Exploration on the Optimization of College Students' Employment Guidance from the Perspective of Counselor Capacity Building

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Abstract: As frontline practitioners of college students' employment guidance, counselors' capability levels directly affect the quality of employment education. Currently, counselors face problems such as insufficient professional competence, monotonous guidance methods, and inadequate resource integration in employment guidance, making it difficult to meet students' diverse needs. From the perspective of counselors' capability development, this paper analyzes their role positioning and capability requirements in employment guidance, examines existing capability shortcomings and constraining factors in practical work, and proposes optimization paths including constructing a systematic training system, innovating work methods and carriers, and improving guarantee mechanisms, aiming to enhance the professionalism and effectiveness of counselors' employment guidance and promote high-quality development of college employment work.
***Keywords*:** counselors; capability development; employment guidance; work optimization; collaborative education

1. Introduction

Employment is the foundation of people's livelihood, and college graduates' employment concerns thousands of families and social stability. Counselors continue to know the students' ideas and emotions over time, and thus can be a more effective force for conducting employment guidance. However, many counsellors do not have the time for employment guidance due to a large number of administrative tasks, lack of professional training and limited support systems. The guidance content is still at the level of policy communication and information dissemination; it does not offer detailed help for students' career confusion. With the increasing complexity of employment conditions and more individualised needs of students, the career counselling abilities, market analysis skills and resource integration capacities of counselors have been growing steadily. Therefore, studying the path for improving the effectiveness of counsellors' employment guidance work based on their capabilities should be done both in light of practical requirements and as a necessary step to improve the quality of college employment services. Given the actual circumstances of counselor team construction, this paper will systematically study the ability factors and improvement paths of employment guidance work to provide a reference for colleges in strengthening their employment education system.

2. Roles and Capability Requirements of Counselors in College Students' Employment Guidance

2.1 Multiple Role Positioning of Counselors in Employment Guidance Work

The four functions of counsellors in employment guidance are career planning, dissemination of employment information, psychological support and school-enterprise coordination. As career guides, counselors help students explore themselves, learn about various jobs, set goals, and plan how to study for a certain job. As information carriers, counselors are at the forefront of school employment work and need to transmit recruitment information and policy updates to students, as well as collect students' employment intentions and difficulties for the school. As psychological support staff, counsellors need to be aware of any anxiety or confusion students are experiencing during the job search period promptly and help them regulate their emotions to boost self-confidence. As school-enterprise cooperation has developed, counselors have extended students' career guidance to include visits to companies, invitations from employers to schools, recommendations for internships and jobs, etc. These roles cover all aspects of students' development, so counselors need to have a general understanding of career education and pay attention to the details of individual guidance, as well as practical skills in resource integration.

2.2 Practical Requirements for Counselors' Capabilities in Employment Guidance Work

The four kinds of qualities a counsellor should have are: First is career development theoretical literacy and guidance

skills; one needs to learn career development theories, career choice models and job-seeking methods, be able to use assessment tools, conduct counselling interviews and design guidance programs. Second is employment market analysis and information integration ability; pay attention to industry trends, enterprise needs and salary changes, and be able to screen and extract good content from large amounts of data. Third, there is individualised diagnosis and counselling for students; as different students have various personalities, abilities, backgrounds and expectations, counsellors need to observe and talk to them to develop different plans for different types of students[1]. Fourth is resource integration and collaborative education ability; it needs to coordinate various departments in the school, establish communication links with external enterprises, mobilise alumni and parents, integrate employment education into ideological and political education, vocational education and practical education at all times, and form educational synergy. The above features are closely related and form the foundation for the work of employment counsellors.

3. Current Status and Capability Shortcomings Analysis of Counselors' Employment Guidance Work

3.1 Practical Dilemmas of Counselors' Employment Guidance Work

Counselors currently face three dilemmas in employment guidance. First is work content generalization: counselors daily manage students, conduct ideological work, coordinate affairs, and maintain safety and stability; employment guidance is just one of many tasks, leaving no time for in-depth research and resulting in low professionalization. Second is mismatch between time investment and effectiveness: although counselors invest considerable energy during graduation season distributing information, compiling statistics, and mobilizing students, due to weak early-stage career planning education and insufficient guidance specificity, students still lack clear goals and adequate preparation when job hunting, leaving counselors overwhelmed with limited results. Third is traditional and monotonous guidance methods: many counselors simply hold meetings, send group messages, and give collective lectures, lacking diversified forms such as one-on-one counseling, group discussions, and practical activities, failing to meet students' personalized needs. Additionally, some counselors' understanding of employment guidance remains at the level of "helping students find jobs," neglecting deeper content such as career value cultivation, capability enhancement, and adaptation preparation, causing employment guidance to disconnect from education[2].

3.2 Main Shortcomings in Counselors' Employment Guidance Capabilities

The dilemmas reveal four capability shortcomings. First is lack of professional career counseling knowledge: most counselors have not received systematic training, have limited understanding of career theories, counseling techniques, and assessment tools, relying on experience and common sense, unable to address students' complex career confusion[3]. Second is insufficient grasp of employment market dynamics: some counselors are unfamiliar with industries corresponding to students' majors, don't understand enterprises' real employment standards and recruitment processes, and provide information and suggestions disconnected from market reality, making students feel the guidance is "not grounded." Third is inflexible personalized guidance methods: facing different students, counselors habitually use uniform standards and approaches, lacking awareness and capability for classified guidance and teaching according to aptitude. Fourth is limited digital tool application proficiency: online assessments, job-seeking platforms, remote interviews, and data analysis have become the new normal in employment work, but many counselors are unfamiliar with these tools and cannot effectively use technical means to improve efficiency. These shortcomings relate to counselors' professional backgrounds, inadequate training, and insufficient practical opportunities.

3.3 Constraining Factors Affecting Improvement of Counselors' Employment Guidance Capabilities

Behind the capability shortcomings lie four deep-level constraining factors. First is incomplete training system: current employment guidance training for counselors is relatively scattered, lacking ladder-style design from entry to maturity; training content emphasizes policy interpretation and work procedures, lacking systematic training in professional theories and practical skills, leaving counselors unclear about how to progressively improve capabilities. Second is evaluation emphasizing quantity over quality: assessment of counselors' employment work mainly examines employment rates and contract signing rates, paying insufficient attention to guidance processes, guidance quality, and student satisfaction; this orientation causes counselors to focus energy on urging contract signing and reporting data, neglecting long-term student guidance. Third is absent career development incentive mechanism: no matter how much counselors invest in employment guidance, they often receive no recognition in professional title evaluation, position promotion, or honor selection, lacking

specific incentives for employment guidance capabilities and achievements, making it difficult to stimulate internal motivation for capability improvement[4]. Fourth is unhealthy collaborative education mechanism: employment guidance requires participation from employment departments, colleges, professional teachers, and enterprises, but in practice, unclear responsibilities, poor communication, and weak cooperation among entities are common, leaving counselors working alone without effective support.

4. Optimization Paths for Counselors' Employment Guidance Work Based on Capability Development

4.1 Constructing a Systematic Training System for Counselors' Employment Guidance Capabilities

A System atic Training Plan for Enhancing Counsellors' Employment Guidance Abilities. First, set up different levels and categories of professional training. Design progressive training courses for all stages of development, such as for new counselors, backbone counselors and senior counselors: Newcomers should learn the basic theories and working methods; backbone members need to improve their counseling skills and case analysis; senior counselors should focus on thematic research and experience refinement. At the same time, organise specialised training based on the different features of the disciplines, such as liberal arts, science and technology, engineering and medicine[5]. Establish Standards and Certification Systems for the Development of Employment Guidance Ability. According to the national standards for career guidance counselors, establish a framework for the employment guidance capability of counselors in college life and specify the necessary knowledge, skills and quality at all levels. Establish a capability certification system, train the counselors to meet the necessary standards, and based on their actual work, issue capability certificates and development paths. Build a good training and exchange-learning platform for the development of talent. Organise counsellors for enterprise secondments, take part in recruitment activities and market research, etc., to improve people's sense of employment opportunities. Organise regular employment guidance case seminars, experience-sharing meetings, skill competitions and other activities to improve the communication and learning of counsellors[6]. Set up employment guidance workshops, master teacher studios, etc., and create learning communities through mentorship and joint problem-solving. Build School-Enterprise Cooperative Training Models and Expand Training Channels. Invite human resources specialists and career counsellors from the company to be the counsellor mentors for the training and practical guidance sessions. Jointly set up employment practice bases with enterprises and provide counsellors with industry knowledge and resource links. Build bidirectional communication channels for counselors and enterprise staff so that counselors can gain experience in enterprises and enterprise experts can work part-time at schools, thus achieving mutual benefits. Together, the above measures will strengthen the professional quality of counselors' employment guidance.

4.2 Innovating Methods and Carriers for Counselors' Employment Guidance Work

Strengthen the Foundation of New Practices with Training. First, advance the development of "full-process + personalised" guidance models by improving employment guidance at the enrollment stage, career enlightenment in freshman year, career exploration in sophomore year, skill training in junior year, and precision services in senior year; thus, build a guidance chain for all these stages. At the same time, build career development archives for all students to record their personalities, strengths and weaknesses, development paths, job-seeking goals, etc., and provide customised "one-person, one-strategy" guidance[7]. Second, improve the accuracy of services with digital technology. Collect a large amount of data on what students hope for in a job, their present employment circumstances, and so on; regularly analyse this data and then tailor services for different students according to their individual needs. Online test instruments can help students gain a better understanding of themselves, an online counselling platform offers convenient 24/7 support, and intelligent information-push systems can recommend suitable jobs for students based on their majors and interests. Third, build a system of peer mutual assistance and group counselling: cultivate the employment backbone of students to promote peer education, organise job-seeking group activities so that students with similar goals can learn together and support each other, and hold collective activities such as mock recruitment and career experiences to improve abilities through practice. Fourth, optimize the model of employment guidance in light of the "three-complete education", integrate employment education with ideological and political education to help students establish correct career views, have professional teachers participate in employment guidance to make full use of their strengths in industrial resources and professional guidance, and mobilize social forces, such as parents and alumni, to provide support and build an education system based on full participation, full-process coverage and all-round support.

4.3 Improving Guarantee Mechanisms for Counselors' Employment Guidance Work

Implementation of optimization paths requires supporting guarantees. First is optimizing assessment and evaluation indicator systems: change the approach of solely examining employment rates, establishing multi-dimensional evaluations including guidance process investment, method innovation, student capability improvement, employer evaluation, and graduate tracking feedback, examining both results and processes, both quantity and quality, using scientific evaluation to incentivize counselors to improve professional levels. Second is establishing capability improvement incentives and career development channels: make employment guidance capability an important condition for professional title evaluation and position promotion, establish special awards; explore professionalization and specialization development paths, allowing particularly outstanding counselors to transfer to full-time employment guidance teachers or career counselors, opening career development channels[8]. Third, provide sufficient time, funds and guarantee resources: Determine how much work needs to be done to give reasonable time for employment guidance; set up special funds to support training, research and service procurement; build workrooms equipped with assessment software, counselling facilities and reference books to create an ideal working environment. Fourth is to improve the linkages of multi-departmental collaboration: clarify the division of responsibilities and collaborative relationships among the employment department, colleges and counselors, establish communication channels and information-sharing platforms, strengthen connections with enterprises, industry associations and government departments, improve the linkage of recruitment-cultivation-employment, and form a closed-loop system based on employment feedback.

5. Conclusion

Counselors are the key force in college students' employment guidance work, and their capability levels directly relate to employment education quality. From the perspective of capability development, this paper systematically analyzes counselors' role positioning, capability requirements, practical shortcomings, and constraining factors in employment guidance, proposing optimization paths including constructing training systems, innovating work methods, and improving guarantee mechanisms. Practice shows that only by incorporating counselor employment guidance capability construction into overall team construction planning and establishing systematic training mechanisms and scientific evaluation systems can the professional level of employment guidance be truly improved. Meanwhile, employment guidance is not counselors' sole task but requires full participation, full-process implementation, and all-round support to form a collaborative education pattern. Future research can further focus on differentiated training strategies for employment guidance capabilities of counselors at different types of colleges, as well as innovative practices of employment guidance models in the digital context, providing more theoretical support and practical reference for high-quality development of college employment work.

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