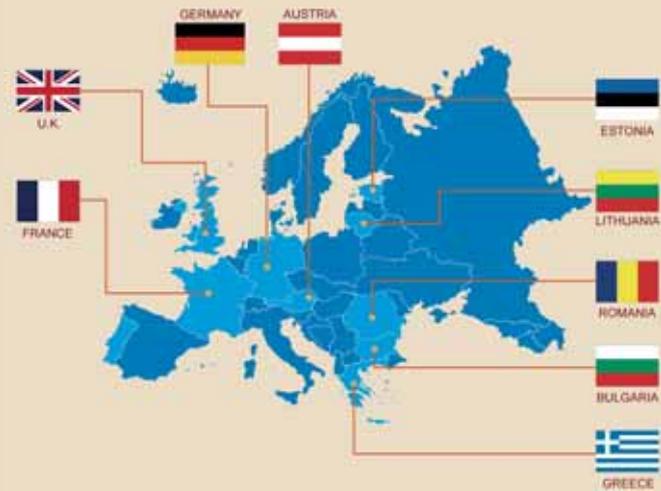
- The National Resource Center for Vocational Guidance of Sofia, in Bulgaria
- High School of Tourism "P. K. Javorov", Dobrich, in Bulgaria
- Secondary Technical school "Dr Nikola Vassiliadi", Gabrovo, in Bulgaria
- PGMET, an Educational Institute in Bulgaria
- IKOFEN, an Educational Institute in Bulgaria
- Hristo Botev School (SOU) Ivaylovgrad, in Bulgaria
- Centre of Training Firms – Ministry of Education and Science in Bulgaria (3 sectors)
- Faculty of Psychology and Sciences of Education, Special Education Department, in Romania
- Romanian Society for Lifelong Learning, in Romania
- National Centre for Vocational Orientation, in Greece
- Career Office of Ellinogermaniki Agogi School, in Greece
- Career Office of General High School of Karnidi, in Greece
- Career Office of General High School of Astros, in Greece
- Career Office of General High School of Kiato, in Greece
- High School of Kerasochori Evritanias, in Greece
- Centre of Career Counselling and Guidance of Zakinthos, in Greece

Oaks Collegiate

Co-ordinator: Dave Beards (Selly Oak School)

Member schools: Bartley Green School
(Technology & Sports College)
Bournville School
(Business Enterprise College)
Frankley Community High School
Hillcrest School and Community College
Lordswood Boys School
(Sports College and Sixth Form Centre)
Harborne Hill School
St Thomas Aquinas Catholic School
(Maths and Computing College)

Selly Park Technology College

Selly Oak School

If you want to participate, you can find the participation form at www.carrer-guide.eu

Career Guide Portal

The CG network is devoted to the improvement of CG counselling within an international framework. To set up and run such a network of experts it is obviously necessary to use ICT. In the case of the CG network this was a core aspect right from the beginning of the definition of the network. The paper discusses the concept and the operationalisation of the different targets by adopting an innovative socio-technic design.

Career Guidance itself is a topic that addresses different subject perspectives but also different target audiences and the question of accessibility (public vs. private). Target audiences include mainly experts (teachers), but also pupils and parents. Subjects

www.carrer-guide.eu
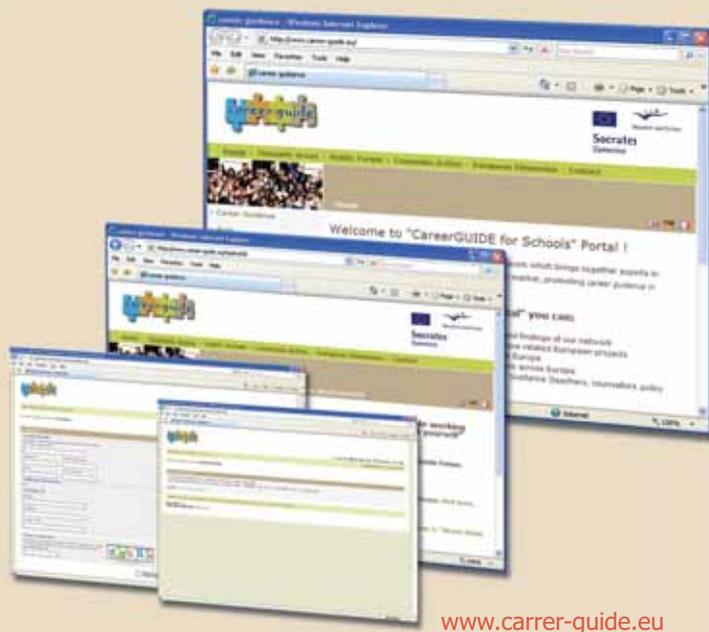
involved are education methodology, vocational/professional education and others. For the development of a suitable ICT concept we had to clarify about these subject-related issues first. This decision was also influential to answer the question which domain is most appropriate.

The very design is based on a combination of a web-based content management system (CMS) with a forum-like communication tool, including the categories of users, news, events, forums etc. The current version is accessible under www.career-guide.eu. A first experience of using this portal was that the inclusion of Wiki as tool is highly suitable.

Future steps of development include the integration of different languages and the improvement of the rights management. Also an usability evaluation will show which functionality is especially

suitable to support the focused work of the targeted audiences. From a knowledge design perspective we follow the model of an online community of practise as it was developed earlier and described in many publications (Wenger, 1998). Extending that approach towards ICT based settings current research concludes the necessity of an effective moderation of the thematic groups after those had been defined. This also corresponds with the experience of the CG network.

Characteristics
- strongly connected with the context of work
- based on the concept of situated learning
- learning as legitimate peripheral participation (lpP)
- in the beginning of the learning process the novice takes up a position at the fringe of the community
- free of the responsibility that full membership would bring, s/he participates only partly in common practice ("peripherality")
- Stepwise full access to the common practice of community members ("legitimacy")
- process of situated learning leads to the expert status and represents thereby also a process of cultivation
- LpP thus describes the relationship between experts and novices
- learning motivation arises by the interest in sharing / improving practice

3 central elements constitute a Community Practice:
- Domain: members must have expertise in a common area ("domain").
- Community: there is a group of people, who exchange experiences.
- Practice: members need to share practice.

Annual Conference 2006

In the framework of the European Project "Career Guide for Schools" the first International Conference titled "Career Guidance: A European Dimension" was organised by Ellinogermaniki Agogi and hosted in the premises of ALBA Graduate Business

School. Over 100 European and Greek scientists, teachers and counsellors specialized in Career Guidance Thematic and Labour Market participated in the conference. As Mrs Chrysoula Kosmidou-Hardy, the responsible for Career Guidance Sector in Peda-

gogical Institute of Greece, mentioned 'teachers should encourage children on active research''. Additionally, Mr Nikitas Kastis, the Deputy Director General of Lambrakis Foundation highlighted the importance of life and labour skills while the representators


of Ellinogermaniki Agogi and ALBA underlined the importance of Personal Development and Emotional Intelligence in children's awareness. Finally, the employability and job market's needs were discussed by career counsellors of Orientum. At this moment, the steps of Career Guidance seem a little bit suspended. However, Career Guidance's future is assigned positive as the Education will turn its eyes over this sector.

A trial exercise's implementation
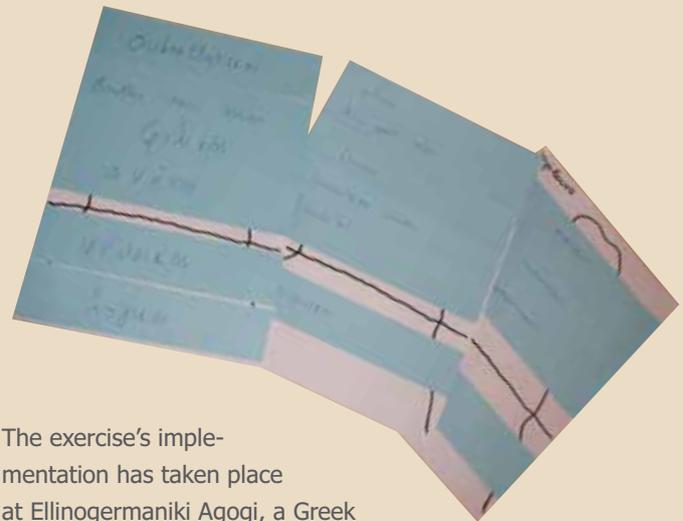
The exercise's implementation has taken place at Ellinogermaniki Agogi, a Greek private school, at the 3rd class of High school. Exercise is based on Johari Window's Theory for Personal Development and traits' recognisition.

Johari Window Theory

The Johari Window is a widely used model for understanding and training self-awareness, personal development, improving communications, interpersonal relationships, group dynamics, team development and inter-group relationships.

The Johari Window actually represents information - feelings, experience, views, attitudes, skills, intentions, motivation, etc - within or about a person - in relation to their group, from four perspectives, which are described below. Johari Window terminology refers to 'self' and 'others': 'self' means oneself. 'Others' means, other people in the person's group or team. The four Johari Window perspectives are called 'regions' or 'areas' or 'quadrants'. Each of these regions contains and represents the information - feelings, motivation, etc - known about the person, in terms of whether the information is known or unknown by the person, and whether the information is known or unknown by others in the group.

The Johari Window's four regions are as follows, showing the quadrant numbers and

commonly used names:

johari window four regions

1. what is known by the person about him/herself and is also known by others - open area, open self, free area, free self, or 'the arena'
2. what is unknown by the person about him/herself but which others know - blind area, blind self, or 'blindspot'
3. what the person knows about him/herself that others do not know - hidden area, hidden self, avoided area, avoided self
4. what is unknown by the person about him/herself and is also unknown by others - unknown area or unknown self

Open/free self	Blind self
Hidden self	Unknown self

The exercise declares to students about 14 to 18 years old, teachers and counselors. Chosen exercises intend to make children think and search inside them.
The specific aims of exercise presented, are:
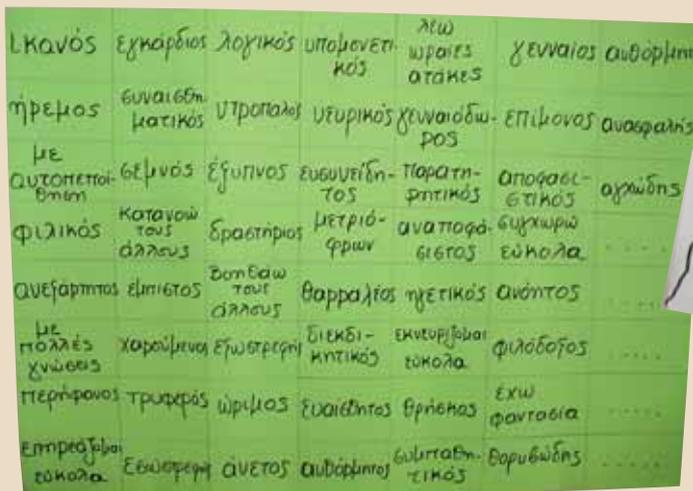
- To motivate students to discriminate the external self traits from the internal ones
- To help them accept their traits

- To recognize and name their feelings
- To motivate them to realize that all traits are essential and to accept that fact.
- To motivate them to understand that they should accept their traits and then to try to change them those which are considered as negative ones.

In few words to help students to develop team spirit, to interact with each other, to pose the same goals, to reveal their thoughts and to share experience.

- We write in the board a series of human traits or we give pupils a photocopy with all these traits plus 6 cartels to each one. Then students choose 6 traits that describe themselves and write them on the 6 cartels. We assure students that no one will see what they have written, so a student can be extremely honest.
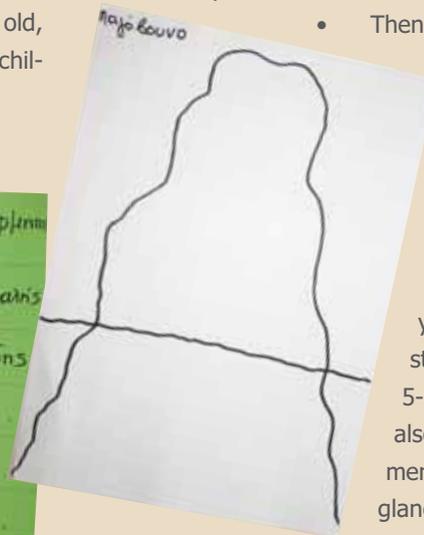
- Then students arrange the traits in order from what they most like about themselves to what they least like. When done, we ask, "Do you like what you see? Do you want to keep it? Now give up one trait. How does the lack of that affect you? It isn't obligatory for all students to answer the questions. 5-6 opinions can be heard. We also try to clarify students' movements, facial expressions even their glance.
- Afterwards, we suggest students to give up another trait and next to give up three. Now we ask them ''what kind of person are you?" After giving up six of the qualities, we could hear all comments students have circularly in order to clarify their feelings. We recommend them to regain all traits one by one, if they feel like. This exercise ends up when children obtain all traits they really want or think they need.

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