



Career writing

Writing Exercises for Exploring and Discovering Career Identities

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CDAА pre-conference workshop, 2018

1. Introductions
2. Theory
3. Identifying points of view
4. Generating the words
5. Responding and editing
6. Providing feedback

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Career Writing

“...a narrative approach to qualitative career assessment whereby client (or student) groups use creative, reflective, and expressive forms of writing to foster an internal dialogue about career.”

Lengelle, R., & Meijers, F. (2015)

Helps clients to rewrite their stories and move through difficult boundary experiences.

Soundart

experience

"FIRST STORY"

- uncertainty
- dissatisfaction
- fear
- helplessness
- insecurity

BOUNDARY

EXPERIENCE

~~_____~~
Soc
CAREER

~~_____~~
F
WRITING

~~_____~~
ENCE

"SECOND STORY"

- proactive
- optimistic
- empowered

Career learning theory

A developmental learning sequence by which people develop career identities and make career decisions:

- Sensing: gathering information and assembling sequences into meaningful narratives.
- Sifting: making comparisons and creating and using concepts.
- Focusing: appreciating alternative points of view and developing one's own.
- Understanding: explaining the past and anticipating future consequences

(Law, 1999; Meijers & Lengelle, 2015).

Dialogical Self Theory

DST frames the self not as a single unified entity but as a “society of mind” consisting of a multiplicity of internal *I*-positions.

(Hermans, 2002)

The dialogue between *I*-positions, which in times of difficulty may be expressions of *self-crisis* or *self-criticism*, is the central focus of DST.

(Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010).

Dialogical Self Theory

Supportive and helpful *I*-positions and dialogues:

meta-positions

third-positions

promoter positions

These *I*-positions act as directors, leaders, scriptwriters, and mediators in the “democratic organization of the self” (Meijers & Hermans, 2017, p. 12).

Career Writing

The goal of career writing is to assist the client to:

- confront unhelpful *I*-positions in their first story
- give voice to meta- and promoter positions,
- re-author more productive *second stories*.

(Healy & McIlveen, 2017; Lengelle & Meijers, 2014)

1. Identifying /-positions

Cool
times!

Happy
childhood

Graduate
program

married
Kids

consulting



Total
crap

— Personal life
— Work life

Motivator

Supporter

Achievement

Noice

Early
success

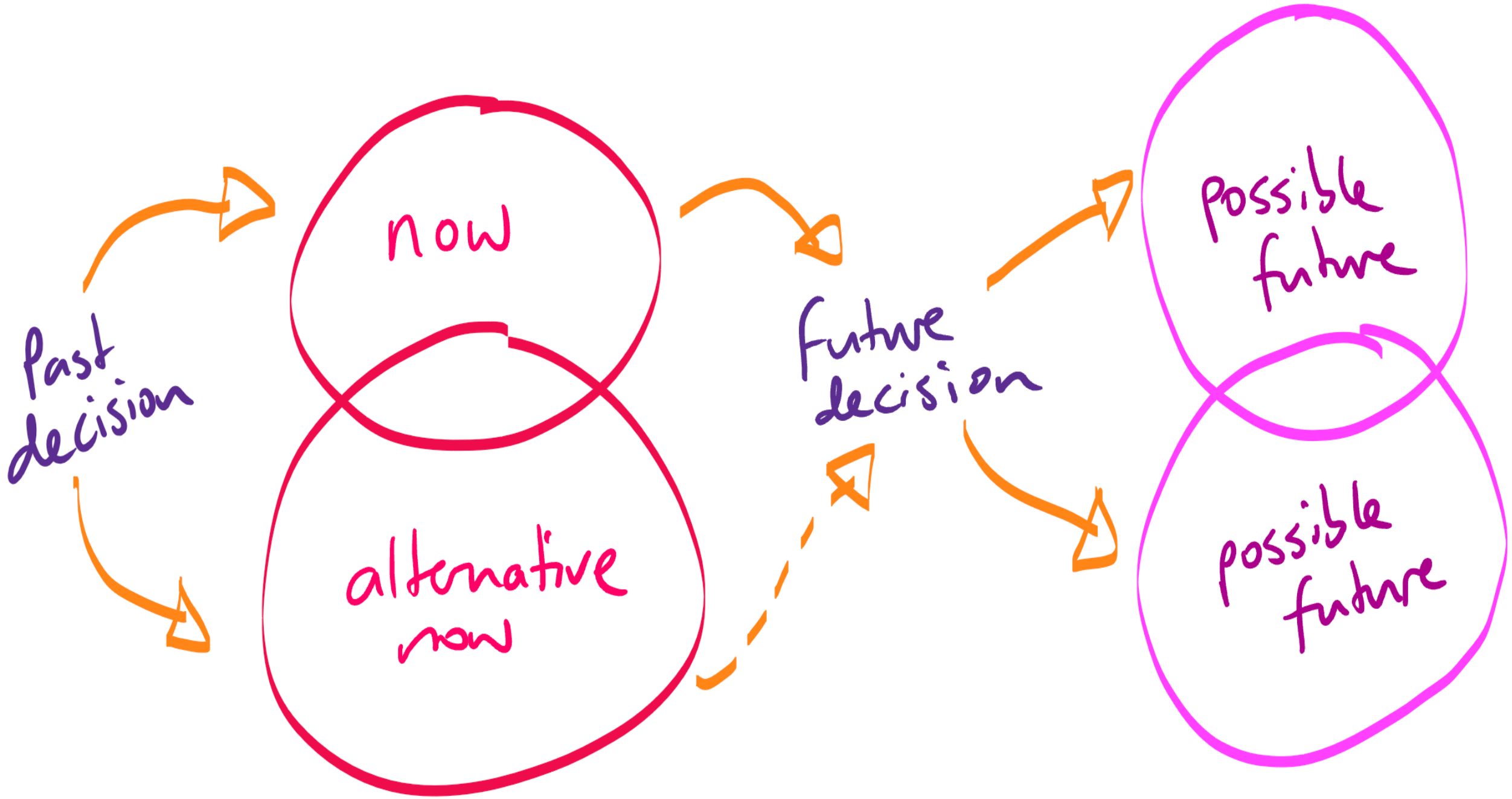
Master

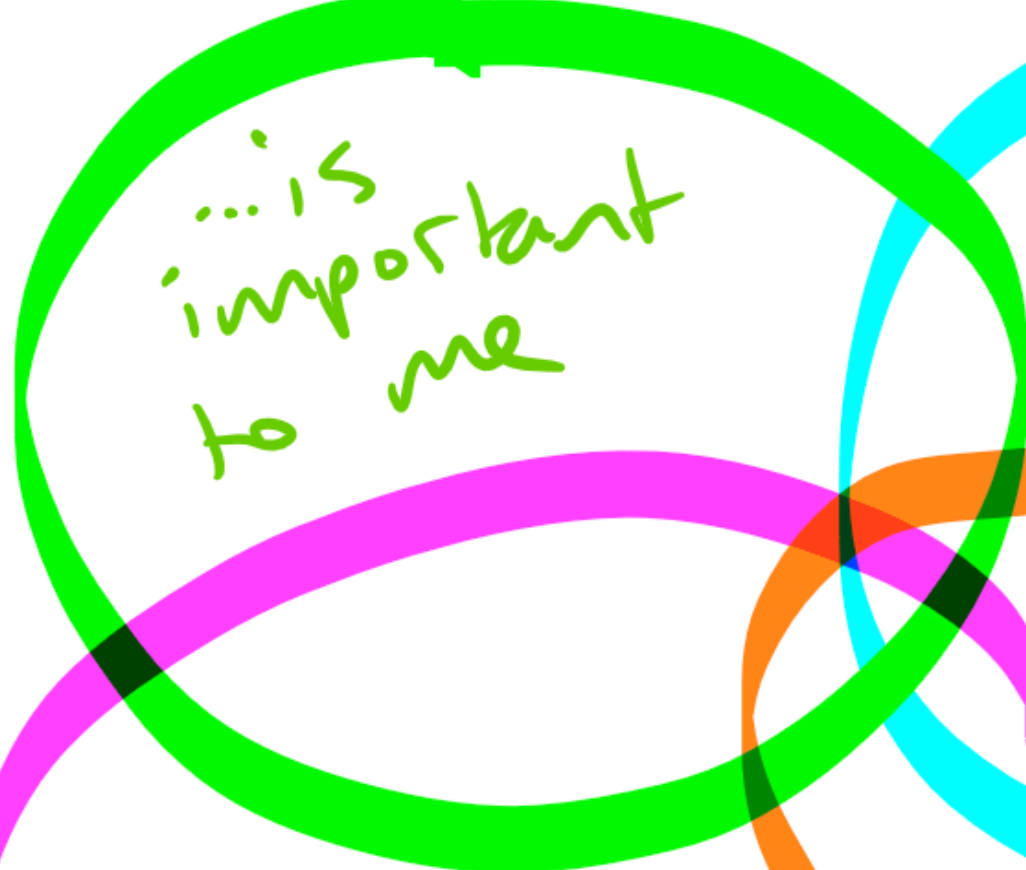
Early
failure

Failure

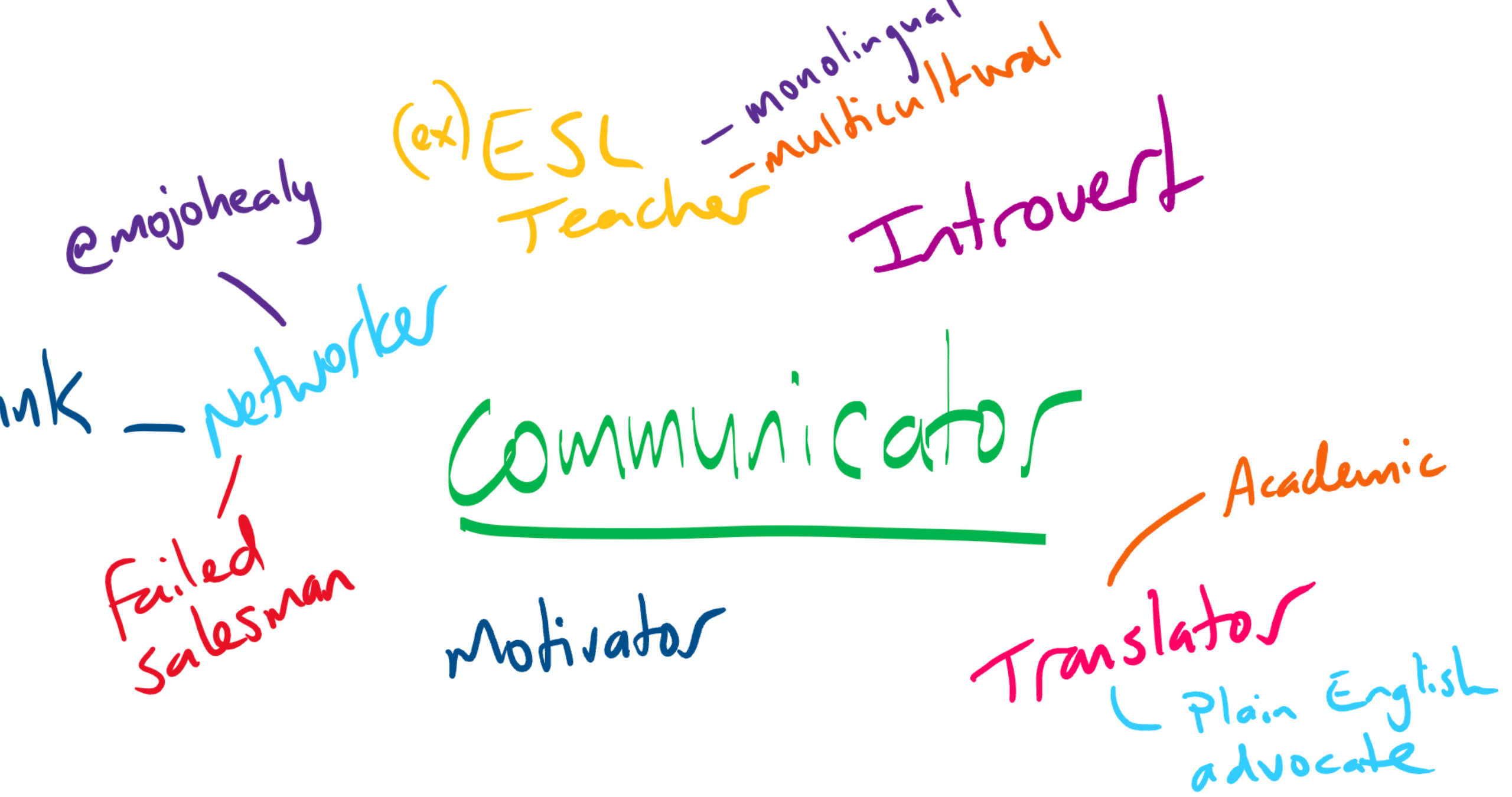
Naysayer











Compatibility matrix of career influences, from My Career Chapter

Work your way across the matrix and compare each influence with one another. Are they incompatible or are they compatible? You rate any two influences with respect to their relative compatibility using a five point scale ranging from:

Very much incompatible = -2

Mostly incompatible = -1

Neither compatible nor incompatible = 0

Mostly compatible = +1

Very much compatible = +2

(McIlveen, 2006)

| | Workplace | Peers | Family | Community & Social Life | Media | Location | Industry Trends | Finances | Job Market |
|----------------------|-----------|-------|--------|-------------------------|-------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------|
| My Career | | | | | | | | | |
| Interests | | | | | | | | | |
| Skills & Abilities | | | | | | | | | |
| Values | | | | | | | | | |
| Knowledge | | | | | | | | | |
| Age | | | | | | | | | |
| Gender | | | | | | | | | |
| Health | | | | | | | | | |
| Sexuality | | | | | | | | | |
| Culture | | | | | | | | | |
| Morals | | | | | | | | | |
| Education | | | | | | | | | |
| Dreams & Aspirations | | | | | | | | | |
| Emotional State | | | | | | | | | |
| Work | | | | | | | | | |

2. Getting the words flowing

Assessments and inventories

1: Judgment

Thinking things through and examining them from all sides; not jumping to conclusions; being able to change one's mind in light of evidence; weighing all evidence fairly.

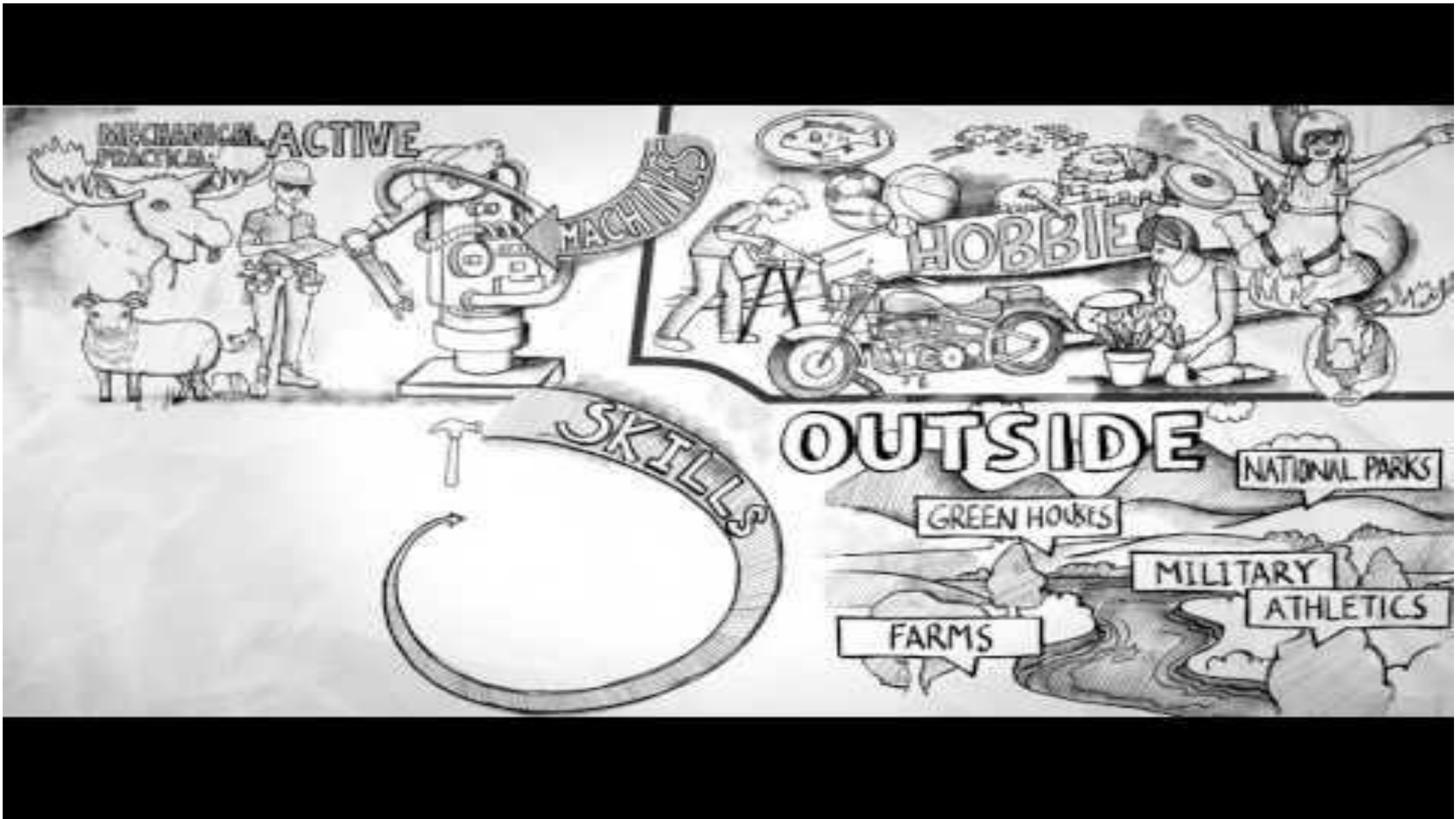
2: Love of learning

Mastering new skills, topics, and bodies of knowledge, whether on one's own or formally; related to the strength of curiosity but goes beyond it to describe the tendency to add systematically to what one knows.

3: Love

Valuing close relations with others, in particular those in which sharing & caring are reciprocated; being close to people.

VIA character strengths
www.viacharacter.org



<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL0raLAqr4q1cloEnVW8bHcpugWSp47Pvu>

Word cards

| | | |
|-----------------|------------------|---------------------|
| NOUN: <hr/> | VERB: <hr/> | ADJECTIVE: <hr/> |
| PLACE: <hr/> | PERSON: <hr/> | PURPOSE: <hr/> |
| HAPPY: <hr/> | SAD: <hr/> | SCARED: <hr/> |

Sentence stems

Location

I came from

My home is

The ideal location for my work would be

I mostly feel very positive / positive / indifferent / negative / very negative in relation to my location because

Location has very positive / positive / neutral / negative / very negative impact upon my careerlife because

Individual Activity:

Finish the following sentences, thinking about the strengths you have identified in the VIA:

1. Ever since I was a child, people have told me I am ...
2. My strengths influenced my decision to study this course at La Trobe because...
3. Currently at University I am drawing on my...
4. In the future, I know that my will be important because...

My Career Chapter (McIlveen, 2006)

La Trobe University Career Ready Portfolio workshop
(2017)

Diaring

Date:

Time:

Situation:

Position _____


said:

Gifs and memes



Dialogues and storyboards

A PhD student,
an employability coordinator
a devoted husband and father
and a recreational cyclist
walk into a bar ...

| THE SIMPSONS | | PABF07 "At Long Last Leave" ACT 1 | | Page 66 | |
|---|-------|---|-------|---|-------|
| Scene | Panel | Scene | Panel | Scene | Panel |
| 1049 | 10 | 1049 | 11 | 1049 | 12 |
|  | |  | |  | |
| Action | | Action | | Action | |
| Dialogue MARGE it's me, Marge! I'm your friend! | | Dialogue | | Dialogue MOE The monster queen is comin' on to me! | |
| Notes | | Notes | | Notes FADE OUT: END OF ACT ONE | |

The three year old career counsellor

Why do you want/need/like/hate/fear ____?

But why?

But why?

But why?

But why?

Responding and editing

Write it down and read it out loud

Adopt the *I*-position of editor, read the text out loud to yourself as you were five years ago

from My Career Chapter (McIlveen 2006)

Adopt the *I*-position of decision-maker and explain your decision to your future uncertain self.

Adopt the *I*-position of future master and outline a practice regime to your novice self.

Adopt the *I*-position of coach and dictate the game plan to your team of selves.

Confront and interrogate

“The Work”

Byron Katie: thework.com/en/do-work

1. Is it true?
2. Can you absolutely know it's true?
3. How do you react when you believe the thought?
4. Who would you be without the thought?'

Turn the thought around and tell me why the new statement is equally true, or truer, than your original premise.

The response to the response is key:

- The initial text exposes an I-position to critique
- The first response provides a counter-point
- The third response allows meta-, third-, or promoter positions to emerge.

You're
dumb!

No I'm
not. You
are.

You're both
dumb, sometimes.
How can we work
together to be less
dumb?

Synthesising

Using your sentence stems as a starting point, spend the next 10 minutes crafting a paragraph describing the following:

- Who you are
- What you're doing
- Why you're doing it

La Trobe University Career Ready Portfolio workshop
(2017)

Step 6: The Conclusion

An editor never has the final say on a manuscript. The author always gets in with the last word. Here is your chance to talk (write) back to the editor. What would you—here and now—say to the younger you who listened to your story and gave editorial comments?

Strengths

My career achievements in the past

My current career strengths are

I will really shine when

I mostly feel very positive / positive / indifferent / negative / very negative in relation to my strengths because

My strengths have a very positive / positive / indifferent / negative / very negative impact upon my careerlife because

My Career Chapter (McIlveen, 2006)

Editing and rewriting

Record and transcribe.

Rewrite from memory.

Type a handwritten draft / handwrite a typed draft

Page > paragraph > sentence > phrase > one powerful word.

Erasure

(www.erasures.wavepoetry.com)

Rewrite for an audience:

Resume, cover letter, LinkedIn, Interview

Providing feedback

Formative: assessment for learning

Summative: assessment of learning

Four levels on feedback:

- Feedback on the task

- Feedback on the process

- Feedback on self regulation

- Feedback on the self

(Hattie & Timperley, 2007)

Providing feedback

Feedback as a dialogue, delivered *with* clients not only *to* them.

- Cognitive dimension

- Social-affective dimension

- Structural dimension

(Ajjawi & Boud, 2018)

Sustainable assessment and feedback promotes the skills and mindset needed for lifelong, self-managed learning and reflection

(Boud & Soler, 2016).

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