

Report LUS Breakfastclub “Career perspectives and Guidance”



Introduction Nieke Campagne and Judith Leetz

This Breakfastclub about Career perspectives and Guidance started with two experts in that field; Nieke Campagne (Project Manager Employability & Skills) and Judith Leetz (Project Leader Career Services 2.0). The National Student Survey (NSE) made the university aware of the lack of connection between the students and the job market. Therefore, a project Employability and skills was introduced. This project should focus on the gap between students and the job market and how to decrease this gap and prepare students for the job market. “The education should focus more on the world outside studying”. Nieke told us more about what the Career Services includes. It means connection with the job market and the importance of networking, profiling and applying. Career Services do not only contain activities for after your study, but also workshops and events to improve our skills we could improve during our study to make the connection with the job market easier. For example organizing business cases in PLNT. Judith Leetz continued the introduction with emphasizing how important it is to improve our skills, needed for the job market and that the Leiden Career Services can help us students with to achieve that.

Already a lot has been done the last couple of years to improve the Career Services at Leiden University. By discussing the following topics, we can further improve it.

1. How can Leiden University improve the current Career Services and their activities?
2. How do we build a community together with students in which we can discuss the added value of 'working on your future' (What's in it for me?). This community gets its own name and various activities are organized from this community.
3. If we want to organize a big event in the future within the context of career preparation

How can Leiden University improve the current Career Services and their activities?

In order to provide a clear information flow about all the facilities and possibilities the Career Services already offer should easily be found on the website of Leiden University and the Leiden University app. It could also be a good idea to incorporate the events and workshops of the faculty career services in the newsletters of the study-associations. In this way you avoid an overload of e-mails but students still get the information. Another suggestion about making the students more aware of the career service possibilities is to include a career column in the mare/mareonline since a lot of students are reading the mare.

Students cannot start early enough to already think about their future and futures jobs. Therefore is it important to already get 2nd and 3rd year students in touch with the career services. Incorporate an obligatory hour in their schedules where the career officer of that faculty introduces him or herself and shows all the possibilities.

Contact between the career officer and the study-association of that faculty is very important. Study-associations often organize career events and they can easily get to their students. A strong collaboration between the career officer and study association could improve each other. The career officer can help with finding the right people to give talks and workshops.

Another idea is to have a kind of student-ambassador of the career service per faculty. Preferably this is student that already has a big network within his or her faculty. This student can be the first contact for students and thereby minimize the step for students to contact the career service.

In an ideal world the career service is incorporated in obligatory courses during the bachelor and master but it is very important to give the students options. For example if a student has already a very nice CV, give that student the opportunity to learn something about LinkedIn and visa versa.

Try to work towards an overall agenda per faculty with all the career events and workshops. Not only of the study-associations but also from the career service and the University. In this way, students get a clear overview of all the options. If there are also interesting workshops of other faculties that might be useful for other students; do not limit the spots for only the students of that faculty.

Students also pointed out that they would like some preparation before they go to a career event. What can you expect from that event and how do you get the most out of your visit. How do you network?

Try to already let the (student)mentors mention the opportunities of the career service in the first year. First students do not necessarily have to start attending workshops and events immediately but at least they know about the career service and where to find them.

Organize more guest-lectures of alumni at the different faculties. Preferably alumni with jobs that are not necessarily logic after graduating in a specific field. These guest-lectures can be given during lunch-breaks or just after lectures at the end of the day.

Organize speeddate-events per faculty with students and people working in different fields.

Make career service visible by using for example student ambassadors.

How do we build a community together with students in which we can discuss the added value of 'working on your future' (What's in it for me?). This community gets its own name and various activities are organized from this community.

The students agreed on the fact that it is better to join existing communities, such as study associations and the mentoraat, rather than starting another new community.

From the study association peer-to-peer contact is more easily initiated, working from the active core rather than trying to incorporate non-active students. Thereby, this should be aimed

centralized from the faculty, whereby the separate study associations work together.

Another suggestion was to set up a student committee to organize a big career event (see question three) which can also serve as a new “community” for the career orientation at the same time, organizing other events in the run to the big event.

Concerning the matching communication message all information should be found in the app, at the website and at the faculties. Besides online communication, ‘recruiter’ students could be used to tell other students about all possibilities.

**Should we organize a big event in the future within the context of career preparation?
What kind of event should this be?**

Not all students agreed on whether it was a good idea to try to organize a big career event for all the students of Leiden University. According to the students organizing a big event is not a good idea because everyone has different interests and the event would be too big. However, Leiden University could organize a big interfacultair event, similar to the career event organized by the Veer Stichting (<https://www.veerstichting.nl/nl/>). This is an event where half of the people are alumni, with all different kind of backgrounds, and the other half are students. We could use this as a “best practice”. At the event we could organize speeddate sessions and provide a stage for the career services. This event should be organized by a committee of students in collaboration with the career services. This committee can serve as a new “community” for the career orientation at the same time, organizing other events in the run to the big event all in the context of career orientation.