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Recent Research

Julia Yates

Phoenix November 2023 Issue 169

The Sailboat Model

Demirtaş-Zorbaz, S., Korkut-Owen, F., Arıcı-Şahin, F. & Mutlu, T. (2023) Career sailboat: a model for enhancing career decision-making self-efficacy among job-seekers, *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, 51:2, 284-297, DOI: [10.1080/03069885.2023.2177615](https://doi.org/10.1080/03069885.2023.2177615)

This paper reports the findings of an evaluation of a careers intervention based on the Career Sailboat Model. I hadn't come across this model before but I like the metaphor. The idea is that students are sailing towards their career goal, in a boat made up of social, personal and systemic factors, navigating the choppy waters of chance. There have been some small-scale evaluations of Career Sailboat Model interventions in the past, which suggest that clients find the model easy to understand and engaging, but this study looked at final year university students and although the sample size was small, it was a well-designed study with a control group. The intervention consisted of a 5-week programme of 60-90 minute career workshops, which covered the key aspects of the model (the influences of social, personal and systemic factors and chance) and the findings indicated that it did have a significant positive impact on the students' confidence in their own abilities to make a career choice. You can find out more about the Career Sailboat Model here:

https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Selen-Demirtas-Zorbaz/publication/272944054_Career_Sailboat_Model_as_a_tool_for_the_Guidance_Counsellor/links/641ae581315dfb4cce9f95ac/Career-Sailboat-Model-as-a-tool-for-the-Guidance-Counsellor.pdf

The benefits of a pro-active personality

Le, S. T., & Lin, S. P. (2023). Proactive personality and the job search outcomes: the mediating role of networking behaviour. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, 51(1), 29-45.

This is one of those studies whose findings will come as no great surprise to anyone, but I'm including it because it's always useful to have some concrete empirical evidence to support our assumptions. This substantial study looked at 773 graduates to identify the factors that seem to lead to a successful job hunt, and found that having a proactive personality is definitely an advantage – leading to more invitations to interview and more job offers. The first specific finding was that proactive people (defined here as people who have personal initiative and change-orientated behaviour) are likely to have clearer career goals. The authors explain that proactive people generally engage in more exploratory activities, and these experiences allow them to identify their own career goals. Proactive people also put effort into building their networks and together, these two things – clearer goals and more networking, result in more invitations to interview and more job offers. A proactive personality is a fairly stable trait and a difficult one to change, but whilst we can't make people more proactive, we can make it easier for them to access opportunities. The authors

suggest we should work with clients to encourage them to identify and take advantage of opportunities. Getting involved in more activities will help them to refine their career goals ,and helping clients to work out how they can build and capitalise on their networks can help them improve their chances of job search success.

Developing asynchronous interview skills

Roulin, N., & Bourdage, J. S. (2023). Ready? Camera rolling... action! Examining interviewee training and practice opportunities in asynchronous video interviews. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 145*, 103912.

Asynchronous video interviews are becoming more and more common. For organisations, this approach has considerable financial benefits, but we know that applicants are less enthusiastic. Organisations often offer applicants access to resources to help to mitigate the negative effects of this approach – most often training videos and the opportunity to practice and watch their own recordings. This study was looking at whether these resources actually make a difference. I was surprised to read that the authors found that there was no benefit to having the opportunity to practice – this didn't improve candidates' interview performance at all. But watching a training video was positively related both to perceptions of fairness and interview performance. Applicants who had watched the training videos ended up giving longer and more structured answers which contributed to a better performance. So, advice to our students, facing asynchronous video interviews, is to watch some training videos – either those provided by the organisations themselves, or those they can find on YouTube, and to give full and structured responses.

Perceived employability

Grosemans, I., De Cuyper, N., Forrier, A., & Vansteenkiste, S. (2023). Graduation is not the end, it is just the beginning: Change in perceived employability in the transition associated with graduation. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 145*, 103915.

There is a bit of interest in the literature at the moment about the differences between notions of graduate and work employability. The two strands of research seem to have developed quite independently and only now are researchers starting to link them up. This paper looks at graduates' perceptions of their own levels of employability through their time at university and then again a year after they have graduated. The authors identified three typical patterns. One group of graduates had high levels of perceived employability when they started their academic courses, and these levels remained high throughout their time at university, rising slightly after graduation. Then there were some whose levels started at a medium level and also increased slightly after they graduated. Finally, there were those whose levels started low and never improved: they arrived at university thinking they didn't have a bright future, and felt the same a year after graduation. The authors seem pleased and a little surprised to find that graduates' perceptions of their own levels of employability don't decrease after graduation – they anticipated that entering the real world might make them feel that their chances of success aren't as great as they imagined. What does concern them is the group of graduates who feel pessimistic about their chances of getting a job

whilst they are students and just as pessimistic about it once they are working. The authors suggest that we should try and identify this group whilst they are still at university and offer some interventions to boost their confidence and optimism.