



## Enabling youth to recognise their talents – Preparing for success as well as failure

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This article reports on a novel idea helping to enable the youth, their teachers and their parents to recognise their talents and abilities so that they find future occupation in which they can use their qualifications to the fullest and be satisfied and happy in what they do. The idea concerns all layers of education supply chain from primary to secondary leading to all levels in the tertiary system. The idea is to inspire and prepare young people for failures as well as success as both are part and parcel of the same coin through which fear of failure is removed allowing young people to learn by discovery and by doing, taking risk which is managed to some degree by their teachers. What is significant is the opportunity to be a player rather than an observer in life and recognition that the struggle is just as important as victory. Identifying the young people's strength and interest is the first step in a more satisfying life and more fulfilled professional life.

Today improvements of technology have brought with it a completely new generation of young people. This new generation's needs and wants changes dramatically from the generations before it. While in the past the youth just wanted to have a job and sustain it, youths nowadays are looking for something in which they can feel that they accomplished something and that their skills are can be put to good use. However, finding a path is not easy for anyone. Without the proper tools and someone with an open mind to guide them they are bound to be lost.

However, while this new mindset arises, the youth unemployment rates in Europe are frightening. So much lives been ruined and some many souls are being lost! The issue of youth unemployment can be seen across all Europe and with the statistics provided by Eurostat it can be seen that the youth unemployment rate is 20% in Europe on average and that 4.017 million young people are currently unemployed. With this information in mind the gravity of the issue should be considered thoroughly. Unemployment on an early age can become a burden on future employability and can affect the role in the society and the psychological of the youths and can have dire consequences on economic growth and the well-being of the European nations. Even though there are occasions where some improvements can be noted this not often sufficient and impacts are dire for both the people involved and the economy. The costs to countries like the UK are substantial. C4FF estimated the cost to the UK population—in terms of both direct costs and lost output to be €10 billion in a study in 2011.

The reasons that youth cannot find jobs or cannot sustain them vary from financial crisis to social and cultural factors. However the biggest problem starts with education and the qualifications that the employers expect from their employees. A big problem is skills mismatching- this means that the skills that is imposed on the students do not match the skills required and the youths do not understand this until it is very late to know that what they are really supposed to do in the line of work they chose to learn. This leads to unemployment to rise and the few who can find a job to be dissatisfied and decide later choose to find other jobs and often relocate. This happens as a result of the gaps in the education system that does not cater for the required skills and does not properly explain



the context of a job properly. According to “Education to employment: Getting Europe’s youth into work” (2014) a research done by McKinsey statistics show that in Europe, 74 percent of education providers were confident that their graduates were prepared for work, but only 38 percent of youths and 35 percent of employers agreed. This demonstrates a huge mismatch between the perception of the education providers and the consumers of the education provisions viz., employers and the youths.

However the road to a good career starts before starting a higher education. Choosing a suitable road for oneself leads to success and job satisfaction. But youth nowadays lack the necessary resources and skills to help them find the most suitable path to success and satisfaction. A recent survey showed that except in Germany, less than 25 percent of youths said they received sufficient information on postsecondary courses and careers to guide make the right decision. This leads to different problems some young people face such as giving up on education, finding a low paid or generic job hence losing productivity and choosing to pursue a path not suitable for them. Moreover people display different reactions to these problems from being confused about their future to being discouraged by the lack of support they need; and while at first they can be fighting for every opportunity they can get, gradually they lose hope and often yield to the circumstances that forces or encourage them to leave education at the first opportunity. This leads to a rise in the unemployment rates and unqualified and unskilled workers and unsatisfactory and ineffective working conditions. A research led by Mckinsley found that, out of the eight countries they surveyed which includes United Kingdom that 61% of the employers were not confident that they could find enough applicants with the right skills to satisfy their business needs.

The employers not finding suitable employers and youths finding it difficult to acquire the right skills for the jobs on offer is a serious problem which deserves our attention. Even after finding a job a suitable job some youths are dissatisfied with job as this is not what they had in mind and hence choose to make a change than just stay doing a job that they are not really interested. According to a study made by TD Ameritade people aged from 14-23 consider job satisfaction more important than the salary. This shows that even in diminishing economic state the youths are still inclined to choosing job satisfaction to higher salaries.

The solution to these problems lies with technology. With today’s technology, it is possible to enable the young generation to experience the work they are interested in and see for themselves if they fit into it or not. Technology reduces the cost needed to educate people by creating apps, sites and even games. “Serious games” can make young people gain virtual experience at a minimum cost. For example, big companies such as Mozilla, the creator of the Firefox web browser, has created an “open badges” initiative that allows people to gain recognition for their programming skills. Technology is also making it easier to take work to people who live in work-deprived areas or who are shut out of the market by cartels. Amazon’s Mechanical Turk, an Internet marketplace, enables companies to hire workers to perform simple tasks such as identifying people in photographs. They can take part from anywhere.

There are people who are needed for low skilled jobs and there are people who are happy to do these jobs; this should be encouraged as low skilled jobs often offer opportunities to



get recognition for their work and opportunity to grow with their job into more demanding and satisfying positions. It is interesting that McDonalds uses competitive video games to teach people how to use the till and interact with customers and some people find these are the skills they aspire to develop in their lives.

The possibilities are endless and a new era has begun with the rise of new technologies viz., Computer Engineering, Cyber Sciences, Virtual Reality (VR) and so forth. While the need for computers may be apparent, the VR is a technology that enables its users to experience real feeling of a job they may have interest and strength in or may have the potential to develop the necessary skills to do well later in their career or life. It can make the user feel as if they are standing at the edge of a cliff or riding a roller coaster and the serious games that are mentioned above can be upgraded to a whole new level.

The proposed idea intends to explore the advantages of the VR both as a tool to identify interest and strength of young people from primary age to tertiary age, and a tool to develop skills particularly those currently in short supply. The age of VR has just started. VR is gaining popularity and according to Statistical data available the total number of active virtual reality users is forecast to reach 171 million by 2018. The VR market is set to grow at a very fast rate in the following years, with [revenues from virtual reality software](#) alone forecast to reach an over three thousand percent increase in four years.

What is significant is that the best part is that VR does not need to be expensive. In 2014 Google launched a DIY VR headset made from cardboard, handset fit over Android phone screens and worked with any software that is made with Cardboard SDK and it cost only 4.08 US dollars. This technology is in its infancy but is growing exponentially; by March 2017, some 10 million Cardboard viewers had been shipped and over 160 million Cardboard app downloads had been made.

Another good example for VR technologies is Oculus Rift head set. This started as just a kick-starter and reached its \$250,000 funding goal on Kickstarter within 24 hours, going on to raise over \$2.4 million by the end of its campaign and only sold (via Kickstarter) headsets as developer kits, but still shifted 100,000.

This shows that even though the apps and the headsets are still in the upgrading era and are still relatively now well known, people are willing to buy them even though it can mean they might lose money. According to a research carried out by Nifty Reads in a survey 92% of respondents mentioned said that they are aware of the term "Virtual Reality." Additionally, only 4% of respondents between the ages of 14 and 19 said they have no interest in VR giving an indication that the youth the VR technologies future is limitless as it is the new hot topic and is an interesting aspect for everyone.

The proposed idea has the potential to become an interesting set project which is expected to help to create the opportunity to give the youth the necessary skills and knowledge for both themselves and the job they are supposed to do. By using Holland's Rasec criteria our vision will give the young generation a chance to understand what areas they are inclined to succeed by determining if they are Doers (Realistic), Thinkers (Investigative), Creators (Artistic), Helpers (Social), Persuaders (Enterprising) or Organizers (Conventional). With well



thought games and quests the proposed app will let the users understand themselves better and choose a path according to these values.

Through computers and VR technologies the intention is to enable to capture the young generation attention for it is better to play a game than to take a test and will be able to reach a wider population of youth. By using gamification techniques Gen-Z will be able to learn their inclination towards jobs and hunt for occupations while playing a game. To achieve this the focus is also on the negative aspects of the new generation, which is getting bored, and the short attention span. So without losing their attention or boring them, the proposed solutions are expected to provide them with information and needed skills for their life and future occupations. With solutions such as VR technology the likely users will be able to experience everything in the quests they are given and will make better decisions for they will be living the quest for themselves.

Through computer and VR technologies any place on our planet and beyond can be reached including not so fortunate areas of the world, all is needed is a phone and a VR goggle, even a cardboard goggle will suffice.