## Contents

# Overview of this issue

Welcome to the Journal of the National Institute of Career Education and Counselling. In this edition established academics, new writers and practitioner researchers bring us useful insights into career learning and the interplay between theory, practice and research. The UK government's recent career strategy placed renewed emphasis on career learning in schools in England making it a highly topical subject for consideration. However, career covers all stages of life and needs to be supported by a life-long engagement with learning, hence the articles extend beyond the school setting. Our authors reflect on programme design, review the development and implementation of career learning frameworks and tools, and explore external and internal contextual factors that influence the career learning process. Whilst different in focus and context, at the core of all the articles is the theme of client and participant career learning leading to progression in career development.

A particular landmark for NICEC is the publication of an article by **Laura Walker** which was awarded the Bill Law Student Memorial Award 2019. In this opening piece, Laura explores the implications for career guidance practice of late career decision making, where she characterises the learning as a process of discovering more of themselves – 'more of me'. The findings are set out using a visual which is unique to the author and very helpful for use by practitioners. The image of 'dancing with fear' is powerful, and reminiscent of Bill Law's use of imagery in his concern to help practitioners to apply the lessons learned through research to practice.

In the two articles that follow, **Lis McGuire** and **John Gough** write from different perspectives about the process of designing learning experiences. Liz explores adopting a collaborative approach between the provider and the user of services. Although the article focuses on addressing the needs of persons with mental health problems, her findings and reflections are equally relevant to programme design for other user groups. Similarly, John's reflections on a collaborative process in training careers leaders in England highlights the importance of engaging the voice of the learner in enabling them to develop this role effectively in complex and demanding educational environments.

The next three articles focus on specific aspects of working directly with clients, and present new career learning tools and a career framework. These developments, rooted in practice, include a mix of 'what works' along with reflection on what was less successful, and insights into why that might be. First, **Katie Dallison** describes the development and implementation of Plan: Me. Piloted within higher education, this tool takes a holistic approach to career decision making, integrating goal setting, and allowing clients to map out a process of how they can move themselves forward independently. Second, we have an article by **Keren Coney and Ben Simkins** in which they consider the potential of using 'screencasting' technology to support students' C.V. writing. Third, **Lewis Clark and Carolyn Parry** review their creation of the INSPiRED teenager framework designed to support collaborative career-based learning between parents/carers and their teenage child.

The final two articles are concerned with the wider context within which career learning takes place. **Szilvia Schmitsek** explores the educational experiences of young people in England, Denmark and Hungary who had been at risk of dropping out, but later gained a qualification at a second chance provision. In contrast, **Nikki Storey** is concerned with the influences on the career beliefs of students in an ethnically diverse state school in London. Using an adapted short version of the 'Careers Beliefs Patterns Scale', Nikki examines the interlinked impacts of ethnicity and socio-economic status, and draws out recommendations for practitioners.

Lyn Barham & Michelle Stewart, Editors

# An evaluation of the INSPiRED teenager framework

## Lewis Clark & Carolyn Parry

**Teenagers** frequently struggle to make informed career choices and often turn to their parents or carers for help. In response to this, the INSPiRED Teenager framework was developed to encourage collaborative career-based learning between parents and carers and their teenage child. A mixed-methods approach was implemented to explore the effectiveness of the two programme delivery formats. The findings show evidence of improving teenagers' career confidence and career direction clarity and also parents/carers' understanding of the changing world of work, their ability to have informed conversations with their teenagers, and their confidence and clarity to help their teenager make informed career decisions.

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## Introduction

At present, we find ourselves in the infancy of a Fourth Industrial Revolution. New jobs are being created and old jobs are being displaced as disruptive technologies, such as artificial intelligence and automation, bring unprecedented change to the labour market. A report published by the World Economic Forum (2016) has estimated that approximately 30% of existing jobs in the U.K. are at high risk of becoming automated in the next 20 years. As a consequence of the developing employment landscape, the concept of a job for life is changing. Individuals must now take responsibility for their own career management and continuously learn new skills as new career and training routes are created (ONS, 2019; Hawksworth & Berriman, 2018).

The evolving labour market is problematic for young adolescents in particular. They are more likely to be affected by disruptive technologies than older workers, with one report estimating that around 65% of children entering primary school today will end up with jobs that don't exist yet (World Economic Forum, 2016). Making future career decisions can therefore become challenging to young people and so many turn to their parents for career support. However, a survey of 1,600 parents across the U.K. revealed that approximately 37% had reservations about discussing career options with their child as they were scared of advising the wrong thing and that their understanding of the developing labour market may in fact hinder their child's future (EY, 2019).

Policy and research has emphasised the significant role of the parent/carer in teenage career decision-making, highlighting the impact of parental support on career preparation, development and aspirations (Perry, Liu & Pabian, 2010; Dietrich & Kracke, 2009; Young et al. 2006). Since the publication of the Department for Education's National Careers Strategy in 2018, schools and colleges have been required to use the eight benchmarks of good career guidance to improve their careers provision. Embedded within the benchmarks are several underpinning criteria that recognise the important role parents/carers play in the development of adolescents' careers education. In particular, parents need access to good quality careers information on their child's potential future study options and on the developing labour market.

There are many sources of high quality careers information, yet few frameworks have been developed to enable parents/carers to support teenagers with their career decisions in an informed way.

## INSPiRED Origins

The overarching INSPiRED framework was designed to reflect the potential changes in the labour market. It

was first developed by the researchers in 2015 as the result of informal action research when working with young adults studying at a Welsh University. Repeated themes which occurred in client career guidance conversations were taken, researched, and developed into the INSPiRED framework, which was informed by sound pedagogy, proven theories and concepts.

The framework consists of eight segments:

- Identity

- Needs and Wants

- Strengths, Talents and Skills

- Passions and Interests

- Impact and Contribution

- Relationships

- Environment

- Direction and Goals

Underpinned by sound career guidance and coaching principles (Yates, 2014; Hambly and Bomford, 2019)), the approach uses a blended humanistic, person-centred constructivist and coaching approach to develop self-understanding and goal-oriented direction setting. Further, the approach sets out to strengthen the teenagers' confidence and clarity over their career direction while building key skills that are needed for the changing world of work. Reflection and learning are synthesized through a unique career and life planning tool which can be used to navigate career transitions during an individual's life.

The INSPiRED framework has been evaluated in different contexts, including with clients who have made multiple career changes (RE-INSPiRED Professional) and as an employee engagement tool (INSPiRED Team). In an education context, the framework was evaluated in 2016-17 as an INSPiRED Graduate pilot programme with a voluntary cohort of 20 BAME students at a university in the Midlands and on a course for which the graduate destination outcomes had been underperforming. The pilot had a high voluntary completion rate of 87.5% and led to noteworthy and significant self-reported increases in both clarity of career direction and career confidence.

## INSPiRED Teenager Variant

The INSPiRED Teenager programme variant was developed in 2017 in response to the need to enable parents/carers to support teenagers with their careers in an informed way. The programme was designed to encourage teenagers to work with their parent/carer to understand their own talents and potential and combine them with a clear sense of purpose so they can thrive and experience well-being, happiness and success through meaningful contributions to themes they care about through learning and work. The programme used the UN Sustainable Development Goals in particular to help highlight potential career themes. This focus provided a rich source of stimulus and discussion and brought together all four constituent parties - parents/carers, teenagers, a career development specialist and employer representatives – by means of a structured coaching question-led approach with workbook exercises and big picture planning tool stimulating family group and plenary facilitated discussions.

The programme was delivered in two formats: as either an online tool with forum support or as a face-to-face workshop series. The online delivery consisted of a self-paced, easy to follow eight-part video series with a comprehensive eBook. This contained several exercises for teenagers to work through with the support of their parent or carer. Additional links to theories, books and video clips were also provided throughout the eight modules.

The face-to-face (FTF) format consisted of two three-hour workshops delivered over two weeks by a career professional. Teenagers again worked through the workbook with the support of their parent/carer with additional help from a career professional and Unilever employees. Participants also took part in related activities and discussions. Workbooks were provided at the start of each workshop for the teenagers to work through as the sessions progressed. Table 1 displays the content of each workbook.

The tasks were designed to provide a lens through which teenagers could make sense of the world of work. Also, the programme included an overview of how to interpret career information online, including LMI. The workbooks were designed to support these

**Table 1:  A breakdown of each workbook content**

| | Module | Workbook Tasks |
|---|---|---|
| **Workshop 1** | Identity | Your Natural Self (personality) |
| | | Your Nurtured Self (values growing up) |
| | | Your Experience (life timeline of significant emotional events) |
| | Needs & Wants | Work-Life Fit |
| | | Values at Work |
| | | Self-Care needs, Success and Happiness definitions |
| | Strengths, Talents & Skills | Identifying Strengths |
| | | Disovering Talents |
| | | Understanding Skills |
| | Passions & Interests | Exploring Passion & Grit (Dweck and Duckworth) |
| | | Stimulating Curiosity |
| | | Flow as a concept at Work |
| | | Exploring Options |
| **Workshop 2** | Impact & Contribution | Finding your 'why' |
| | | Creating your career purpose statement |
| | Relationships | Identifying your tribe |
| | | Working in teams |
| | Environment | Thriving at work |
| | Direction & Goals | Deciding between options |
| | | Vision board for goalsetting |

objectives by enabling the teenagers to align their unique talents, skills and passions to a clear purpose.

In 2018-19, an evaluation of the two programme delivery formats was undertaken to see how effective they were at providing an easy to learn systematic approach to helping parents/carers enable their teenagers to make more informed career decisions.

## Method

Following approval by a university ethics committee, an adaptation of Kirkpatrick's (2016) Evaluation Model was used to evaluate the framework. Typically, measures are made on four levels: (1) reaction, (2) learning, (3) behaviour and (4) results. However, levels three and four of the model were omitted as these levels measure longitudinal data and consequently did not align with the evaluation timeframe.

### Online Programme

The online programme was advertised on select council and social media websites. Seventy-two parents/carers registered their interest in participating, of whom the first fifty were invited to take part. Participants were provided access to the online programme and its resources over a four-week period. Retention of participants proved difficult with only

twenty-eight pairs engaging with the programme modules and none completing the programme. Although participants were invited to complete a post-programme survey and attend a focus group, which may have provided insight into the low levels of engagement, there was no response.

### Face-To-Face Programme

The FTF programme was advertised in schools located in an economic cold spot across North West England. Sixty-eight parents/carers registered their interest in participating, however, the workshop venue only had the capacity and resources to host the first forty-five pairs.

Workshop 1 was delivered by a careers professional at the a local venue on a Wednesday evening from 4pm–7pm to twenty-nine participants. Retention of these participants was also difficult with just sixteen pairs attending workshop 2 the following week.

At the end of the second workshop each parent/carer-and-teenager pair were asked to complete a post-programme survey exploring their clarity of career direction and confidence. Fourteen pairs provided a response.

To further explore the views and experiences of those who completed the programme, a focus group was run. This was attended by four parent/carer-and-teenager pairs. The data was thematically analysed and the key themes extracted.

## Key Findings and Discussion

### Parents and Carers

Career support from parents has been shown to have a direct effect on teenagers' career confidence and preparation (Perry, Liu & Pabian, 2010). Nonetheless, many parents (and carers) feel ill-equipped to offer career support to their teenager as technological advancements continue to reshape the employment landscape. The FTF workshops set out to address this discrepancy by conceptualising to parents (and carers) how the labour market is expected to evolve during the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

Data from the post-programme survey revealed that when asked on a scale from 1 to 10 (1 being 'very little' and 10 being 'a lot') how much they thought new technologies such as automation and artificial intelligence will change the world of work in the next 10 years, 12 of the 14 (85%) parents/carers had recorded scores of 6 or above. Also, parents/carers spoke specifically about how, prior to the programme, they were unaware of the developing labour market and that it is vastly different to what they experienced when they were a teenager. Others mentioned how they now understood that their teenager may not have just one career, but many, as new jobs will be being created and old jobs displaced. For example:

> 'I think at the start of the course where they talked about how 68% of children starting school now will be in jobs that aren't even created yet made me aware that it is a fast-changing market and very different to what any of us have experienced.' (Parent)

> 'This [programme] really has provided a framework to adapt and work to because I don't see that my children will have one career, they will have many careers and it is enabling them to identify those transferable skills that they can use.' (Parent)

These finding indicate that participation in the programme had improved parents/carers' understanding of the developing labour market.

Parents/carers also found themselves having more informed conversations with their teenager about careers throughout the two workshops. A parent mentioned how the programme encouraged intergenerational conversations which they really valued, while a teenager was able to reflect on the conversations they had with their father about experiences of work:

> 'I have some idea of how to 'clear the fog' because a lot of [teenagers'] responses are 'I don't know' so as a parent you often feel like you don't know how to help. This [programme] has therefore been really useful in supporting these conversations and it is something we will go back to and develop.' (Parent)

'[The programme] allowed me to reflect on what I really did want out of work. I discussed with my dad about his experiences of work which was interesting.' (Teenager)

These findings were particularly encouraging as effective communication within the family has been shown to be crucial for laying a sound foundation for career decision-making (Akosah-Twumasi, Emeto & Lindsay, 2018).

Collectively, these findings demonstrate that the framework provides parents/carers with an underpinning knowledge of the labour market and the ability to have informed conversations with their teenagers about careers. This was further highlighted in the post-programme survey as when asked how confident they were about helping their teenager make a good career choice (1 being 'not confident and 10 being 'very confident'), 11 of the 14 parents/carers (78%) scored themselves as 6 above.

It would be interesting for future evaluations of similar frameworks to explore the long-term implications and extent of these benefits beyond the programme itself.

## Teenagers

Another key theme that emerged from the data was how many teenagers felt confident and clear about their future. To support teenagers in this development the programme introduced them to a range of career related tasks to provide a lens through which they could make sense of the world of work. When asked how useful they found the tasks on a scale from 1 to 10 (1 being 'not useful' and 10 being 'very useful'), 11 of 13 (84%) teenagers gave a score of 6 or above. In particular, the teenagers enjoyed tasks that involved discovering their talents, reflecting on their needs and wants and understanding their life time-line. For example:

'I enjoyed the needs and wants task the most because this allowed me to reflect on what I really did want out of work. I hadn't realised I wanted a nice workplace environment, but I now understand why this is quite helpful.' (Teenager)

'I enjoyed the discovering talents task the most because it helped me figure out what I was good at and what my way of thinking was.' (Teenager)

After the workshop tasks had been completed, teenagers were asked via a post-programme survey how confident they were about making a good career choice; 11 of 14 (78%) scored themselves as 6 or above (1 being 'not confident' and 10 being 'very confident'). In the context of careers, this was especially important as research has demonstrated that the more confident an individual is in their abilities, the more psychologically ready they are to take on tasks such as changing careers (Higgins, 2001). Further, having career confidence is also an important predictor of successful adjustment when young adolescents transition from education to employment (Stringer, Kerpelman & Skorikov, 2012).

In addition to career confidence, teenagers were asked how clear they were about their future career direction; 9 of 14 (64%) scored themselves as 6 or above (1 being 'not clear' and 10 being 'very clear'). Teenagers mentioned specifically how they were clearer on a range of topics including their unique talents, skills and strengths. One teenager in particular talked about how he had a vague idea of what career he wanted to pursue beforehand, but the programme provided a clearer idea of what path to take in order to achieve it:

'Before I did the sessions, I had met with a careers adviser and had a vague idea of what I wanted to do, but the sessions we've had have given me a lot more clarity and I now have a more precise idea of what I want to do and where I want to go.' (Teenager)

## Course leader perspectives

From a delivery perspective, the course leader felt the eight segments of the programme clearly helped parents and teenagers to understand the main considerations when making a career choice. She felt the INSPiRED Career and Life Planner tool with its eight questions (one for each of the segment) was particularly welcomed by participants as a way of maintaining a high-level course overview and provided a framework for more intergenerational conversations to take place. It was also clear to her that participants valued having both a careers professional and employers in the room which widened conversations beyond parental experience:

'I think it was good that staff were dotted around the room. They were not just bringing answers to any questions but their own personal information on how they have done the same thing and what they do in their current role. That helped because they referenced real situations' (Parent)

Having the voices of all four constituent parties (parents/carers, teenagers, employers and career professionals) contributed significantly in a social mobility context by supporting the visualisation of moving within or between levels within a society. The course leader discussed how this enabled and empowered teenagers to develop their confidence and take more control of their career decision-making by engaging them in more meaningful discussions, which clearly reflected who they were and what they wanted, rather than what their parent/carer wanted for them.

Parents/carers themselves also had insights into their own career journeys and decision-making, deepening their career understanding and gaining career learning themselves as a by-product of their own teenagers' learning. Although the educational background and salaries of participating parents/carers varied widely, crucially the use of the planner with its open questions which related to anyone's life ensured that material and content was accessible to all.

When reflecting on how the programme could be improved, the course leader recognised that some room logistics beyond her control, including internet access issues, meant that sessions started late and further valuable time was lost from the programme because some delegates couldn't access their pre-course activities. This left the careers professional under pressure to adapt content while ensuring the delegates received enough content.

These challenges may also have contributed to the difficulty of retaining participants. The online delivery had a 100% drop-out rate while the FTF delivery had a drop-out rate of 55% from workshop one to workshop two. However, research has exemplified the difficulty in retaining participant engagement with online courses which can derive from numerous reasons including lack of time, course difficulty, unrealistic expectations and lack of digital skills (Jordan, 2015; Onah, Sinclair & Boyatt, 2014).

Although research shows that attrition in online courses is extremely common, it was unexpected that the drop-out rate for the FTF delivery would be so high. While it was not possible to establish the precise reasons for this attrition and the extent to which they were programme related, one explanation could be that one of the main feeder schools ran an event at short notice for parents on the evening of the second workshop which could not have been predicted. Those who completed the FTF programme felt that participant attrition may have been due to work and travel related issues. For instance, one parent talked about how they had to leave work early to arrive on time which was not always possible for others. Another mentioned how they only had thirty minutes to get from school to the venue which could be difficult. Future deliveries of similar programmes should consider hosting workshops that involve both parents/carers and teenagers at a more convenient time for all participants to attend.

Overall, the FTF programme can make a positive contribution to this important field of work. It provides a framework for parents/carers and teenagers to work together in a career context with unique support from career professionals and employers. It also offers a distinctive Career and Life Planner tool that enables teenagers to remain in control of their careers beyond the programme delivery. Future research should investigate the long-term effects of the framework to explore whether it provides a lasting solution to address the problem of enabling parents and carers to support their teenager in an informed way.

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