

The Live2Work Project

Results of pilot courses and their implications for the design, building, and development of life projects of young adults and adults in situations of professional vulnerability

ABSTRACT

We herein present the most recent developments of the Live2Work Project (ERASMUS+, with the participation of Portugal, Denmark, the Czech Republic, and France). We present some of the results of the pilot courses that were conducted with technicians (conselors, mentors, trainers) from three different countries in order to test the project's first two outputs. We also reflect on the importance of conducting pilot courses to build a final version of these outputs.

INTRODUCTION

Live2Work Project targets technicians who work in designing, building, and developing life projects with young adults and adults (18-30 years) in a situation of professional vulnerability, including migrants and refugees. Six outputs achieve this aim: (i) a manual describing the project's conceptual background and methodology, (ii) a toolbox organized in thematic modules to meet different needs of the target group, (iii) a manual to train technicians, (iv) workshops / training activities for technicians, (v) videos to promote the project and act as tutorials, and (vi) an e-learning platform to access all project materials.

METHOD

Participants

N = 30: 13 participants in a pilot course in Portugal, 8 in Czech Republic, and 9 in Denmark; mostly female (28 women, 93,33%); 12 between ages 20 and 30, 5 between ages 31 and 40, 12 between ages 41 and 50, and only 1 older than 51 years. Most completed higher education in the fields of psychology (n = 7) and social work (n = 12). Most work in institutions providing support to youths and young adults in situations of professional vulnerability, as well as migrants and refugees.

Measures

Our measure consisted of a questionnaire to evaluate the pilot course, organized in 5 parts: (i) sociodemographic characteristics; (ii) satisfaction with formal aspects; (iii) satisfaction with course content; (iv) relevance of the content for their work; and (v) constructive feedback regarding the course or the project as a whole.

RESULTS

Feedback regarding the course for the project

Most liked about the project:

1. Existence of manual and conceptual framework with a solid theoretical foundation, raising the confidence in and supporting the use of the toolbox;
2. Unites very varied activities, that would otherwise be scattered, into one document;
3. Besides allowing us to work towards the (re)integration of young adults and adults in situations of professional vulnerability in the labor market, it enables working on questions related to self-knowledge, self-esteem, and feelings of autonomy, competence, and control regarding the development of their life projects, as well as preparation to deal with unpredictability;
4. Can be used flexibly, all activities being optional and adaptable and their use depending on the needs of the participant(s);
5. The use of visual, manipulable materials that don't demand excessive writing competence and have a playful nature.

Aspects to improve:

1. Design of the materials, particularly the technical files, activity sheets, and support files for all toolbox materials;
2. Use of simpler and more direct language;
3. Little innovation and creativity using positive and cognitive psychology to support some toolbox activities and in some activities themselves;
4. Follow-up to the pilot course, so that technicians may use the activities in their work contexts with the target group, analyze their effectiveness, and report back to the project team in order to improve them.

Information about most and least favorite activities in Table 1. Participants gave specific feedback for all activities, so we could understand their strong points and anticipate implementation difficulties. Whenever possible, this feedback was integrated into the final version of the activities (table 2).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Table 1: Inicial dimensions and activities of the toolbox

Dimension	Activities and tools
Pre tools	#0 Contract Agreement - Individual or group
Self Knowledge	#1 My Values - Image Cards 7 #2 My Values - Wheel of Life 2 #3 My Strengths - Solitary Game 10 #3.1 My Strengths - Success Stories #3.2 Values in Action - Online Questionnaire #3.3 My Strengths - Directed Interview
World Knowledge	#4 Steps for Identifying Career Prospects 7 #5 SWOT Analysis 1 2 #6 Exploring Professional Occupations #7 Relations and Support Network 2 4
Transitional Skills	#8 Diary of Positive Emotions 3 #9 Diamond - Positive Focus 1 1 #10 Perception and Tolerance to Diversity #11 Time Management
Decision Making	#12 My Goals - SMARTE Model 3 #13 My action Plan
Wrap up tools	#14 My project and I: Global Vision 1



Table 2: Final dimensions and activities of the toolbox

Dimension	Activities and tools
Pre tools	#1A Individual Contract #1B Group Contract
Self Knowledge	#2 My Values - Image Cards #3 My Life Values by Self-Assessment #4 Character Strength Cards - Solitaire #5 Strengths by Storytelling #6 VIA Online Assessment #7 Strength Spotting Interview
World Knowledge	#8 Self-Assessment for exploration of interest - Steps to identify future career paths #9 Competence Tree #10 Exploration of Occupations #11 Mapping Network Relations (step 1) #12 Identifying Role Models and Support (step 2)
Transitional Skills	#13 Learning Positive Emotions #14 Learning the Power of Thoughts - The Diamond #15 Challenging Thoughts, Core Beliefs and Build Optimism #16 Perceptions #17 Time Management
Decision Making	#18 Goal Setting #19 Goal Setting - Anchoring the goal #20 Anchoring Learnings, Decisions and Goals
Wrap up tools	#21 My Project Sum up

Several authors have highlighted that it is crucial to evaluate career management interventions (e.g. McNamara, 2002; Nichols, 2012; Pinto (2010); Silva, 2004; Woodward, 2002). For the purposes of Live2Work, it is imperative to assess not only whether the intervention is beneficial towards the target population, but also whether the end users -those who would deliver the intervention to the target group - understand how to apply the intervention and agree about its usefulness. Moreover, including end users' feedback helps us develop the best possible intervention (cf. Nichols, 2012) and raises the chances that it will be put in practice effectively.

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