

Title: www.talkingjobs.net

Date of use – 6th-13th March 2011

Key Stage 5 – Sixth Form College

Subject: CEIAG



This is a CEIAG resource which I have looked at from my perspective as a Careers Co-ordinator in a Sixth Form College teaching Key Stage 5 (A Levels) and also from the viewpoint of my students. The resource is also aimed at jobseekers or those not currently in employment, but I have not looked at that facility as it is outside of my experience.

The primary focus of the resource is a collection of “talking jobs” – 40 video interviews with individuals answering an extensive list of questions about their work, the qualifications and experience they needed and their background and lifestyle. You can select from a wide variety of jobs and careers at all levels – so there really is something to suit almost everyone.

Students are able to work on the site individually, with the option of browsing through the jobs and questions and “book marking” and printing those that particularly catch their eye. Alternatively, students can opt to spend some time (an hour is recommended) doing one of several different activities designed to get them thinking about, for example, the relationship between qualities and skills, the consequences of decisions and what employers are looking for.

As a teaching resource for the age group that I teach, I think that this is a valuable tool for working with individuals or small groups of students. The option for individual students to browse through different talking jobs is the most useful, whether or not done on an individual basis (which can be done in their own time and therefore will not impact on the timetable) or as part of one of the suggested structured group activities. Either would work well as the talking jobs are easy to access and negotiate between the different jobs and questions.

The talking jobs provide an interesting and informative guide to the different jobs and would be an inspiration for any student completely at a loss to know what to do. In addition, they provide a detailed and personal insight into different jobs for those students who do know what they want to do but want to know more about it. However, one glaring omission in the questions asked of each individual is how much they actually or potentially earn. Although they are asked about their standard of living, this is answered differently and not always from a financial aspect. This can often be one of the first questions asked by a student.

In addition, for Careers or IAG deliverers, there are a series of lesson plans and activities to enable them to deliver a comprehensive CEIAG program based around the talking jobs which very much brings the subject to life. It is possible to control which talking jobs can be accessed by the students during the activities, which is a useful function as it enables you to focus on particular areas and the students won't be distracted from the activity by looking at the wide variety of jobs on offer rather than concentrating on the task in hand. Although I liked the lesson plans, the reality for me is that there is insufficient time in the timetable to deliver it and in any event I think that most would be

more suitable for a younger age group. I did however like the section on CV's and would find that useful, particularly with the option of linking CV's to different talking jobs. This makes thinking about relevant skills and qualities to include in a CV for particular jobs much more relevant and fun for the students.

Students tend to have a fixed idea about careers, i.e. that they will go to university and get a job and one of the aspects that I most liked about the "talking jobs" is the fact that many of them did not follow a traditional route – which I think is encouraging for those students who do not know what they want to do or those who perhaps are struggling to make the grades for a particular university or course. The "talking jobs" also emphasise the fact that nowadays people tend to have more than one career and that not everyone gets it right first time. This is a useful message for students who can feel stressed and pressured by not knowing what they want to do. I also liked the fact that the jobs are not "stereotyped" – that there are men and women doing and talking about non-traditional jobs, such as Keri the plumber.

As a sixth form college, our primary aim is to prepare students for university and most of our limited time for Careers is concentrated on giving advice and guidance on university applications. However there are always some students who do not follow this route, and with the change in tuition fees, I expect that there will be an increasing number who will choose not to go to university to avoid incurring substantial debt. A resource like this will therefore become an increasingly useful tool.

Publisher's Response

Talking Jobs is about using personal narratives to help schools and colleges deliver impartial work related learning by encouraging young people to explore the lives and decisions of people they might not ordinarily meet. As such it's a starting point to help prick young people's curiosity ahead of more detailed labour market information (LMI) research.