



Leadership Academy

Action Learning Project

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The Forced Transfer Student: Implications for Career Professionals

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Introduction

This Leadership Academy project aims to shed light on the social, academic, and career-related challenges students may face during a ***forced transfer*** event.

Defining Transfer

The transfer process is “the classic forward transfer of community college students to the university” (Gere, et al., 2017, p. 335).

- **Lateral transfer:** moving from similar institution as currently enrolled (community college to community college);
- **Vertical transfer:** moving from two-year to four-year institution with intent on completing a Bachelor’s degree;
- **Reverse transfer:** moving from a four-year to a two-year institution;
- **Cross-level transfer:** enrolled at both two-year and four-year institutions simultaneously;
- **Dual credit/enrollment:** enrolled in college-level classes while in high school which count towards a high school diploma and college-credit;
- **Swirlers:** moving consecutively among multiple institutions without necessarily progressing towards degree completion (Poisel and Joseph, 2011).

A New Transfer Strand

The ***forced transfer***: unanticipated transfer from one college to another not of a student's choosing (Maietta & Gardner, 2019).

Literature Review

- Students who transferred in their **first year** of college reported lack of clarity in their career path and an inability to assess their own skills and traits.
- **Sophomores** also did not see connections between course work and how they can apply classroom knowledge post-graduation, diminishing their commitment to school.
- **Junior** and **senior** transfer students also expressed confusion about 'who I am' and the lack of clarity about their career transition. Confusion and lack of confidence about career or life goals ran throughout the literature
- Further troubling is the stigma surrounding career counseling that may factor into students who transfer seeking the help they need (Di Fabio & Bernaud, 2008).

Problem

Successful management of the transfer event begins long before a student moves from one institution to another.

Essential to this management is the recognition that how students' approach and cope with the transition event is as varied as the students themselves.

Students struggled with various career issues (and the career issues morph given the time of transfer or time to degree).

Theoretical Framework

Schlossberg's

Created to facilitate an understanding of adults in transition and the coping mechanisms needed to move from one event to another in one's life.

Two phases:

Phase 1: Approaching Transition

- (a) identifying the transition type, context, and impact, and
- (b) understanding the process of the transition

4 S System

Phase 2:

Taking Stock of Coping Resources [the 4 S System] – influences how transitions are experienced and the reaction to (i.e.: ‘coping’) with those experiences.

Helps in understanding how various elements influence successful transition through the lens of ***Situation, Self, Support, and Strategies.***

(Goodman, Schlossberg, & Anderson, 2006)

Methodology

This phenomenological study will explore the **social, academic, and career-related** challenges students may face during a forced transfer event

Semi-structured interviews and follow-up focus groups of students who have experienced a forced-transfer event within the past year.

Research Statement

This study will investigate the social, academic, and career-related challenges students face during a forced transfer event.

In what ways did the forced transfer event impact students who transferred socially, academically, and in their career-trajectory?

Demographics

20 individuals

Transfer students from a neighboring college that closed

Not involved in legal dispute with former college

Methods: Procedure

Pre-qualifying questionnaire

Individual semi-structured interviews followed by focus groups.

Students were invited to participate in one (1) individual interview and one (1) follow-up focus group.

Interview questions were designed by the researchers based on the literature review of the transfer student transition using Slossberg's 4-S.

Methods: Data Analysis

With permission from the participants, individual interviews and focus group sessions were video/audio recorded.

Data was transcribed, coded and managed using NVivo software to identify repeated themes and motifs.

To avoid researcher bias, an audit trail was maintained, and member-checking was employed.

Methods: Results social, emotional, career

Loss of cohort (S)

Change of community (S)

Excluded (S)

Sense of abandonment (E)

Re-occurring trauma (E)

Lack of trust (E)

Disillusionment with future (C)

Limited options (C)

Unpredictability (C)

Methods: Discussion

Wetzel and Debure (2018) postulate in order to benefit transfer students, there are three important interventions that need to take place:

- (1) faculty mentoring,
- (2) a first-year seminar course, and
- (3) transfer progress monitoring.

Where does this leave forced transfer students?

Follow-Up Activity

- Continued research on forced transfer students
- Publication on redefining the transfer experience and further investigation into implications of the transfer experience for students forced to transfer as a result of college closure
- Education on the implication of the forced transfer event as one unique to the undergraduate experience and one that will continue with time
- Develop training and resources to faculty/staff who work with this population at the giving and the receiving institutions is necessary

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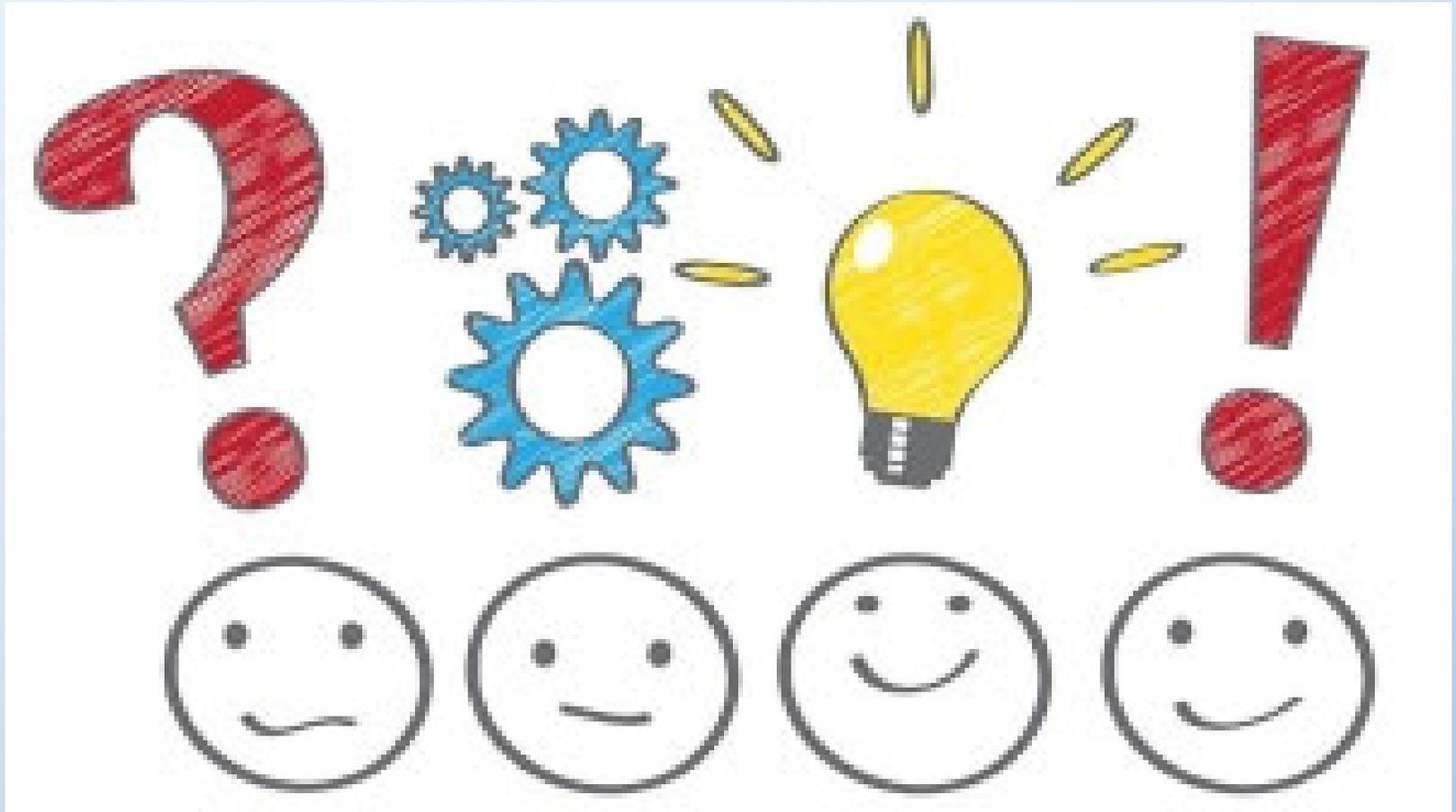
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