

REPORT ON JOB NAVIGATOR DEMONSTRATION

13th February 2009

1. Job Navigator is a Career Guidance System developed by Berufs Navigator GmbH, Hamburg. The purpose of this report is to outline the next stages.

2. Background

- 2.1. The Edward de Bono Foundation UK has established the Centre for Serious Creativity and Constructive Thinking (CSCCT) at MMU Cheshire. Berufs Navigator has given the de Bono Foundation exclusive marketing rights to deliver Jobs Navigator in the UK and other countries.
- 2.2. The proposal is to use Job Navigator as a joint project between MMUBS and the CSCCT.
- 2.3. A team visited Germany in January 2009 to see a live demonstration with 140 seventeen-year old students at the Roydorf Gymnasium, near Lüneburg. Each classroom contained up to 40 students.

3. The Job Navigator system

- 3.1. Job Navigator works in peer groups. Groups of four students rank themselves and their friends against a number of skills and attributes. The exercise is carried out in a classroom setting and students 'vote' using a special handheld keypad. The results are then fed into a computer and students are matched against job profiles. These profiles have been generated through discussions with experts in their fields. As well as the job descriptions, the profiles include fifty personality characteristics which are important for those jobs.
- 3.2. The pupils receive hand-outs of their top ten career matches, and then have an individual consultation. The job recommendations are explained in detail and possible job prospects are discussed. The students also discuss their current academic progress and makes a learning contract covering potential improvements to grades, jobs to research and opportunities for work experience.
- 3.3. Feedback from schools has been very supportive. The school we visited had used Job Navigator last year and the majority of students and parents said they should definitely use it again this year.
- 3.4. How it is used in Germany. Many of the top companies (Mercedes Benz, BASF, Siemens, Deutsche Bank, Volkswagen and Audi) use it. The German bank, Volks und Raiffeisenbanken, runs Job Navigator days, where they invite in young people and run the sessions. They find that it has increased their market share for new accounts from this age group.
- 3.5. In some areas the banks partially fund the use of Job Navigator in schools and some projects are financed up to 75 % by the government. Students are usually asked to contribute €10 each.

3.6. In two years 100,000 students have experienced the process. Berufs Navigator GmbH is now looking to expand their markets overseas. They are currently in discussion with the UAE government.

4. Evaluation

4.1. The Job Navigator system has potential for use in the UK. The exercise clearly motivated the students. There are other systems of career matching, but most are based only on self-evaluation. Job Navigator is different in its use of peer comments. Students also receive the certificate, results handouts and follow up sheets on the day.

4.2. The issues which have to be addressed before it could be used in the UK are those of transferability and the resources required. Both are dealt with below.

5. Transferability

5.1. Job Navigator has not yet been translated into English, but Berufs Navigator will do this as soon as they get a contract in an English-speaking country. In addition to verbatim translation, it needs to be checked for national and cultural differences in terminology.

5.2. Germany has a highly structured set of job titles and descriptions. UK job titles, descriptions and person specifications are more fluid. An exercise in mapping UK and Germany job details is essential for the system to work. This will require detailed knowledge of both systems and languages.

5.3. If the Job Navigator is to be used with university students, consideration should be given about integration with the Personal Development Planning (PDP) process. The two systems are not in conflict; ideally Job Navigator would be embedded in the PDP process at the appropriate time.

5.4. Students with special learning needs must be accommodated, therefore the screens and wording must meet Bobby standards for accessibility. Extra time might be necessary for students with reading problems as the standard screens pass fairly quickly.

6. Resources to run the Job Navigator sessions

- 6.1. Time: the current capacity for one session is 90 students per day. The demonstration session involved a briefing session, the main Job Navigator session and then counselling sessions in the groups of four.
- 6.2. Staff: the counsellors need specialist training and good knowledge of jobs. The sessions will generate further demands and students will then need advice on CVs and signposts to further information. Technical help to run the computer system (not specialist).
- 6.3. Rooms: for briefing, main session and counselling.
- 6.4. Equipment: special handsets, laptops/PCs and data projectors.

7. Potential uses in the UK

7.1. MMU students

Job Navigator could give careers advice to students unsure of their final career path. (Over 40% of graduate jobs are open to graduates of any degree discipline, often because they require the same set of transferable skills.) Job Navigator could also be used in advance of placements.

7.2. MMU applicants

The possibility of using Job Navigator with applicants for courses is worth further exploration. It might be carried out in 6th form colleges or at open days.

7.3. External organisations

Berufs Navigator have demonstrated that large private sector companies in Germany have taken it on board. There is also scope within the public sector eg NHS. There is potential to be explored.

7.4. Government employment initiatives

The government has many initiatives to train people and help them get into work. The need to help unemployed people is more urgent in the current economic climate. Frequently, people train but do not then enter employment (for a number of reasons). The use of Job Navigator in this situation has the potential to ensure that people's training and job seeking is focussed on a job which matches their skills and attributes. We would need to explore potential sources of funding.

7.5. MMU Institute of Education

The Institute of Education (IoE) is working closely with the De Bono Foundation to disseminate thinking skills in schools and, in principle, wish to proceed with Job Navigator subject to its suitability and cost for the UK education market.

8. Funding

- 8.1. As previously mentioned, in Germany Job Navigator sessions are funded by the government (local authorities and the national Department for Employment), the banks and private sector employers.
- 8.2. The use of Job Navigator may meet EU and UK government objectives and would match onto funding programmes. In regeneration areas with high unemployment, it might be possible to get money for a pilot project. Training local people to become counsellors is another way to improve local skills.

9. The way forward

- 9.1. Berufs Navigator has offered to come and demonstrate the system in Manchester. This is an essential test before any final decisions are made. A useful test would be to see it in action with a broader range of abilities and ages (including mature students) and to see students doing it in English.
- 9.2. Significant resources in research, development and marketing will have to be put in place by MMU and the Edward de Bono Foundation UK once the demonstration has been evaluated.

10. Recommendations

- 10.1. Take up the offer and agree dates to demonstrate Job Navigator in Manchester and design a test with a variety of MMU students and schools.
- 10.2. Subject to clause 9.0 being agreed, potential sources of public and private sector funding will be explored to implement Job Navigator in its entirety.
- 10.3. Subject to clause 9.0 being agreed, an investigation would commence into the suitability of Job Navigator to reduce the number of unemployed people, close the skills gaps and release the individual's potential.
- 10.4. Subject to the demonstration proving acceptable to the Business School, Institute of Education and other faculties, the terms and conditions of the legally binding agreement with Berufs Navigator will have to be agreed by all parties before final commitment.
- 10.5. Clarify the organisational responsibilities of MMUBS, IoE, the Edward de Bono Foundation UK and Berufs Navigator.
- 10.6. Discuss potential synergies with the Institute of Education, other faculties and the Careers Service within MMU.