

**JOB GUIDANCE
Trade and Services
A Scheme for Students
in the 10th Form of the Secondary School Level**

**City Adult Education Centre
Thiestraße 26 a, 38226 Salzgitter,
Special Service Education**

Thiestraße 26 a, 38226 Salzgitter,

A joint venture of:

**BNW - Bildungswerk der Niedersächsischen Wirtschaft
(Educational Provider of Lower Saxonian Business)**

**BBS Fredenberg
(Vocational School)**

**Ludwig-Erhard-Schule, BBS Salzgitter
(Vocational School)**

**Agentur für Arbeit
(Job Centre)**

1. Objective of the Scheme:

The project aims at students going through a stage of vocational guidance supporting their career choice and helping answer the following questions:

1. What knowledge, abilities, skills and key qualifications do I have?
2. Depending on my qualifications what jobs am I eligible for?
3. Will my individual requirements be in agreement with the standards of the job to opt for?
4. Do I have to consider any options in order to succeed? What are possible options?

These questions will lead to the following project stages:

1. Consultations for teachers, parents and students
2. Assessment of aptitude with consultations afterwards
3. Selective career guidance
4. Practically oriented projects

125 (both male and female) students of the six secondary schools in Salzgitter took part.

1. Consultations

Prior to the project there was one consultation for teachers as well as four ones for the parents involved. The students got invited as well.

2. Assessment of Aptitude

2.1. Targets

The assessment of aptitude aims at establishing, together with the youth, a self-assessment and outside assessment as to their aptitude for different occupational areas, their soft skills, their attitude to learning and working as well as their state of knowledge. The evaluation primarily aims at determining the students' strengths.

However, deficiencies related to the jobs have to be noted and need considerations.

The evaluation is the initial point for an ongoing furthering and educational planning. The students' readiness to accept their results is vital for all ongoing planning. To achieve this, the connection between the tasks set and the future professional life is to be made plain beforehand. Assessment and giving feedback to the students is to follow shortly after, characterized by the attempt to perceive together with the students their abilities and strengths.

The assessment is to bring about students assessing their occupational outlook more realistically and avoiding wrong decisions, which e. g. can lead to sticking to a rather unrealistic career aspiration or a drop-out of training.

2. Contents

The assessment of aptitude will comprise only reliable testing methods and social exercises.

The establishment of aptitude will include different dimensions:

The performance level in the basic subjects German and Mathematics will be covered. Besides, exercises to establish craft skills will be held.

Another focus will be on covering key qualifications as creativity, teamwork, task orientation, and communicative skills of the youth. To cover all this group-dynamic exercises, presentation practice and group discussion will be apt in particular.

3. Career Guidance by the Job Centre

According to their results and the conclusions to draw the students will be advised by career guidance counsellors. The (first) consultation will support the findings of the assessment preparing the follow-up practically-oriented projects.

4. Practically-oriented Projects in the Occupational Areas:

- Painting/Interior Decorating
- Wood Working
- Electrical Engineering
- Metal Processing
- Food Processing (baker)
- Nursing (Geriatric Nursing)

- Social Education (pre-school teacher)
- Grooming (hairdresser/beautician)
at the Vocational School Fredenberg

- Economy
- Administration
- Health Care
at the Vocational School Ludwig-Erhard-Schule

4.1 Objectives

Checking the results from the assessment of skills and career guidance. This stage of getting involved in everyday vocational school routines will enable insight into future job careers. At the same time the dialogue among students and trainees/apprentices will be supported. This “back bag” principle of selective accompaniment and support will deepen the trial..

5. Findings

Altogether 125 students got assessed. Thereof a little more than a half were girls (57%). 88% of the participants are of German citizenship, 35% have grown up in families with a migratory background.

First it is to establish that one out of three (35%) did not have a definite notion of their prospective job field. 19% expressed the intention to continue their schooling, however, only partially to achieve school-leaving qualifications, but often for a missing option to act. It is amazing how many students (16%) had not developed any ideas about their future career despite the close deadline of the beginning training term.

6. About two out of three had certain ideas of their professional career. This is the allocation of career aspirations: clerical jobs including

organization, administration and office (21% = 26 students); trade-technical jobs (27% = 34 students); health care/social jobs (12% = 15 students).

Comparing the career aspirations with the findings of the assessment the following was established: The results of students aspiring to a clerical job showed up a considerable gap to the standards required. With three out of four students particularly the results in mathematics were at discord with the standards in these occupational areas.

Also the students aspiring to trade-technical jobs had to revise their career ambitions. Due to their results about half of them were advised to downgrade their aspirations to jobs with a lower job profile.

On the whole, about half of the students participating showed up a serious gap between the test results and the requirement specifications of the job aspired. In all these cases the students were pointedly advised by the career guidance counsellors to consider possible career options in order to avoid that a probably unrealistic professional path will be pursued for a longer period

As for the students aiming at a higher school-leaving qualification it was stated that the type of school chosen and the requirements needed for were largely at discord with the result of the assessment.

The majority of students with no definite notion of a future job training received information, based on the report of the assessment, on suitable training opportunities which are in demand. That was an attempt to provide a fundament for a sensible career choice.

VI. Summary

The career guidance scheme included 125 students.

105 students had a certain notion of their prospective professional career or aimed at a higher school-leaving qualification. More than half of them needed help to revise their career goal.

In this context it is vital to recognise the importance of the students' accepting the results achieved. This can be taken as granted. The results were accepted. According to the final talks the feedback was invariably positive. This is worth noting as the findings of the assessment were in many cases at discord with the students' own previous notions.

The students considered the test panel to be their dialogue partners with whom they could have an unbiased talk, free from any interference from their parents, about ideas and goals. An essential part of the findings was also the assessment of their own aptitude. Thus the talks were also aiming at encouraging the students establishing their career goals based on their actual aptitude.

In the end a lot of students reconsidered their career choice which generated either a change of the job aimed at or led to recognising possible options which both counteracted any early failure to find their alleged “dream job”.