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Language: English

Type of Presentation: Workshop

About the Presenter:

Mr Leong Jenn Yeong is at present leading a department in Assumption Pathway School in Singapore where he is responsible for helping students to develop critical skills and competencies needed to be a 21st Century Worker. Prior to his appointment, he was a school counsellor at Pioneer Junior College where he was heavily involved in the use of career approaches to help students make good career decisions. He is also involved in action research and has presented papers and workshops in the Philippines, Hong Kong and Singapore.

Title of Paper: Helping Students Create Dynamic Career Stories Using the Selective Optimization with Compensation (SOC) Model

Abstract:

Increasingly, career counsellors are realizing that the individual is a system operating within the context of the environment they function in. This constant interaction with the environment allows the individual to formulate a unique view of life and allows him to form his own interpretation of events. Hence engaging a client in his or her career developmental process is not just about forecasting what is the best career pathways but about working with the client in a collaborative manner to create new stories based on the context he or she functions in.

The SOC model developed by Baltes and colleagues (Baltes, 1997; Freund & Bates, 1998) provides a working model for career counsellors to help clients create these new stories. In essence, career counsellors need to go through the following three processes in the creation of their career narratives:

- Helping the client create the new or desired story for themselves and how they intend to make this new story come alive;
- An examination of the strategies of how to optimize the use of the client's internal and external assets available to fulfill his or her desired goals and
- An examination of the compensating strategies when the client encounters barriers or losses in story creation process.

Given that the environment the individual is operating in is constantly changing, these stories often need to be dynamic and subjected to regular reviews. In the collaborative process, career counsellors would need to get clients to review their stories to ensure that their clients are in control of their life journey.

This workshop will demonstrate how career counsellors can use this model to help their client create new stories for themselves. The experience of the writer in using the model to help the clients in developing a new career story in a school counseling setting in Singapore will also be shared.

References:

Baltes P.B. (1997) On the incomplete architecture of human ontogeny: Selection, Optimisation and Compensation as foundation of developmental theory. *American Psychologist*, 52, 366 -380.

Freund, A. M. & Baltes, P.B. (1998) Selection, Optimisation and Compensation as strategies of life management: Correlations with subjective indicators of successful aging. *Psychology and Aging*, 13, 531 – 543.