

A need to find and manage...

INFORMATION

Jane is finding it difficult to come to college. She is in the first year of a two-year science course - which she enjoys. But she is on the brink of leaving, because she is in such financial difficulty. She can't afford to travel to college. She's missed a lot of lessons. And she can't afford to eat properly. Her parents aren't helping. She can't concentrate or make a decision - 'It just seems an impossible situation - there's no way out!'. She feels panicky.

Jane has been doing well on her course. She was pretty sure she wanted a future working in science. But she is really desperate - 'any job will do!'. She has heard about a training programme at a local pharmaceutical company - through a relative who works there. But that's all she knows about it. She knows nothing about other work-based training options.

The information - and impressions - that people respond to is about what is going on their lives as well as in the world 'out there'.

Making progress here means being able to say...

- what attracts you;
- what you are able to offer;
- what you can do about it.

If a person doesn't say these things for herself, other people may try to say them for her.

A learner can find help with this through...

- a good careers library;
- expert advisers, who can help you sift through the information;
- assessments, checklists and computer programs which can link you to work-opportunities;
- careers education which helps you to find, apply and land a job - or other opportunity;
- recording or profiling which help you to set down what qualifies and equips you for future work.

Case studies assembled by
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A need to understand and manage...

FEELINGS

Boris lives with protective and supportive grandparents. He seems happy at home, and values their care. But he finds the social side of college daunting - he wants to be in small groups. At times he has a way of referring to everything as 'crap!'; at other times he says he's going to 'run away and have a good time'; and 'I have a right good laugh'. When he's low he wants to know, 'will things get better?'. At his lowest he says, 'I've got pills and I'm going to get drunk and take the lot... I don't think about owt when I'm pissed'. There are marks on his arm and wrist, which he will - it seems with pride - show off. And then he'll say, 'that's stupid, in'it?', and 'I'm crazy aren't I?'

At times Boris just doesn't show up at college. His concentration is variable and his memory lapses. He still says things like 'I hate myself... my life... my acne... and everything around me!'

Work is not just about qualifications and 'how-to-do' skills, it is also about 'why-bother' feelings - the hopes and fears, doubts and commitments people have about their lives and its possibilities.

Making progress here means being able to talk about...

- good feelings about self, life and work;
- bad feelings about any of this;
- what you most want to feel about yourself and your possibilities.

Everybody has something to say about this. And we all need to work out why such feelings are important to us. Feelings are different for different people.

A learner can find help with this through...

- a personal adviser who can 'be there' for people, listen, and take seriously what you say;
- careers education which helps people to say what they feel, and try out what they would do about it;
- recording and profiling to set down - in words and pictures - what is going on in your life and how you feel about it, and a chance to talk it over with somebody who can help.

A need to understand and deal with...

ATTACHMENTS

Tracey is victimising other students - and she refers to her 'victims' as 'my friends'. She is the eldest of six children, all living with their mum. When Dad died in a car accident, Mum started to drink, and is now drinking heavily. She sometimes hits Tracey. She says it was Tracey's fault that Dad died - and that she wishes Tracey had died instead.

Tracey tells of how she is left to look after her brothers and sisters. She says she finds it difficult to deal with 'all of this, and college, and going to work'. A part-time job helps to pay the rent and buy food. Tracey says, 'Mum drinks away a lot of our benefits money'.

She says of one of her 'friends', 'she helps me out - at college and work - more than anybody else would help me'. Tracey says she doesn't have time for many friends; and, anyway, 'friends often get tired of me and dump me - because they think I'm too demanding!'

Attachments are partners, family and friends - people who are important in a life. Life planning means considering these people - especially if they are dependents. Dealing with attachments means considering them, but also respecting yourself.

Making progress here means...

- knowing who is influencing you;
- knowing whether their influence is fair and helpful;
- making new contacts;
- knowing who you should be paying attention to - and why.

New contacts help when they show people new ways of thinking about life. Making new contacts can help both the individual and his or her dependents.

A learner can find help with this through...

- work experience where you can meet new people;
- work shadowing where you can get to know a person well;
- visits to and from different people and places;
- mentoring - where somebody with different experience can help you;
- recording and profiling to help you review your contacts, what you learn from them, and what new ideas these encounters give you.

A need to appreciate, and understand how to move on, from one's own...

BACKGROUND

Zaira has received threatening text messages, has been threatened physically, slapped by a student and shoved into a cupboard. Her father begins accompanying Zaira into college, sitting next to her in the library and standing outside her classroom.

He says that one of the culprits is related to his family. 'There is', he says, 'a family feud' - but he offers no details. He tries to explain the situation for Asian families - 'some parents send their daughters back home if things get really difficult'. He argues that it has been the bullying that is holding her back, and he wants her to have another chance - 'Zaira is very determined to succeed'. She wants to get into a university-course in medicine or pharmacy - 'then I would be okay'.

The adviser speaks to Zaira alone on only one occasion, when Zaire says, 'if I don't get the grades I'll have to get married'.

Background gives a person beliefs and values. These are taken from early neighbourhood, religious and ethnic experience. They are often expressed in stories and music, and in what is thought to be worthwhile in the media. This culture may be deeply internalised - part a sense of self. It often expresses opinions about race, class and gender.

Making progress here means being able to work out...

- what beliefs and values you respect and will hold to;
- what you will let go;
- how you will move on.

Beliefs and values are important in working life - especially where they link work to being a citizen, the environment, ethnicity, gender, the global community, race, religion and social class.

A learner can find help with this through...

- teachers, advisers and mentors who understand the strengths of the culture - and any need to move on;
- visits and projects which show new places, people and beliefs;
- careers education which helps people to appreciate the importance of values and beliefs in their lives and work;
- recording and profiling to help you reflect on old and new experiences, and to say what you will keep, and how you will move on.

A need to manage life and change your mind through...

LEARNING

Matthew is bullied. And, as one tutor remarks, he has a noticeable 'personal hygiene problem'. Matthew lives with his dad. When the tutor tries to talk to him, he denies a report that he sends other students suggestive e-mails.

When asked about the bullying he shrugs off his tears, saying he has to go. He says that he is leaving college to find a job - because he is 'fed up with the name-calling'. He had no idea what he wants to do. He knows he can see a careers adviser, but he says he doesn't need to.

A confrontation in the refectory provoked a young woman to exclaim, 'you smell and it's putting us off our food!'. Now he is ready to talk: his Mum died when he was beginning secondary school...; his dad has had a succession of girl friends...; Matthew has never got to know any of them... Dad leaves the housework to him... He says he hates his dad, and feels very lonely... 'But', he says, 'the worst thing is to get close to someone - who then leaves you!'.

Learning for life means building up a mental picture of who does what, how and why things are as they are, and what you can do about it. People start building this learning when they are toddlers. But new people and new experiences always mean new learning - and that sometimes brings a change in a person's picture of how-things-are.

Making progress here means knowing how to...

- gather real information and impressions on what is going on - in work and in your life;
- sort it into useful order - so you have your own clear way of seeing what's what;
- focus on what is important - so that you can probe what most needs to be understood;
- work out how these things really came to be like this - and how you can change things.

The important thing here is actively to learn for yourself - not passively to bounce off others, or just go along with them. But that means being clear with yourself - about what is happening and why.

A learner can find help with this through...

- schools or colleges which link learning to the real world - sooner rather than later;
- learning activity which builds up learning for life over time;
- timetables which offer learning slots long-enough that you can get to grips with the learning, and try it out;
- recording and profiling to help you set down learning, plan how you will use it - and to think ahead.

A need to find meaning in your life and work through...

PURPOSE

Henry is an intelligent and articulate seventeen year-old. He refers himself to a student adviser, and tells of how he has lived in various places - world-wide. He says he doesn't feel he belongs anywhere, or that he has been involved in any of the decisions about his life. He says he feels that he can't speak to his parents about his problems because, he says, 'they've never had time for me'.

His girl-friend has just left him, because of drugs. He says that he owes his dealer money, and is scared. The drugs are, he says, 'because I felt down, and they make me feel better'. He breaks down at this point. He blames himself for getting other people involved. Yet he feels under pressure from others to supply drugs, and be the 'dare devil'.

He goes on, 'I don't know why I'm at college... well, that's not true, I'm here because my parents want me to have a career and do well - like they have... There's a lot of pressure at home'. After a long silence... 'I've considered suicide... but I'm not brave enough... I promised my ex-girlfriend that I wouldn't, though - and that I'd stay on at college'.

One purpose at work is to make a living. But working purposes can also be for satisfaction, fulfilment, or commitment to what is thought to be important.

Making progress here means being able to see work as a meaningful part of life. Then you can manage your working life so that you can see whether and how work helps you with...

- getting money and spending it;
- achieving things, as well as finding fulfilment and making a contribution ;
- fun and leisure life - as well as resting, sharing and loving.

Everybody is different about how they see things like this: you may not agree about it - even with your closest friend. Some people decide that what can't be found in work must be found in other ways. Crime is part of this calculation. Sometimes it means making 'career' less important than other things in your life.

A learner can find help with this through...

- school and college work where learning is relevant, not just to getting a job, but to realising happiness, fulfilment and achievement;
- learning activity which helps you to understand being a partner-in-life, parenthood, family relations, and being a citizen - as well as passing exams and 'doing well';
- recording and profiling to help you set down what you are learning, how you are going to involve others, and how you are going to find what you most seek.

THE RESOURCES

There is as much complexity in what people do about career as there is in what they do about anything. Careers work has, therefore, developed as wide a repertoire of learning methods as any aspect of curriculum.

information centre	a walk-in area where books, leaflets, posters, graphics, audio-visual and digitally-based material can be accessed by learners
face-to-face	'interviews', 'guidance and support', 'personal advice', and 'mentoring', where learners access individualised advice, counselling and group work
recording	psychological tests and checklists, 'portfolios', diaries, and 'progress files', where people set down what they have done, can do - and intend to do
classroom	in the timetable as 'personal social and health education', in period-length slots - where learners examine, share and respond to ideas and perceptions of life and work
integrated	life-and-work-related ideas woven into 'mainstream' subjects, frequently in 'set-aside' slots (of hours, days or weeks) so that there can be real-time engagement
community-linked	'visits-in' by working people, 'visits-out' by learners and 'off-site' learning - where learners engage with the people, places and tasks beyond the college gates

is this helpful to me?

- in seeing which resources can best meet my learner's needs
- in identifying possibilities for development
- in knowing where now to turn for partnership

more help: The Career-learning Network (2003). *Finding the best next thing to do:*
The Career-learning Café - 'magazine - making it work'.
Free on-line at www.hihohiho.com

YOU CAN'T DO THIS BY YOURSELF...

Network tasks include...

helping - point of delivery

- > understanding individual learning needs
- > 'being there' for learners
- > referring people on

staying in touch - mapping

- > appreciating local family and neighbourhood attachments and culture
- > linking to school-college and local people - on the basis of identified needs
- > involving local people - as mentors, experience-of-work contacts, etc.

team support - central services

- > carrying out useful enquiry - into learner needs and for evaluation
- > identifying your 'cutting edge' - where most can be gained from change
- > feeding what you learn out to society and back to the network

managing - making the network work

- > keeping 'left hands' and the 'right hands' in touch with each other
- > finding 'common ground' for developing the network
- > negotiating resource allocation

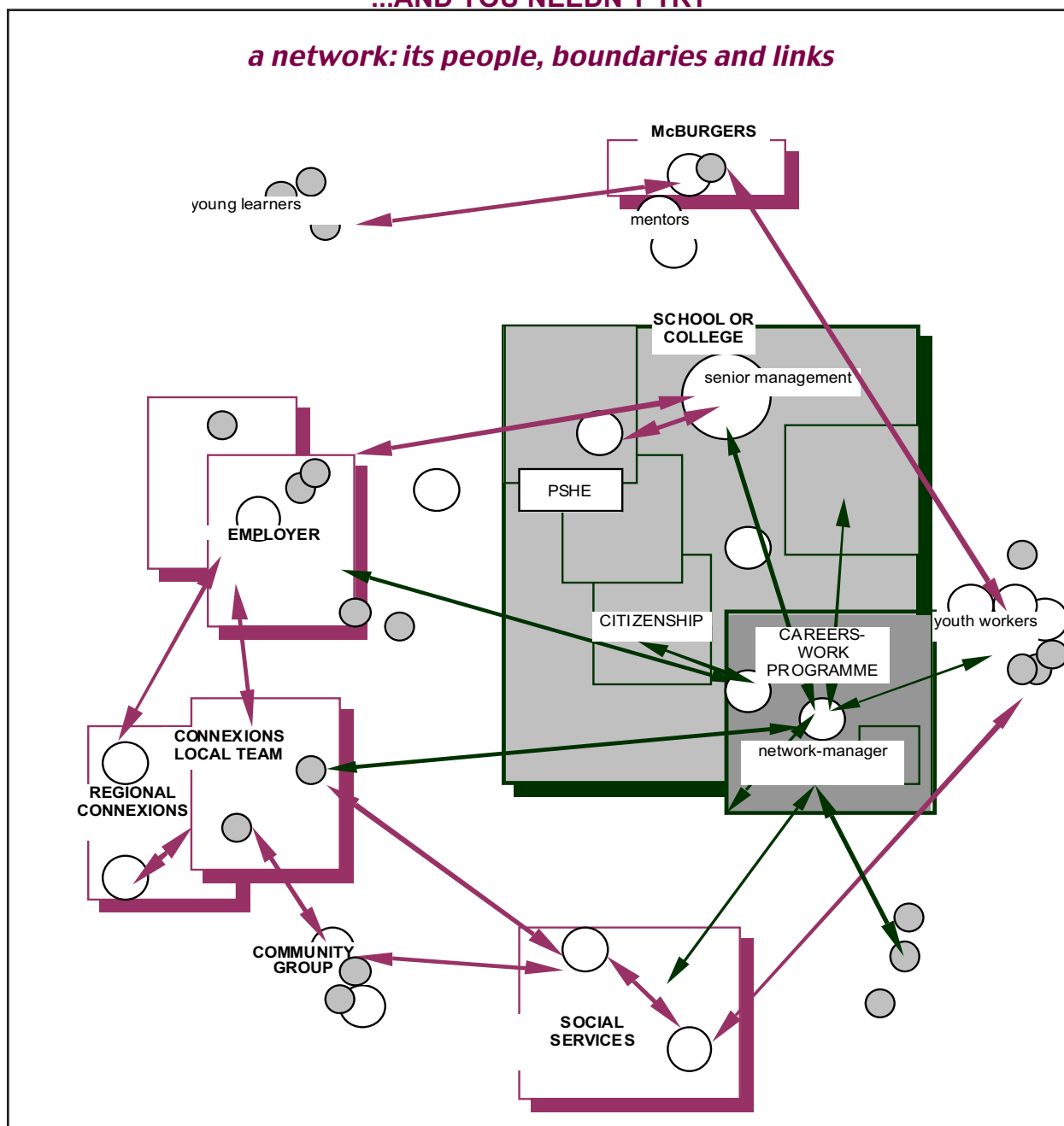
is this helpful to me?

- in clarifying my own role
- in seeing how my role links to what others do
- in welcoming both voluntary and professional help

more help: The Career-learning Network (2003). *Managing change:*
The Career-learning Café - 'magazine - making it work'.
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...AND YOU NEEDN'T TRY

a network: its people, boundaries and links



This is not an ideal network. There is no such thing. But there is what can be made usefully to work in your locality

is this helpful to me?

- locating the key individuals, boundaries and links in my network - now
- imagining what that network might usefully look like - say in a year
- knowing what new links I can make right now

more help: The Career-learning Network (2005).
Managing Networks. The Career-learning Café - 'the magazine - making it work'.
 Available later this year, free on-line at www.hihohiho.com