

**Report on the educational programme
Career counselling Centre at Tajik National
University**

Daniel Markovič, Slovakia



Training 1) Career Counselling and Guidance in the European Union. Establishment and operation of a career centre at university. Arguments for the creation of a career centre. Specifics of career counselling at Tajik National University (workshop).

Target group: university management, career centre supervisor, career centre worker

Career counselling OECD, EU and World Bank definition

- Career guidance refers to services and activities intended to assist individuals, 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 community sector and in the private sector. The activities may take place on an individual 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, counselling 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.

Career counselling in the higher education institutions context – for students

- Career Counselling is a process that will help you to know and understand yourself and the world of work in order to make career, educational, and life decisions.

- Because *career development* is a lifelong process that, whether you know it or not, actually started when you were born! There are a number of factors that influence your career development, including your interests, abilities, values, personality, background, and circumstances

Factors that influence career choice

Who is a career counsellor?

- The Career Services staff member assisting you holds a master's degree and has expertise in career development theory, counselling techniques, administration and interpretation of assessments, and career information resources.



Why set up a career guidance workplace at a university?

- Better employment of students in the labour market

- Development of students in the so-called soft skills (self-knowledge, communication, career management skills)
- Platform for cooperation with employers
- Such a workplace monitors changes and trends in the labour market
- In European countries, part of the quality standards for universities

How are career centres organized at universities?

As separate career centers - Rector's Office

Part of a wide counseling center (for example, together with a psychological counseling center, start-up incubator)

Administered by one of the faculties / schools

As a private company operating on university premises

What do university career centres do?

- First contact with the client
- Providing information to clients about the world of work, preparation for job interviews
- Consultations on CVs and cover letters

- Individual consultations and advice on career planning and job search / brigade
- Individual client development plan
- Basic career diagnostics (career anchors, competencies)
- Client self-knowledge activities (interests, values)
- Group counselling
- Publication of job offers, brigade offers, internships, internships and volunteers
- Organizing educational and training events
- Organizing events with employers (presentations, workshops)
- Collective guidance through educational materials on e-learning

Organization of the TNU career centre

Tajik National University is the first and largest university in Tajikistan with a total of 23,000 students trained per year in 18 different academic branches. TNU was formed in 21 March 1947 and the head office of the university is located in the capital city of Tajikistan, Dushanbe Rudaki Avenue near Vatan cinema. Tajik National University prepares very extensive human resources for sectors of the economy of Tajikistan, from journalists to ordinary finance professionals and managers. President Emomali Rahmon and the former chair of the National Bank of Tajikistan Murodali Alimardon are alumni. The university encompasses publishing, a research library, a botanical garden, a hostel, 114 departments (107 special

departments) and a military chair and high school. Career centre at Tajik National University will be incorporated under the Rector's Office and will function as a university-wide workplace accessible to clients during working days in the renovated premises. Its opening hours will be the same during the teaching period and the exam period, for clients four working days, in one of which the opening hours are extended so that it can be reached by part-time students. Opening hours are divided for online services and personal consultations. During the Centre's opening hours, one of the employees is always present to make the first contact and provide basic information. Consultations during the holidays are reduced to 1 working day a week, and the Centre's opening hours are adjusted accordingly. On the day when the centre will not be open to clients, staff will evaluate and prepare documents for clients, manage the administration and engage in project activities.

Workshop

- What are your university's biggest strengths in the job market?
- How is your university different from other HEIs in Tajikistan?
- What would be a good name for your career counselling workplace?
- Defining the mission and values of the career centre: The mission should take the form of one long sentence. Values should be 3 to five nouns.

Training 2) Theoretical concepts used in career counselling. Client groups for career counselling and counsellor cooperation with clients. Services and methods of career counselling for students, graduates.

Target group: career centre supervisor, career centre worker

Theoretical concepts used in career counselling at Tajik National University

Holistic approach to career counselling: we perceive the client holistically, because the key to his/her life satisfaction is satisfaction in the following areas: a) work (or volunteer work, learning), b) personal well-being (health, entertainment, relaxation, exercise, creativity) and c) relationships (friends, family, community). Career decisions cannot be made in isolation from other areas. Employees tend to be significantly happier and more productive when they are satisfied in these areas.

Holland theory of vocational types: John Holland developed his theory building off the ideas in Frank Parsons' theory. Essentially, he categorizes six personality types: Artistic, Investigative, Realistic, Conventional, Enterprising, Social. While there are many facets involved in each personality type, the theory relies on an individual's personality type to direct their proper career path. This theory assumes that all people do have some features of each personality type, although identifying the

dominant personality trait is key in determining the right career path for them. For example, someone with a primarily investigative personality would be well suited to work as a biologist or anthropologist. On the other hand, someone with a dominant enterprising personality would work well in sales or promoting businesses and services for others.

Social Cognitive Theory: by Albert Bandura. It is a learning theory based on the ideas that people learn by watching what others do, and that human thought processes are central to understanding personality. This theory provides a framework for understanding, predicting and changing human behaviour. 1 Attention - You need to pay attention to learn something new. The more striking or different something is (due to colour or drama, for example) the more likely it is to gain our attention. Likewise, if we regard something as prestigious, attractive or like ourselves, we will take more notice. 2 Retention - You must be able to retain (remember) what you have paid attention to. Imagery and language play a role in retention: you store what you have seen the model doing in the form of verbal descriptions or mental images, and bring these triggers up later to help you reproduce the model with your own behaviour. 3 Reproduction - At this point you have to translate the images or descriptions into actual behaviour. You must have the ability to reproduce the behaviour in the first place. For instance, if you are watching Olympic ice skating you may not be able to reproduce their jumps if you cannot ice skate at all! Our abilities improve even

when we just imagine ourselves performing. 4 Motivation - Unless you are motivated, or have a reason, you will not try to imitate the model. Bandura states a number of motives, including: past reinforcement, promised reinforcement, vicarious reinforcement. Albert Bandura has had a large impact on personality theory and therapy. His action-oriented, problem-solving approach appeals to those who want to make changes, rather than simply philosophise.

Planned Happenstance Career Theory: According to this theory, it is not always right to plan, because even unplanned events can lead to a good career. This theory addresses the need for people to cope with changes in a rapidly changing labour market. Managing life transitions (e.g. from school to work, from one job to another) is perceived as a basic career management skill. At the heart of the theory is the fact that unpredictable social factors, random events and environmental factors (being in the right place at the right time) have a significant impact on clients' lives. The role of the advisor is to help clients approach random states and events positively. In particular, it supports its clients' curiosity to explore available options, perseverance in dealing with obstacles, flexibility in dealing with various circumstances, optimism in order to maximize the benefits of unplanned events.

The career counsellor links knowledge from the above theoretical concepts with the current situation on the labour market, with research in career counselling and

from the world of work, and with the study departments of the Tajik National University.

Possible clients of the career centre at Tajik National University

- Full-time students - enrolled in bachelor's/master's and doctoral study programs; this also includes students with an approved distance learning method or with an individual study plan.
- Applicants - interested in studying at your university.
- Graduates - for example, members of the Alumni Club, with a time limit of five years from the successful completion of the study.
- External/part-time students
- Full-time, slightly older, non-workers students - students who did not continue their studies at the university after graduating from high school, but entered the labour market, or carried out other activities and after a long time, for example at the age of 30, returned to school desks as full-time university students.
- Foreign students present at the university - studying within the mobility program, foreign language study program.
- Employees - people whom in a certain life situation need to use counselling services or want to work with a career centre.
- Employers - entities that want to cooperate with the university, its faculties and students in the

world of work. These are job publication services, student meetings with employers, workshops with employers' representatives, etc.

Cooperation between career counsellor and client

Developing a counselling relationship

As with all forms of counselling, career counselling is most successful when the counsellor establishes a meaningful connection, a professional counselling relationship with his client. A career counsellor not only uses personality and career tests, but also works to understand the worries, interests, concerns and desires of his clients at a level that is much deeper than any test could reveal. By establishing a counselling relationship with your clients, a career counsellor can provide more complete support and guidance.

Common definition of objectives

A career counsellor sets specific goals with his or her clients and orients his or her clients to achieve those goals if conversations and activities move too much toward other interests. With appropriately selected questions, the counsellor can help define clients' career goals.

Creating a space for self-knowledge

A career counsellor does not only provide its clients with test results. He gets to know his clients and, most importantly, gives them a space to talk about the issues

affecting their career choice. A personal meeting in career counselling can be a gateway to self-discovery, as the counsellor is skilled in opening up the client's self-reflection. Career decisions are not made in isolation from other domains of the client's life (family, health, economic situation).

Understanding changes in the labour market

The career counsellor works to keep up with the news and changes facing the labour market. It pays attention to how automation, digitization, outsourcing and global competition affect job opportunities. Understands the skills and attitudes that workers need to succeed in the modern world of work. The consultant works with its clients to ensure that clients are competent in technology, accept diversity, are prepared to handle modern job insecurities, and are able to maintain the level of education and competencies they need to avoid backwardness or redundancy.

Help turn life themes into career goals

A career counsellor not only recommends possible occupations, but also helps your clients uncover a hitherto unrealized passion for a specific career. The career counsellor works holistically, looking at each client as a complex personality and looking for topics that have a natural connection to the career for which the client is qualified. He emphasizes that the best approach is to find a career that matches the abilities and life goals of the client.

Services and methods of career counselling for students, graduates: Consultancy work with clients

Career counsellor at Career centre of TNU:

- Provides information to applicants, students, graduates, their families, teachers and other university staff.
- Conducts initial interviews (first contact) with those interested in services, identifies the individual needs of clients.
- Provides individual consultations.
- Arranges with the client an individual support program / sets a development plan.
- Creates conditions for the client's involvement in the counselling process.
- In the best interests of the client, he cooperates with other professionals (eg psychologist, coordinator for students with special needs), distributes the client to other professionals.
- Examines students' individual or group needs in counseling and support services.
- Performs basic career diagnostics and counseling for education, professional training and career development of the client, performs career diagnostics aimed at identifying work and study potential, self-knowledge and support for the development of the client's potential.
- Identifies clients' abilities, interests and educational needs.

- Verifies clients' knowledge, skills and competencies.
- Collects information about the client, processes the basic, study, professional history of the client and evaluates it.
- Activates the client and implements training of the client's skills for career management and career development.
- Supports the client in finding optimal procedures, strategies, plans and solutions.
- Supports the client in personal and professional development.
- Provides guidance on applying for a job.
- Analyses and edits documents in the field of job application, e.g. CV, client motivation letter.
- Provides basic information about the world of work (where and how to look for a job, a part-time job).
- Provides individual counselling focusing on solving the unemployment situation and preventing unemployment.
- Provides group counselling focused on the support and development of key competencies of clients needed for employment and career management skills.

Training 3) Career Management Skills. Interactive workshop on tools in career counselling.

Target group: university management, career centre supervisor, career centre worker

Career management skills (CMS)

They are competencies which help individuals to identify their existing skills, develop career learning goals and take action to enhance their careers. To enable careers professionals and other educators to help people to develop their career management skills a number of countries have developed CMS frameworks. These frameworks provide a way to define the skills and attitudes which support individuals to effectively manage their careers and to progress through life.

Area 1 - Personal effectiveness

- I know who I am and what I am good at.
- I'm able to reflect on my strengths and address my weaknesses.
- I make effective decisions relating to my life, learning and work.
- I remain positive when facing setbacks and I stay positive for the future.
- I make use of technologies to develop my career
- I am able to set myself career goals
- I generate ideas that help me to achieve my goals

- I can review my skills in relation to what employers are looking for

Area 2 - Managing relationships

- I can find and use information and the support of others for my (future) career
- I interact confidently and well with others
- I build professional relationships and networks to support my (future) career
- I maintain my (professional) relationships and networks
- I can use social media networks
- I understand the need to use social media to network for my (future) career.

Area 3 - Finding work and accessing learning

- I learn throughout life
- I can find work or learning opportunities that are right for me
- I seek new opportunities to help build my career
- I can develop skills which will help me to get what I want out of work
- I assess the pros and cons of formal and informal sources of information
- I can cope with changes in the world of work

Area 4 - Managing life and career

- I can make decisions and set career goals for myself within appropriate timescales
- I manage my goals, my time and personal finances in a way that supports my career building
- I am innovative and creative in my thinking about my work, learning and life
- I maintain a balance in my life, learning and work that is right for me
- I can cope with challenges and changes which take place in life

Area 5 - Understanding the world

- I understand how changes in society relate to my learning and work
- I understand how learning and work change over time
- I can make a positive impact on society
- I make the most of opportunities I come across
- I am open to opportunities including, those in other countries

Workshop

You as a learner and doer

- What led to your choice of academic focus area/s at TNU?
- What are you hoping to gain from your TNU experience?
- List your five favourite classes and/or teachers. Think back as far as you like in your career as

a student. What made them so great? How do/did they excite or challenge you?

- What topics and ideas get you super excited or even “obsessed”?

Energy and flow

- What is your favourite kind of project or assignment?
- What sort of thing can you do for hours without it even feeling like work?
- What do you like to do for fun? How do you spend your free time?
- What activities make you feel happiest and/or most energized?
- What personal qualities do you view as your strengths?
- When other people turn to you for help, what kinds of questions / problems do they bring to you?

Inspiration and fulfilment

- Who do you look up to? What about their work/life/approach/impact on the world inspires you?
- What news stories and current affairs issues most capture your attention?
- What career paths do you know you do not want to pursue?
- How do you define success?

- If you were guaranteed success, what would you do with your life?
- If you had a magic wand and could do whatever you wanted for a year, what would it be?
- If you had time to volunteer on a regular basis, what organization, cause, or population would you serve?
- What global, national, and/or local issues most interest you?

Roots and dreams

- What did you dream of becoming when you were younger?
- What have you done in your life that you are especially proud of?
- What kind of impact would you like to have on the world?
- What do you find most exciting, enjoyable, and/or fulfilling in your life right now?

Selected Career Counselling Methods

1. Pre-Counselling

Pre-counselling is conducive to get a basic understanding of your candidate. It helps in getting a clear idea of the concerns of the candidate. For instance, consider an example when a doctor is approached by a patient. Instead of straightaway beginning treatment, he talks with the patient as to what ails him. Similarly, a face-to-face talk with your candidate will help you in identifying the gap

between their current state and the desired goal. This will assist in making an informed decision about the further course of counselling based on the person problem statement and the expected outcome. A counselling session works best when you have a clear picture of the candidate's needs.

2. Rapport Building

For communication to flow freely and clearly during counselling, it is essential to remove any potential blockages. You establish a rapport when you show empathy, create mutual trust and affinity with that person. The better the understanding, the more comfortable and effective the counselling will be for both the counsellor and the candidate. Creating a bond with them will establish trust and help them to open up to you. This will make the task of guiding them much easier. Establishing a strong healthy alliance can be invaluable in influencing candidates. They will trust you to give the right options for them and you can trust them to listen to your advice. By building a good rapport with your prospects, they are much more likely to recommend you as a counsellor to others and support your ideas. This will also immensely help you establish many interpersonal relationships which can open many doors in the future.

3. Career Assessment

This is a tool designed to analyse the various skills, talents, and aptitudes of your candidate. It is a way of learning about how variation in personal attributes can impact

success and satisfaction with different career options. Different types of assessments focus on specific areas including interests, emotional quotient, aptitude, personality traits, and knowledge. The career assessment is done based on the analysis of these areas. It is recommended to follow a multidimensional assessment that provides a comprehensive and accurate analysis. As opposed to one-dimensional, the multidimensional assessment takes into account multiple sources to obtain information. For example, the most commonly used form of assessment includes a psychometric assessment. The right forms of career assessment will help you in guiding your candidate to the perfect career fit.

4. 360° Profile Analysis

Getting into a career you are skilled in but dislike provides little to no benefit in the long-term. To resolve this it is essential to find a career in line with life purposes and values. And to achieve this, career counsellors must take a holistic approach in providing the right guidance. It means regarding each candidate as a whole instead of just a few specific areas. This approach focuses on the candidates' thoughts, culture, beliefs, and frame of mind together with his or her skills, personality, and knowledge among other assessment factors. Combining these details along with the inputs from the pre-counselling, assessments, and discussion with the decision-makers will help in setting up suitable career goals.

Best career counsellors do not just find the list of suitable career options. However, they help their students and prospects in discovering previously unrealized passions and interests.

5. Setting Career Goals

The whole point of career counselling in itself is to set the optimal career goal. Setting specific goals is imperative to achieving them. By setting career goals, you are determining a roadmap for the career to move forward and devising strategies on how to reach there. Breaking the goal setting into short-term, mid-term and long-term can aid in creating a well laid out ultimate plan.

Here are a few tips to consider when setting career goals for your candidate;

- be specific and clear
- it must be measurable
- be realistic and achievable
- tie actions to each step
- be adaptable
- relevant to life-purpose
- be positive

It is essential to include alternatives to be implemented if the need arises because sometimes even the most well thought plans do not work out as planned.

6. Develop an Action Plan

An action plan can be considered a tool to allow counsellors to develop a course of action for the candidate.

This involves creating a well-defined checklist consisting of actions and steps to aid them in meeting the laid-out goals and objectives. It will include the entire steps necessary to implement the short-term, mid-term, and long-term goals. For example, helping a student who has finished high with their next action step will include providing and setting up with the appropriate courses and colleges. You also need to motivate your prospect into working at accomplishing the goal.

7. Using Technology Platforms

Living in a digitalized world it is extremely exhausting to recall being efficient without various digital technology at our disposal. Can you imagine a scenario with no use of any technology where all the assessments and analyses have to be manually done? What if the counselling is to be done for a multitude of candidates dispersed over an entire country? Close to impossible let alone inconceivable. These instances as such indicate the significance of technology and its platform in the aid of career counselling. Without technology platforms, the process of counselling in its entirety becomes tedious and delayed. The technology interface offers end-to-end solutions, from psychometric tests to highlighting course options to educational guidance to delivering assessments and analysis reports. This helps counsellors to pick the reports at ease and work on them.

Training 4) Career centre communication channels and communication action plan. Cooperation with employers. Quality policy.

Target group: university management, career centre supervisor, career centre worker

Roles of a career counsellor within a TNU

- Coordinates and implements professional activities in the field of career counselling.
- Decides on the portfolio of services for a given academic year.
- Creates long-term and short-term plans.
- Proposes a weekly schedule of career guidance activities.
- Selects appropriate career tools for client evaluation and self-evaluation.
- Designs a strategy to support and counsel students through career guidance.
- Comprehensively ensures the process of contact work.
- Gains a variety of information from the world of work, classifies them for further use in counselling.
- Processes manuals, manuals and similar materials for students and teachers.
- Performs analytical activities in the field of labour market and employment policy.
- Monitors evaluations of services provided and feedback from clients.
- Collaborates on career guidance projects.
- Creates career information resources with usability at the university level.

- Monitors legislative changes in labour law and higher education.
- Creates and maintains client databases in electronic or written form.
- Evaluates the provided services, tools and methods of career counselling.
- Keeps relevant workplace documentation and related administration.

Events provided by a career counsellor

- Sets the goals and content of career guidance and career education events.
- Organizes information, counselling and educational activities to choose a profession for applicants, students, graduates.
- Leads educational, training and development events.
- Organizes and leads discussions on topics from the world of work.
- Prepares and uses teaching aids and teaching equipment, creates materials for participants.
- Processes its own educational or development texts.
- Prepares presentations for events.
- Implements and evaluates feedback on educational and training activities.

Communication activities

- Addresses potential clients in order to inform about career counselling services.

- Cooperates with other institutions in the area of the capital Dushanbe (employers, local governments, employment offices).
- Processes documents for use by other components of the university.
- Prepares press releases, posters and contributions to TNU social networks.
- Delivers texts and photographs on career guidance activities to the International Relations and Marketing departments.
- Checks the quality and accuracy of promotional outputs on career centre activities.
- Ensures the publication of up-to-date information on career guidance activities; monitors the timeliness of data and participates in the updating of websites.
- Provides information to the public on action plans, results achieved with the necessary confidentiality.
- Represents the TNU career centre in negotiations, in front of the media, in front of real and potential clients and other entities.
- Participates in information events for the public.
- In the online space of the university, it publishes job offers, brigades, and internships from cooperating employers.
- Ensures the publication of offers from employers to students.
- Cooperates with external entities - employers in university events.
- Creates a space for employers 'meetings with university students, assists employers in

- organizing events on university premises, and provides employers' workshops for students.
- Participates in university and labour fairs.

Communication action plan

1. Launch the TNU Career Centre website on the most popular social media.
2. Attend lectures and seminars at various study programs and all faculties (full-time or online) in order to inform about the existence of a career counselling workplace.
3. Publish articles on career guidance on the TNU website and the university's social media website.
4. Launch the TNU Career Centre website with a range of services, useful information and contacts.
5. Prepare and print graphically engaging brochures on career guidance.

Services for employers of Career Centre of TNU

Advertising and promotion of employers' offers

- about jobs
- about part time offers
- about internships
- on site visits
- for corporate competitions

Arranging student meetings with employers on university premises

- recruitment at the University campus
- hosting employers at the events and activities of the Centre
- presentations by employers at the Career Centre
- involving employers in lectures and exercises

Quality policy of Career Centre of TNU

The TNU Career Centre pays constant attention to increasing the efficiency and quality of the services provided. It monitors and evaluates the needs and expectations of its clients.

In order to monitor and increase the quality of services provided, Career Centre staff regularly conducts client feedback, in the form of an online questionnaire or a printed questionnaire distributed after the use of the service or immediately after the end of the organized event. Based on the findings of the feedback evaluation, they make adjustments in the provision of services.

The methodology for evaluating the standards of the Slovak Accreditation Agency for Higher Education in *Article 17 Indicators of education, in point 2. Student-oriented learning, teaching and assessment* sets out indicators that serve to assess the status and perception of student-oriented education and student support. The following indicators are influenced by the organization and functioning of the TNU Career Centre:

- scope of support and career guidance services (estimated in hours per student),
- number of employees with a focus on student support (study and career counselling),

The TNU Career Centre will cooperate in making data on its activities available to other parts of the Tajik National University for the purpose of evaluating study programs. It will report information on the scope and type of services it provides, opening hours, events and activities. It will record the number of students who used the services of the centre during the calendar year (for the needs of the annual report) and the academic year (for the needs of evaluation according to standards).

The quality policy of career counselling in the TNU Career Centre is based on the quality standard of the Slovak Association for Career Counselling and Career Development:

1 Ethical service with a clear mission and goals

1.1 The mission, goals of the service and outputs on the client's side are clearly defined and based on the needs of the target group.

1.2 The service complies with the ethical principles for the provision of career guidance.

1.3 The provision of the service is planned with defined key performance parameters in accordance with the vision and mission of the provider. The service is governed by established transparent rules.

2 Service using multidisciplinary resources

2.1 The service uses up-to-date sources of information about the world of work and educational opportunities in a form suitable for the target group.

2.2 The provider actively creates and uses opportunities for contact with the world of work and with employers.

2.3 The Provider cooperates with external partners and is able to direct the client to alternative or additional services.

2.4 The Provider uses approaches that allow the client to examine relevant career decision factors.

3 Client-oriented service

3.1 Clients are adequately informed about the course, tools used and goals of the process.

3.2 The service is tailored to the individual client based on an analysis of his needs.

3.3 The client is an active participant in the service, which allows him to identify multiple career development opportunities without external pressure or conflict of interest.

3.4 Spatial security and measures for the availability of the service enable the establishment of an advisory relationship between the client and the adviser, especially for disadvantaged clients.

4 The service benefits the client and the company

4.1 The service leads to the development of career management skills.

4.2 The service leads to written outputs, which the client can use outside the counselling process.

4.3 The Provider investigates the feedback and impacts of the service.

4.4 The Provider actively promotes the services provided and carries out activities to promote the interests of career guidance.