

Discussion questions for the Career dating

1. Introduction: For some people, it has been clear what they want to study, and they got a place in their desired field. However, career decisions aren't always based on rational thinking, clear plans, or even correct information about the field of study.

Questions:

- **What did you know about your field in advance?**
 - Why did you choose to apply for your field?
 - How has studying in your field met your expectations? What has been unexpected?
 - How do you see your colleague's field?

2. Introduction: On your path to the current situation, you have already made several choices on things like hobbies, optional studies, or secondary schools. A variety of factors can affect these decisions, such as your own interests and ambitions, but also things like the environment, location, or relationships.

Questions:

- **What kind of decisions have you made before starting your studies?**
 - Think about optional subjects at school, secondary school choice, courses, internships, summer jobs, or hobbies. Or think about other big decisions in your life, such as moving to another city.
- **On what grounds have you made decisions?**
 - Have your personal goals affected your choices?
 - Have things like your home location or transport connections had an impact?
 - Did you follow your friends or did you consciously decide on your own?

3. Introduction: Other people might have tried to influence your decisions deliberately or done so unconsciously. These people can be, for example, teachers and study counsellors, parents and other family members, friends, or coaches and other instructors you met at hobbies.

Questions:

- **Who has had an influence on the choices you've made, either positive or negative?**
 - Has someone tried to influence your decisions on purpose?
 - Or has someone influenced your decisions without intending to influence you?
 - How have your teachers and study counsellors influenced the decisions concerning your future career?
 - How has your family background influenced your career? Are there other academically educated people in your family? Have you been encouraged to pursue

certain fields? Did you want to follow in your parents' footsteps, or did you want to do something different?

- Who has encouraged you and what have been important lessons that you can take with you?

4. Introduction: Making decisions is not always easy, and choices can evoke different feelings. On the other hand, feelings might affect your decisions or even your willingness to make decisions.

Think again about the decisions you have made so far. They may be related to study application or other big choices in your life.

Questions:

- **How did it feel to make decisions?**

- Have you found it easy or difficult to make decisions?
- Have you felt insecure when making choices, or have you regretted your choices afterwards?
- Have your feelings about certain decisions changed afterwards, once you have seen where the decision has led you in your life?
- What has helped you to make decisions before?
- How did you know or feel that the decision was the right one?

5. Introduction: It might be hard to recognize the role of gender in career-related decisions. It is easy to think that gender hasn't influenced your own decisions. However, ideas about the suitability of different things for different genders are so deep in our culture that they can have an influence without us being aware. In Finland, the labour market is segregated by gender and there are also differences within the fields in the placement of men and women in different jobs. Even some hobbies are segregated by gender. Gender stereotypes can limit the opportunities for realizing your potential.

- **How do you think your gender has influenced your decisions in the background?**

- Are there gendered images associated with your field?
- Have you been guided to make certain choices based on your gender?
- Have you made choices that are atypical for your gender? How did you feel about it?