

Cannexus Invitational Dinner

Monday, January 23, 2012

What follows is a brief summary of issues discussed. We hope this will help you recollect ideas you want to pursue with us or with others.

* Career guidance needs to be imbedded in curriculum (Example: Manitoba grade 9, 10, 11, 12 curriculum). A change of culture is needed in school boards. All teachers need training to learn how to infuse career in the subjects they teach. Career courses should not be just be dropped on “newbies.”
* Effective career guidance causes a “ripple effect” – when students are engaged, seeing a positive future, this can change their behaviour right now. For evidence see: www.derby.ac.uk/files/career\_cruisingnew.pdf.
* Discussion around everyone working in separate silos. The challenges are shared and too big to be tackled in fragmented fashion. We must pool our strengths and harmonize our efforts.
* Importance of listening to student voice – teaching them to drive their own learning. We shouldn’t be afraid to ask the students important questions – guide and facilitate their voice.
* Accountability is important for students and administrators. Even students need to be able to track their progress.
* Too many policies, funding cycles, and interventions are short term, band-aid solutions without sustainability of staff or funding. Only long-term models and funding can make a real and lasting difference.
* To date our arguments have been moral (good for individuals and society). Governments have funded them in the past, but no more. They are under increasing pressure to ensure proof of impact/change (accountability).
* Career development cannot be “bolted” on, but must be part of the building from the inside out
* Some systems have given up on career development in schools. European example of taking career development out of the schools and into the community.
* If we expect Math, Science, Language, etc., teachers to infuse career development concepts and conversations into their curriculum we must teach them why and how.
* More of the same won’t get us where we need to go. Can we get crazy – get creative – think outside of the box? Colour outside the lines.
* Let’s not throw the baby out with the bath water. The idea of infusing career into the curriculum is a good one. We just haven’t been doing it well. Don’t discard the idea. Come up with better ways to make it happen.
* Students are engaged when given the opportunity to explore “me.” No other work they do in school is about them. If we want education to be personal and relevant, to tweak curiosity and create a thirst for learning, students must see the learning as for and about them. Only career, which helps them develop informed dreams for their future, as about them.
* Implementation, cross-curricular or not ,needs to be mandated in order to have teeth. Bryan Hiebert and Bill Borgen do 5-day implementation training sessions with educators abroad. They would help school districts in Canada.
* Metaphors, like the “perfect storm,” are powerful. Recent [research at Stanford University](http://www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi/10.1371/journal.pone.0016782) indicates that metaphors influence how people think about and solve real-world problems. With the same information, but different metaphors in mind, informed people arrive at different conclusions and advocate different solutions.
* We need a national campaign focused on paying attention to career health along the lines of the highly successful “*Participaction*.” Preventative. Annual career checkup. After an interview on Mark Franklin’s CareerBuzz radio show Terry O’Reilly (CBC Radio, Age of Persuasion, now Under the Influence) has tentatively offered to help create such a national campaign.
* We must get our message to average Canadians who are the voters and have the potential to influence the governments, school boards, etc.
* We need to focus on what is working and build on that rather than reinventing. Must identify the things that are important. They may not have resulted in all the changes we wanted in the past. We need to revisit key issues that haven’t gone away and do them better.
* Mutual respect is needed between community partners – no one threatened by the other – we all have common goals about which we are passionate. Chances of success increase with collaboration and the voices become louder and more compelling.
* There is a need for a cultural change. Rather than doom and gloom scenarios about work, people need to see positive role models, real people enjoying their jobs, happy, thus healthy.
* We need a national strategy addressed to all Canadians, not just those who are informed and “get it.”
* There is no “silver bullet.”
* Traditional war strategies (i.e., war on drugs or poverty) have failed. “Gorilla tactics” may be more effective. If we can all agree on three goals and the strategies to get there, and everyone (irrespective of their silo) works toward these common goals, we may succeed. Are there two or three “pillars” we can knock over that will change everything?
* When Kris Magnusson started as Dean of Education at Simon Fraser, he asked his son what he should impart on teachers in training. After overnight reflection his son replied “who said the sky was our limit.”
* Career crisis versus career *checkup*. Most people don’t seek help until they are in crisis.
* We need to choose our language carefully. For example, when the real estate industry shifted from selling houses to selling *homes* they connected emotionally with buyers and sellers.
* Work, learning and leisure. Career is not all about work. Rather, it’s about life balance and navigating and transitioning through a very transient life ahead.

These bullets don’t do justice to a rich and engaging discussion intended to wrap-up at 9:30 that went to 10:30 - despite many participants having to get to other hotels or home through freezing rain.

We realize Career Cruising is just one player in a cast of many doing their best to help Canadians enjoy success in their careers and lives. Let us know how we can support your efforts to make a difference, and please help us achieve our goal of a deeper level of implementation of our ccEngage resources. Over 100,000 Canadians from primary students to those planning their retirement access our programs each and every day. Due to the lack of priority accorded to career development, in many cases their interactions are too superficial to effect the real change in their lives we seek.

We will follow-up on these themes with most of you in coming months. Don’t hesitate to contact us if you see opportunities for collaboration. You can reach anyone on the Career Cruising team by calling (toll-free) 1-800-965-8541 or emailing: info@careercruising.com. Visit our great new website at <http://www.careercrusing.com>.