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# **ELECTRONIC CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS**

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## **CAREER RELATED PREFERENCES OF GREEK ADOLESCENTS LIVING IN ATTICA DURING THE GREEK FINANCIAL CRISIS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Greece is currently experiencing a financial crisis, which consequently effects the population in regard to employment and career development. Previous studies point out that metropolitan regions are more vulnerable to the economic crisis. The present study describes the effects of the economic crisis in the adolescent population (14-19 years old) living in the Attica region, in regard to career values, career preferences and comprehensive abilities. The data were collected from 2008 to 2014. Furthermore, possible gender differences are also explored. The sample population for work values (N=237), indicates that the highest career value for both sexes is high payment. Gender differences can be observed in regard to the preference of the second and third value, where creativity and human contact come next for females and job stability and creativity come next for males. The sample population for career preferences (N=234), indicates that the preferable career interest for both sexes are educational and social jobs, while in regard to gender, music related jobs come first for males while educational and social jobs come first for females. Lastly, the sample population for the comprehensive abilities (N=171), indicates that meaningful memory ability, scores highest for both sexes, while the second and third abilities for both males and females are perceptual completion and clerical speed and accuracy. The presentation offers suggestions for future research in order to provide adolescents with better educational preparation and career counseling during the economic crisis.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Career serves as an important aspect for the human life. The career that we choose to follow defines us and adds to our overall happiness. A the three-year pan-European study of societal and economic effects on quality of life and well-being, carried out by EU-funded researchers indicated that Career fulfillment provides workers with the means to maintain life satisfaction (Centre for European Labour Market Research, 2007). For most individuals, the time to choose a career path comes in late adolescence, when the students are expected to declare a major to specialize on. In Greece the public Universities offer 455 majors to choose from, 260 in higher education and 195 in technical education. Additionally there is a variety of majors offered in the Open University, Centers of free studies, institutes of professional training and other operators. The vast number of majors to choose from, means that it is not an easy decision. This difficult decision has also been influenced by the Greek economic crisis.

## **THE ECONOMIC CRISIS IN GREECE**

The year 2009 highlights the start of the most severe, and still-evolving, economic crisis the country has experienced during its modern history. Studies have indicated that the most urbanized areas are the ones that are more vulnerable to economic crisis. Furthermore, in relation to career it has been shown that the crisis has resulted in high dispersion of unemployment (Psycharis et al., 2014). The labor market between 2004 and 2007 has shown that youth unemployment rates in Greece are among the highest across the EU, even for tertiary education graduates (Mitrakos T., et al. 2010). Moreover., the youth employment rate in Greece decreased to 11.8 % in 2013 which is by far the lowest rate in the EU including countries particularly affected by the crisis. (Kraatz S. 2015). Further studies indicate an incomplete transition from education to work. (Kraatz S. 2015). In regard to gender research has shown that females face a higher probability of unemployment compared to men with similar educational qualifications. (Mitrakos T., et al. 2010). As far as specific professions are involved studies have indicated that the professions of Physics, Mathematics and Statistics pose a high risk for a few years, the professions of Physical education & sports, social sciences and several TEI specialties face a serious unemployment problem. (Mitrakos T. et al 2010).

In the era of economic crisis and unemployment it is important to take under consideration the work values of adolescents as the work values are considered to be central in the study of Career development. Super's theory on work values states that they play an important part when it comes to career choices. (Politi V. 2014). Previous studies have pointed out that advancement, job stability; innovation and autonomy were rated higher in a nationwide study, of millennial-aged respondents, while earnings were rated lower. (Papavasileiou E. 2014). In

regard to gender, Schwartz's theory on work values states that there are differences regarding men and women's values. Men place value on power, prestige, achievement, pleasure and challenge, while women place more value in kindness, reassurance and security. (Politi V. 2014).

Another important area to consider in regard to career development is the vocational preferences of Greek adolescents. The vocational preferences during a period of crisis and unemployment involve more than what children like, but also which majors offer a better prospect. A study exploring which higher education schools adolescents apply for, shows that during the economic crisis a) youths prefer specialties that offer greater vocational stability such as medicine, pharmaceuticals and legal studies, b) preference in financial, humanities, psychology and schools that offer a career in the army has risen and c) preference in management, education and journalism schools has declined (Megalokonomou R., Goulas S. 2016). In regard to gender a study on the perceived vocational abilities in regard to gender among primary school children has indicated that the choices present social stereotyping, meaning that the mentality of the Greek population tends to consider that women are meant to do certain jobs while men other. More specifically the study found that children believed that women should hold jobs that involve taking care of others while men should hold jobs that involve physical strength (Manesis N. et al. 2007). Previous research has indicated that there are statistically significant differences in regard to gender and vocational preferences among Greek population. Males tend to prefer mechanical, computational and literary fields while females tend to prefer aesthetic and social service fields (Argyropoulou E. P. et al, 2007). A study on the vocational preferences of boys and girls conducted by the Programme For International Students (PISA), indicated that In almost all OECD countries, girls seem to be more ambitious than boys. On average, girls were more likely than boys to expect to work in high-status careers such as legislators, senior officials, managers and professionals. The gender gap in career expectations was particularly wide in Greece and Poland where the proportion of girls expecting to work as legislators, senior officials, managers and professionals was significantly higher than the proportion of boys expecting to work in those occupations. The proportion of boys planning a career in engineering or computing was significantly higher than girls, while, on the other hand the proportion of girls planning a career in health services was significantly higher than boys. In regard to science related careers, both boys and girls rendered similar results.

In addition to work values and vocational preferences it is important to also consider the occupational skills that children have acquired before applying for higher education. The Occupational skills reflect the abilities that adolescents have acquired through educational, familial and extracurricular education. There has been little or no research in Greece regarding the area of occupational skills. The only study involving the capabilities of Greek students is the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). The results of PISA 2006 and

2015 indicated that adolescent students in Greece scored lower than average in regard to science, the results of PISA 2003 and 2012 indicated that they scored lower than average in mathematics, and the results of Pisa 2000 and 2009 indicated that they scored lower than average in reading and collaborative problem solving. In regard to gender differences, the PISA 2006 indicated that girls in Greece outperformed boys in science (Sikora J., Pokropek A. 2006).

## **METHOD**

### **Participants**

The present study describes the preferences of males and females aged 14 to 19 years living in the Attica region. The data was collected from 2008 to 2014 while providing career counseling in a public hospital.

### **Instruments**

As previously noted, the areas that seem to be important in exploring career related subjects are work values, career preferences and career skills and these were the areas that were explored in the present study.

### **Work values**

The area of work values was assessed using Supers Work Values Inventory-Revised (WVI-R). The specific instrument is comprised of 12 scales measuring the relative importance placed on the following work-related value dimensions: Achievement, Coworkers, Creativity, Income, Independence, Lifestyle, Mental Challenge, Prestige, Security, Supervision, Work Environment, and Variety. These Work Values scales are internally consistent and show predictable patterns of gender differences and similarities. The Work Values have adequate discriminant validity.

### **Vocational preferences**

Vocational preferences were assessed using the Ohio Vocational Interest Survey (OVIS). The OVIS scales regrouped the nine levels described by the Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT). The OVIS Questionnaire has 253 statements that describe real activities and various professional duties. The Questionnaire helps people connect their interests in specific activities to information on various professions. The OVIS is applicable for eighth to twelfth grade male and female populations. OVIS scoring services provide national and local, male and female reference groups for comparison purposes. The OVIS items are brief statements of activities in the cluster of jobs representing an OVIS scale. The reliability is high and the items are valid to the extent that the DOT listings are valid. The OVIS has been translated and standardized for Greek population by ISON psychometrica.

### **Occupational Skills**

The area of occupational skills was assessed using the Comprehensive Ability Battery (CAB). CAB ability tests measure the special innate ability to execute all basic operations that are necessary within the professional life. They constitute a battery of 13 tests that examine all basic abilities that define the ease with which an individual can learn and execute specific tasks. measures of memory (Rote Memory, Meaningful Memory), measures of a spatial-related work context (Mechanical Knowledge, Aesthetic Judgment, Representational Drawing), measures in the verbal-creative domains (Verbal Fluency, Originality) and Auditory Ability, Clerical Speed and Accuracy, Hidden Shapes, Memory Span, Numerical Ability, Organizing Ideas, Perceptual Completion, Production of Ideas, Reasoning, Spatial Ability, Spelling, Tracking, and Verbal Ability..The CAB has been translated and standardized for Greek population by ISON psychometrica.

## **RESULTS**

### **Work Values**

The Work Values questionnaire was filled by the participants (N=237), and the results were assessed by using all the participants, as well as each gender (Table 1). The data were analyzed using comparison of means. The present study indicated that a high income is the most important work value for both sexes.

The area of gender differences rendered the results that job stability and creativity came second and third subsequently, for males, while controlled activity came last whereas creativity and human contact came second and third subsequently for females, while supervision came last.

*Table 1*

	GENDER								
	Male			Female			Total		
	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Security	1,4909	110	1,79063	1,3150	127	1,67000	1,3966	237	1,72558
Prestige	,6091	110	1,27858	,5591	127	1,02084	,5823	237	1,14545
High Income	1,6091	110	1,43415	1,5512	127	1,45137	1,5781	237	1,44064
Achievement	,9727	110	1,42365	,9764	127	1,43905	,9747	237	1,42889
Variety	,7455	110	1,26662	1,0472	127	1,43570	,9072	237	1,36537
Creativity	1,2909	110	1,50440	1,4646	127	1,60750	1,3840	237	1,55963
Mental Challenge	,4000	110	,94043	,5039	127	1,05314	,4557	237	1,00166
Independence	,6545	110	1,17650	,6772	127	1,24008	,6667	237	1,20849
Coworkers	,9000	110	1,29182	1,3465	127	1,52429	1,1392	237	1,43563
Lifestyle	,3455	110	,90297	,2362	127	,71776	,2869	237	,80908
Work Environment	,4000	110	,99724	,1417	127	,67524	,2616	237	,84818
Supervision	,0545	110	,42483	,0630	127	,32728	,0591	237	,37492

**Vocational Preferences**

The vocational preferences questionnaire was filled by the participants (N=234), and the results were assessed using all the participants, as well as comparing the means for each gender. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. In the present study adolescents showed preference to educational, musical and communication occupations while machine handling and manual occupations were not widely chosen (Table 2).

Gender differences were explored as to which occupations were preferred in regard to male and female participants. Males (N=105) preferred musical, law enforcement and communicative occupations, while manual occupations scored the lowest points (Table 2). Female (N=129) participants preferred educational, entertainment and performing arts and communicative occupations, while machine handling scored significantly low (Table 2).

Table 2

	GENDER								
	Male			Female			Total		
	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Machine_handling	20,33	105	7,516	14,34	129	4,544	17,03	234	6,744
Paramedic_Occupations	22,54	105	8,482	24,10	129	10,384	23,40	234	9,589
Mucical_Occupations	30,38	105	10,605	29,92	129	10,909	30,13	234	10,753
Office_Occupations	20,91	105	6,877	21,19	129	7,700	21,06	234	7,328
Farm_Occupations	24,71	105	8,475	22,36	129	8,416	23,41	234	8,506
Educational_Occupations	27,74	105	8,664	32,20	129	8,589	30,20	234	8,886
Law_and_Order_Enforcement	29,39	105	10,033	29,49	129	9,784	29,44	234	9,875
Medical_Occupations	22,06	105	8,380	22,57	129	9,899	22,34	234	9,232
Mechanics_And_Physics	28,66	105	9,688	24,96	129	8,511	26,62	234	9,224
Art	26,39	105	7,903	30,34	129	9,722	28,57	234	9,147
Manual_Occupations	19,30	105	6,981	17,07	129	5,987	18,07	234	6,533
Specialized_Craftsmen	20,83	105	6,900	22,05	129	8,625	21,50	234	7,905
Athletics	28,52	105	6,881	26,02	129	7,190	27,15	234	7,147
Applied_Arts	23,39	105	7,138	16,89	129	5,317	19,81	234	6,983
Communications	28,72	105	9,399	30,84	129	9,851	29,89	234	9,688
Marketind	27,57	105	8,672	27,86	129	8,469	27,73	234	8,544
Basic_Services	23,60	105	7,796	23,49	129	7,214	23,54	234	7,465
Law	25,89	105	8,787	26,38	129	9,113	26,16	234	8,953
Quality_Control_Occupations	21,46	105	7,271	18,57	129	6,560	19,87	234	7,021
Numeral_and_Mathematical_Occupations	28,31	105	10,029	22,62	129	9,556	25,18	234	10,155
Audience_Entertainment	26,99	105	8,801	31,40	129	9,902	29,42	234	9,657
Customer_Services	22,01	105	7,013	22,42	129	7,636	22,24	234	7,350
Management	28,46	105	9,138	28,15	129	9,064	28,29	234	9,079

### Occupational Skills

The overall results of the present study indicated that meaningful mnemonic ability, perceptual completion and clerical speed and accuracy are qualities that Greek students living in Attica possess in the highest degree, while mechanical knowledge and numerical ability seem to be a qualifications students lack. The results were the same for both males and females (Table 3).

Table 3

	GENDER								
	Male			Female			Total		
	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Verbal_ability	40,6362	80	18,43641	46,0765	91	17,26233	43,5313	171	17,97565
Numerical_ability	32,0145	80	14,78348	32,8534	91	12,33290	32,4609	171	13,50045
Spacial_ability	55,0927	80	20,31856	56,1237	91	16,19368	55,6414	171	18,19197
Clerical_speed_and_accuracy	53,4060	80	14,22636	56,9908	91	16,82477	55,3137	171	15,72043
Reasoning	45,2786	80	21,49659	47,1005	91	20,70461	46,2482	171	21,03621
Hidden_shapes	53,2283	80	23,56593	54,7920	91	22,65959	54,0604	171	23,03298
Rote_Memory	51,5068	80	23,91574	53,6092	91	22,73449	52,6256	171	23,24934
Mechanical_Knowledge	29,6415	80	15,08951	25,6557	91	11,82386	27,5204	171	13,55738
Meaningfull_memory	62,4375	80	25,54462	72,2527	91	20,42960	67,6608	171	23,41622
Production_of_Ideas	34,1300	80	13,65704	37,9680	91	13,47834	36,1725	171	13,65794
Originality	36,2686	80	22,72896	37,1995	91	18,00337	36,7640	171	20,29484
Aesthetic_judgement	31,4709	80	16,67723	41,7009	91	17,16189	36,9149	171	17,64610
Reprasantational_Drawing	37,8133	79	21,62080	52,7198	91	21,57007	45,7926	170	22,78436

### DISCUSSION

Before discussing the findings of this research it is important to consider that this study is merely descriptive and there are no indications of causal effects.

The results regarding work values indicate that the financial crisis may have affected Greek adolescents as both genders chose to place high income as their most important value. Such a finding does not correspond with the previous findings whereas job stability and creativity seem to remain high work values and in agreement with previous research. It is interesting to notice that Greek adolescents place little value in controlled activities; such a finding emphasizes the need of Greek youth to feel free.

The results regarding vocational preferences indicate that during the crisis adolescents have shown an increased interest in arts (males in music and females in performing arts). The high interest in arts and music related careers

could indicate the importance of placing more value in such courses, in primary and secondary education. Law enforcement scored high in males, a result that is in agreement with the previous studies as such a career provides for a secure and stable job. On the other hand, females showed a high interest in educational occupations, a result that agrees with the stereotype that women prefer jobs that involve taking care of others. It is also interesting to notice that jobs that involve education and communication rated high for both genders, while previous studies had indicated that interest in education journalism studies had declined. The low interest in manual occupations, could be indicative that Greek youth is not familiarized with such skills or that they may perceive such jobs as undermining.

The results regarding occupational skills showed that Greek adolescents seem to share the same skills. This could be indicative that the educational system promotes mnemonics and observational skills. When examining the areas where the participants scored the lowest, the findings are in agreement with the previous findings of the PISA research, which indicate that Greek students lack mathematical and scientific skills.

All the areas explored in the present study indicate that adolescents lack interest and experience in practical skills (mechanics, manual activities).

#### Limitations

As noted above the study does not provide causal effects, and thus cannot suggest ways to promote a better education in Greece for adolescents who grow during the financial crisis. Furthermore, the statistical significance of the gender differences was not examined, thus while we may observe the varieties, it is best to place more value in the overall scores.

Future studies could explore how education relates to and affects the necessary occupational skills, the correlation between vocational skills and career advancement and provide information of significant gender differences in regard to work values, vocational interests and occupational skills.

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## **EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN CAREER GUIDANCE**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*What are the benefits of applying Emotional Intelligence principles in career guidance? The basis of Emotional Intelligence is Emotional Awareness - knowing my internal states, preferences, resources, and intuitions (Goleman, 1998). Promoting this competence in unemployed people leads them to important improvements in job seeking as they learn to empower motivation and carry on a focused research, keeping the performance high without being upset by emotions after a bad interview and finally learning to develop new strategies to increase effectiveness in job seeking. As career advisors with more than 30 years of experience, we are here presenting the first results reached with the application of this new approach.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Emotional Intelligence in Career Guidance is an innovative approach to Career Counselling that we are experimenting in our company, Cooperativa Sociale Dalla Stessa Parte (DSP), in Italy. We are a no profit organization whose activity focuses on three different areas, represented in our logo (picture 1) with three different colours:

- environmental and green sustainability (green): promotion of values such as respect for land, organic cultivation, responsible gardening;
- laboratory and assembly area (yellow): protected workplace for people with social or psychological disadvantages, activities based on commissions from external companies;

- work policies and career guidance (blue): planning of interventions to promote work for people with disadvantage, job search orientation and career counselling.



*Picture 1*

## **OUR APPROACH IN CAREER GUIDANCE**

Focusing on the latter, it is essential to underline more specifically the kind of people we provide our service to and what is our approach. We have been offering career guidance and counselling to people who came from difficult life paths (marginalization, detention, long-term unemployment...) and to people with disabilities, but in the last period we opened to everybody who was looking for a job. This widening of users has required an in-depth look at the approach that has always distinguished us, the Castelfranchi-Montorfano model, which is based on the cognitive approach. In psychology, this approach is based on a connection between mind and behaviours and it assumes that our thought processes affect the way in which we behave. It can be simplified in this picture (picture 2):



*Picture 2*

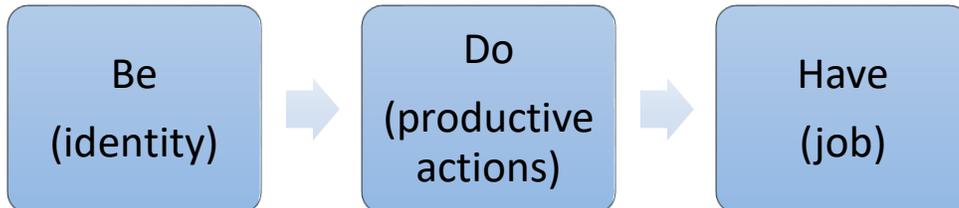
In our team, we started a reflection about the concept of productivity, its meaning in our society and the consequences in the self-perception for those who lose their job. In the Western world we are used to perceive ourselves as productive mainly in connection with the professional role we cover in the society. Our job

is considered the primary vehicle to our function in the community, the only way to prove our success and value and to increase our potential. Taking inspiration from a study by Lucia Giovannini, an Italian psychologist who belongs to the American Psychological Association, we can identify a cognitive paradigm HAVE – DO – BE which serves as a base for our perception of the relationship between our job and our identity (picture 3):



*Picture 3*

This picture can be read as follows: “If I have a job, then I can do productive actions (my role in the society) and so I will be (I will build my identity as a professional)”. If people assume this paradigm, when they lose their job the consequences can be destructive: following the paradigm, “If I lose my job, I don’t do anything productive and so my identity will crash”. What this study suggests is to reverse the paradigm, as follows (picture 4):



*Picture 4*

It can be read like “If I am (if I build a strong and confident identity), then I can do productive actions (such as looking for a job in an effective way) and so I will have a job (I will reach my goal)”.

### **NEW CLIENTS’ IDENTITY**

Moving from this point, identity stands out as the focal point of our activity with unemployed people. We should work to promote the construction of a powerful identity and to increase people’s self-esteem to empower their ability to be more effective in every field of their life, job seeking at first.

Since the concept of identity is so central in the reasoning, our team tried to systematize the characterizing elements that make the “new” clients we work for extremely peculiar. With a figurative expression, we may define them “Two-sided people”, as the features that they present are quite in contradiction to each other. On the one hand, these people would apparently have all the cards in place to re-enter easily and happily in the workplace. In fact, they are:

- Natives
- Very much integrated into the surrounding area (and we know that nowadays 80% of the positions are found through a personal contact)
- With a long work history
- Very much technically skilled
- With no disciplinary actions ever but very good references from the past employers
- On the other hand, other elements that they bring to us regarding their situation is like:
  - A story of long-term unemployment: 2-5 years
  - They delivered applications everywhere
  - They didn’t obtain any result (in many cases, even an invitation for an interview).

Once again, we are not talking about disadvantaged people or people with disabilities (compared to which the difficulties of a company about hiring them might be more understandable), but about “simple” unemployed, who have worked for years often for the same company and were fired just because the company closed off. So what is the point of this apparent contradiction? What is the missing skill that could help these people to have a more satisfactory outcome?

## **OUR HYPOTHESIS: EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE**

We believe that Emotional Intelligence may be the missing skill that could contribute effectively to the success of job search for these people. First of all, it is essential to recall the most popular definitions of Emotional Intelligence: “The ability to recognize, understand and manage my own emotions and the ability to recognize, understand and influence other people’s emotions” (Goleman 1996) and “the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth” (Salovey and Mayer, 1997).

More in practical terms, we can define Emotional Intelligence as the awareness that our emotions drive our behaviour and impact people in a positive or in a negative way. Moreover, this skill becomes crucial when under pressure, therefore specifically in job search. When looking for a job, it is very easy to run

out of control, to lose temper or feel frustrated, especially if the unemployment situation is prolonged for some time.

Following Goleman, the key point in the definition of Emotional Intelligence is the concept of awareness. This is the starting point for the encounter with one's self. In particular, Emotional Self Awareness is competence number one among the five components of Emotional Intelligence (the others: Self-regulation, Internal Motivation, Empathy and social skills). Basically, Emotional Awareness may be summarized as being aware of:

- Internal states (How do I feel?)
- Preferences (What do I like/dislike?)
- Resources (What can I do?)
- Intuitions (What do I want?)

As career counsellors, it is impossible not to notice how all these elements are very much connected with the rules of job seeking. Being aware of feelings, preferences, resources and having good intuitions can definitely enhance effectiveness in job seeking. In particular, a more exhaustive treatment of the benefits of Emotional Awareness in this specific field will be discussed in the next paragraph.

## **BENEFITS OF EMOTIONAL AWARENESS IN JOB SEEKING**

The benefits of empowering Emotional Intelligence and in particular Emotional Awareness in job seekers can be summarized in three points. As follows, Emotional Awareness may help to:

- clarify values and purposes: this means to empower motivation and, as a consequence, to carry on a more focused research, avoiding the frequent risk of running into an unattractive job only for the money. Of course the salary is crucial, but as career counsellors we should deliver the message that it is not the only priority in choosing an offer: the phenomenon of people who leave a job they apparently struggled to find is getting more and more common;
- clarify how people feel and why: a key point of Emotional Awareness is being able to name emotions in order to distinguish them one from the other; it is essential in job seeking to stay "centred" and focused on the self and to keep the performance high, without being upset by unpleasant emotions after a bad interview or a negative answer for a hiring, for example;
- consciously reflect on the overall experience as unemployed workers: take time to reflect and to retrace past experiences with a supervisor means to give one's self the chance to actively develop new strategies to increase effectiveness in job seeking in an evolutionary perspective, as evolution not only means "change", but "growth".

## **HOW TO EMPOWER EMOTIONAL AWARENESS: AN EXAMPLE**

In DSP we are experimenting some techniques to treat the Emotional subject with our clients. An example of an activity that we are testing moves from a storytelling task (that is itself a very useful skill in job seeking, as the capability of telling our work history is highly involved) asking the client to tell an episode when his/her job seeking had a disappointing result (such as a negative answer to an application). Then we follow Goleman's definition of Emotional Intelligence and we ask the client to:

- recognize the emotions experienced before, during and after the situation
- understand the stimulus that generated those emotions
- learn to manage emotions realizing that there are no positive or negative emotions but only emotions which are useful or useless in a certain situation (of course this point is not completed in one session, but requires a longer path made of "virtual meetings" with one emotion at a time and more specific activities to increase awareness).

## **RESULTS**

In the first experimentations, we can definitely confirm that the application of this approach has enabled us to look at a significant increase in awareness in job seeking-related activities for those we tested these tools on. Even if we still don't have enough data to draw definitive conclusions, it is undeniable that in these people the job search approach has completely changed.

For example, these people have shown greater stress resistance as well as increased resilience and problem solving skills; today they are more able to face a stress interview, better competent to work on the unemployment-related experience and aware of the weaknesses they need to reinforce; their search has today a clearer, more targeted objective and more in line with talents but also with the wishes of each. All this helps them to make more effective choices, sometimes preferring the seemingly uncomfortable road (like to enrol in a new training course at 50) compared to the road that so far seemed to be the simplest but the least successful.

We hope to be able to quickly collect significant data showing the results so far only briefly exposed, in the knowledge that this subject is worth further explorations.

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