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Leitfaden Berufliche Orientierung

Praxishandbuch zur qualitätszentrierten Ausbildungs-
und Studienorientierung an Schulen

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| Verlag BertelsmannStiftung

Abstract

This handbook “Leitfaden Berufliche Orientierung” is a practical guide for innovative schools that provides pedagogical professionals with a comprehensive action guide for implementing a school-based concept for vocational orientation and the associated activities. It aims to create a conceptual framework for career guidance that is tailored to specific needs and subject to quality management. The strategies presented in the handbook are applicable across school types and are designed to facilitate the systematic integration of vocational activities into schoolwork. In addition to a wide range of background information, the guide offers a diverse set of teaching materials that significantly reduce educators’ workloads. From parent-student “open house” nights to company tours and job application trainings, the handbook addresses a broad spectrum of ideas and practices.

Career orientation in schools introduces children and young people to a working world that is unfamiliar to many of them. Given its complexity and diversity, good career orientation must at least provide young people with an understanding of the basic expectations they will face throughout their education and working lives. At the same time, good career guidance must enable them to develop a realistic view of their own abilities and individual talents. Schools can only fulfill these points if career guidance is integrated into their overall educational framework and is subject to continual updates and qualitative development. Reliable coordination teams and an established framework for quality management are key pillars in achieving long-term success in these areas.

The handbook simplifies teachers’ work in several ways. It is not intended to replace or radically change existing professional orientation activities, but to be used wisely to rethink their systematization and effectiveness. In this regard, the measures can be assigned to four different dimensions: classroom activities, extracurricular activities, cooperation between schools and business, and cooperation between schools and other partners. Each school thus has a status profile that can be used to review individual progress and identifying areas in need of improvement.

During its development, the handbook was tested, evaluated and improved in various types of schools in the German federal states of Baden-Württemberg and North Rhine-Westphalia. It is therefore field-tested and tailored to the needs of schools. It offers users creative freedom in developing career orientation activities that are in line with the profile of the respective school. Working with the manual does not require specific background knowledge or expertise. The handbook includes a website with a vari-

ety of materials such as checklists and worksheets designed to support teachers both conceptually and in the classroom as well as further reading and useful links. All documents are provided in Microsoft Word-format so that they can be easily adapted for individual use. Activities covered range from conducting an initial status analysis to preparing individualized counseling interviews to developing long-term quality standards. The handbook is a practical tool for schools aiming to help students answer three key questions as they prepare for a career or vocation: Who am I? What can I do? Where do I want to go?