

'What triggered your present wish not to teach?' 'How will this decision impact on your life now?' 'How will this decision impact on your life in the future?' 'Have you discussed this with your friends, family or a counsellor?' 'What sort of feedback are they giving you?'

The student may be concerned about a disastrous teaching practice or some negative feedback from a supervising teacher.

### *Diagnosis*

If their feeling of a lack of commitment or motivation concerns them ask whether it is occurring in any other part of their life. Unless you feel comfortable at this stage you may wish to refer the student to professional counsellors or careers staff.

Naming an issue makes it much easier to deal with. The accuracy of the naming process will determine the quality of the advice given. Without an appropriate diagnosis of the underlying issue it is important to refrain from becoming involved in problem resolution.

However, sometimes the presenting issue is the issue. For example a student may say they don't feel competent enough to teach. Ask yourself and the student about the skills and experiences they need before they would feel ready to teach; how can these be located and accessed.

### *Assertiveness*

If a student is not suited to teaching consider how many more skills they would require before they approach industry, for example marketing and assertiveness. It is not appropriate to set students up with expectations that they are better suited to another career unless they are advised that they need to reframe their skills and learn different job seeking strategies.

The present employment market indicates that many students will have to sell their skills either to schools as an emergency teacher, to private schools and to other employers hence preparation for a career should be an integral part of the curriculum. All students need an ability to clearly articulate personal strengths as well as the skills the course refined and developed. □

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# SIX CAREER ATTITUDES

Students have different approaches to their own career development which indicates the need for a long term and varied provision of career counselling services by institutions.

Research into career development by Meredith Fuller has identified six major attitudes towards career development by teacher education students.

- **Self contained** students with a clearly defined action plan and definite career path - who search actively for appropriate information.

- **Functional** As above but require coaching to develop and refine their career goals.

- **Apologetic** Students with a short term goal to complete the course - students have difficulty asking for their need to be met and may require assertiveness coaching for interpersonal interactions which relate to their career plans - even with supervising teachers and lecturers. They have difficulty naming their strengths.

- **Superior** Students with a clear intention of performing well and completing the course without extensions. Have clear short term goals but may not have longer term goals or a solid comprehensive career identity. They believe this will happen during initial employment. They have less mastery over the environment than they think and need help in constructing a more realistic view of themselves and the environment.

- **Dependent** Students have not thought past course completion. May attend career information workshops but have difficulty in relating information to their particular situation. May request excessive assistance from staff.

- **Avoider** These students do not have career plans or a high expectation of course completion. They delay career search. Do not attend programs, workshops, seminars. May resist or delay seeking assistance, particularly for an imminent crucial decision.

Indications seem to suggest that a multi-faceted approach to career development would be beneficial in catering for all types.

- Some students will benefit best from the information and counselling provided by specialist agencies in a generalist way.
- Others will benefit best when this is integrated with practicum experiences throughout the course.
- Some when it is integrated through seminars shared with academic and counselling staff as part of the course.
- Some when requisite value, attitudes and skills have become integrated into normal curriculum.
- Some from questions raised by course advisors, supervisors and lecturers at crucial parts of the course. □