

Analysis on Effective Approaches to Improve College Counselors' Vocational Capability From the Discipline Perspective

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Abstract

College counselors should be qualified with correspondent management ability as well as certain discipline basis so as to fundamentally improve their vocational capability for the purpose of facilitating the higher education work to be implemented smoothly. From the discipline perspective make analysis on effective approaches to improve college counselors' vocational capability and clarify which vocational capabilities college counselors should own and major paths for vocational capability promotion to achieve the synchronous development of college counselors themselves and discipline construction.

Although college counselors have existed for half a century in China, there is still no specific vocational concept so that they receive relatively low sense of approval from the whole society. In recent years, "College Counselors' Occupational Ability Standard (Temporary)" has confirmed counselor's occupational concept to facilitate the improvement of counselor's social status and vocational credibility, stimulate college counselors' routine working enthusiasm, and strengthen management work quality in colleges and universities. Make analysis and discussion on college counselors' vocational capability from the discipline perspective to clarify its essential connotation for the successful implementation of various work in colleges and universities.

Key words: Subject; Instructor; Professional ability; Promotion; Way

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1. SUMMARY OF COLLEGE COUNSELORS' VOCATIONAL CAPABILITY IN NEW ERA

1.1 Connotation of College Counselors' Vocational Capability

Vocational capability refers to the qualification of ability to be occupied in a certain position and with the help of the ability to successfully complete various job duties of this position. Vocational capability determines not only whether people are competent for the work of the position but relate to whether people can acquire the sense of accomplishment and self-identity through the vocation. College counselors as the leaders in college students' daily life and learning process, their vocational ability mainly refers to managing and serving college students, establishing ideological and political construction, fulfilling the responsibility of education, and realizing the objective of talent cultivation with the support of their self-equipped knowledge composition, discipline basis, working experience, and comprehensive accomplishment.

1.2 Characteristics of College Counselors' Vocational Capability

Characteristics of college counselors' vocational capability are mainly reflected in four aspects as below: a) realistic concern. College counselors' vocational capability should be closely related with students' daily life and study, to provide help for each student, and solve their problems in daily life, study, psychology, and employment by applying their own knowledge reserve and professional

skills, for the purpose of students' realizing their solid self-planning. b) Behavior guidance. The nature of college counselors' work has determined their frequent contact with college students so that they can make full use of their own personal charisma providing positive guidance for college students, helping them establish correct ideological values and imposing positive effects on their future study and development. c) Content extension. Contents of ideological and political education of college students keep reforming with the social progress, which requires for college counselors' clear awareness of the problem to continuously update their own knowledge structure, effectively expand and extend the knowledge hierarchy of their vocational capability. d) Development sustainability. College counselors make studies on ideological and political education of college students from the theory level through combining with their long-term occupation experience to realize the improvement of vocational capability by constantly enriching their own theoretical knowledge structure and to play a leading and demonstrative role in student work.

2. DISCIPLINE BASIS OF COLLEGE COUNSELORS' VOCATIONAL CAPABILITY

Professionalism is the prerequisite for college counselors to improve their vocational capability. The vocational definition requires to examine and evaluate their professionalism so as to equip them with the independent and irreplaceable professional characteristics. College counselors are mainly responsible for implementing college education work, which requires them to own solid professional basis and good vocational ethics. They must be equipped with substantial expertise and relevant disciplinary knowledge for the purpose of realizing their professionalism during the vocational development process. College counsellors' working environment has determined that they can acquire professional knowledge through multiple channels for professional skill upgrading. The most common method is to effectively study professional knowledge of relevant disciplines. Thus, college counsellors must learn professional knowledge and discipline knowledge closely connected with their work, and acquire solid professional competence for substantial qualification of the work.

Currently, specialty systems in colleges and universities are complicated with diversified categories, which make it difficult to directly match with the professional knowledge and vocational capability needed by college counselors, mostly for undergraduate specialties. In recent years, college counselors have an educational background of bachelor or above in general, so it is not applicable to make studies on college counselors'

vocational capability with knowledge of undergraduate specialties. At present, college counselors with master's degree are in the majority but there are multiple categories of specialties in postgraduate education mainly including three levels: discipline categories, first-level disciplines, and secondary disciplines. It has been demonstrated and proved that Marxist Theory, Philosophy, Political Science, Management, Sociology, Psychology, Law, and Ethics are the discipline foundation which college counsellors should own, as well as the basic condition to establish their vocational capability. Except for these defined disciplines above, college counselors' work is related with the students' specialties and disciplines under their administration. Only through the in-depth understanding of students' discipline categories and specialty knowledge can college counsellors provide academic assistance and employment guidance for college students and improve college counselors' occupational planning ability so as to provide promising employment prospects for college students.

3. SIGNIFICANCE OF DISCIPLINE BASIS ON COLLEGE COUNSELORS' VOCATIONAL CAPABILITY PROMOTION

Relevant fields and educational sectors have paid great attention to the development of college counselor teams, and explored college counselors' vocational capability improving paths according to the discipline basis. They are capable of clearly defining the discipline foundation of college counselors' vocational capability, and truly aware of which disciplines are instructive and supportive for improving college counselors' vocational capability, to continuously broaden college counselors' vocational capability improving paths and realize the synchronous development of both college counselors' vocational capability and disciplines.

3.1 Definition of the Discipline Basis of College Counselors' Vocational Capability

Traditional education and teaching ideologies think there is no correlation between college counselors' work and discipline construction, and college counselors only need to deal with student management work with no need to participate in discipline construction. In addition, college counselors have no awareness of the correlation between their own work and discipline construction so that their own specialty development is in stagnation. This kind of incorrect concept makes college counselors' vocational capability construction deviated with the discipline construction and makes it difficult to establish a theoretical framework of college counselors' work. Currently, some theoretical researches think college counselors' work should be involved with the discipline construction but without clearly defining the discipline foundation related

with college counselors' vocational capability. Thus, it is necessary to clearly define the discipline basis of college counselors' vocational capability, define and divide existing disciplines on the basis of our categories: Philosophy, Law, Pedagogy and Management, so as to make college counselors' vocational discipline basis more reasonable and standardized. Meanwhile, it is necessary to clarify the correlation between college counselors' work and different disciplines and make staffs in this field realize the connection between the occupation of college counselor and discipline construction for the purpose of accomplishing the objective of college counselors' vocational capability cultivation.

3.2 Clarify the Discipline Focus for College Counselors' Vocational Capability Improvement

From the discipline perspective, it should be of pertinence to improve college counselors' vocational capability so as to truly clarify the discipline focus. Firstly, according to the occupational characteristics of the college counselor, qualify them with corresponding discipline knowledge and the awareness of the important function of the secondary discipline of ideological and political education in improving college counselors' vocational capability. College counselor as the principal part of college ideological and political work provides students with ideological and political education and also offers support and service for college students' daily life and study. To become an excellent college counselor, he or she must own solid discipline knowledge of ideological and political education. Secondly, no matter what specialties college counselors have selected in their undergraduate or postgraduate program, they should receive pre-service education and training to clearly master the theoretical foundation, specific methods and knowledge structure of ideological and political education. Unlike specialty instructors, college counselors should take a comprehensive learning of ideological and political education, class construction, daily management, and psychological health education, occupational planning and other discipline knowledge to establish their own vocational capability for their specialized development, professionalism improvement and better competence of counselor's work. According to the specific condition of counselors' occupation, college counselor teams have the characteristic of openness, which requires college counselors' lifelong participation into their work and appropriate mobility so as to achieve the optimized allocation of talent resources. Therefore, while improving college counselors' vocational capability, take their career development into consideration to avoid the career bottleneck and to construct a completed college counselor team lifelong education system.

Counselor specialty development plays a promotional role in relevant discipline construction which in turn lays solid professional foundation for college counselors'

vocational construction. Take the secondary discipline of ideological and political education as the example, it has close relevance with college counselors' vocational capability. They need to instruct college students with ideological and political education in daily work, but also need to make in-depth researches on some theoretical hot issues and difficulties highly concerned by college students based on their psychological states and ideological characteristics so as to improve the quality of college ideological and political education work. College counselors can participate in "ideological and moral cultivation and legal foundation" course teaching, apply for titles of senior professional posts, expand the talent team of ideological and political education discipline, and make studies on disciple's other branch theories. Colleges and universities can select counselors from ideological and political education discipline, and construct counselor training bases to conduct professional training on ideological and political education specialty. Colleges also should make surveys on ideological and political education to establish college counselors' ideological and political education training system, and provide orientation training for college counselors. In addition, college counselors strive for a higher degree of ideological and political education at their posts so as to constantly improve their professional knowledge of ideological and political education and possess strong professional research ability.

4. EFFECTIVE APPROACHES TO IMPROVE COLLEGE COUNSELORS' VOCATIONAL CAPABILITY FROM THE DISCIPLINE PERSPECTIVE

4.1 Approaches to Improve College Counselors' Individual Vocational Capability

Combined with the individual characteristics of college counselors, they have acquired different categories of discipline knowledge in varying degrees with different learning methods during each stage of their career. It is feasible for them to learn discipline knowledge in different hierarchies and categories through different studying methods based on their practical working situation and individual demands so as to realize the improvement of counselors' vocational capability.

4.1.1 Hierarchical and Fractional Learning of Related Discipline Knowledge

Firstly, when recruiting and selecting college counselors, it is necessary to have a clear awareness of applicants' discipline structure and professional knowledge system, and focus on hiring talents in fields of Law, Philosophy, Pedagogy, and Management. The specialty background and discipline knowledge background of talents in

these fields are closely related with college counselors' vocational capability for them to own excellent post competence. Meanwhile, based on college students' specialties recruit and select specialty-related counselors so as to provide guidance for students' study, academic course and occupational planning. Secondly, during the process of vocational training, it is necessary to constantly intensify counselors' discipline specialty foundation so that they own solid knowledge of ideological and political education. For non-specialty category college counselors, their training duration can be prolonged so as to make their professional knowledge structure conform to the post requirements. Strict admission and evaluation system should be conducted to standardize talents. Newly recruited counselors should be equipped with substantial discipline basic knowledge, but also should take phase leaning and selective learning of related discipline knowledge for in-depth study and research on work related discipline contents, so as to instruct and practice daily work with the help of professional knowledge they have learned for the purpose of good theoretical and practical effects. In the meantime, college counselors should have a basic understanding of fundamental knowledge in each discipline for post competence promotion.

College counselors' constant learning and researches on related discipline knowledge based on specific working practice combing with daily working background can help them comprehensively acquire the discipline knowledge but can also strengthen the deep discipline learning so as to become the elites in this discipline owning both theoretical researches and practical achievements.

4.1.2 Apply Correct Methods to Solidify Discipline Foundation

In recent years, our country has attached great importance to college counselors' training work with counselors' training and research base established by Ministry of Education gradually to mainly provide college counselors with on-duty training, routine training and senior training. There are a lot trainings of discipline specialties targeting at college counselors mainly used for training local counselors in shifts. On-campus training includes different types such as discipline special topic exchange and scientific research activities, which have constituted to a well-established nation-province-school three-level training system to provide abundant training chances for college counselors.

It is necessary to carry out scientific research work on the basis of discipline theories while paying attention to practices, so that counselors can continuously improve their working level. In addition, apply excellent research results to provide instruction and support for counselors' daily work to fulfill positive communication and interaction between counselors' working practice and discipline construction. In the meantime, the implementation of counselors' practice work can

also effectively demonstrate the discipline research achievements. College counselors can choose discipline teams independently based on the practical situation and participation into the special subject learning and research for solidification of their discipline foundation and enrichment of theoretical knowledge.

4.2 Approaches to Improve Collective Vocational Capability

4.2.1 Establish a Secondary School's Student Working Team With a Diversified Discipline Specialty Structure

Currently, the major method to manage college counselor team is the secondary school model. Whether college counselors' vocational capability can improve to a large degree depends on whether they have established favorable communication interactions with colleagues, superiors and subordinates. Secondary school belongs to fundamentally counselor-managing unit requires for effective coordination of the discipline constitution of department counselors based on practical situation from an overall perspective so as to realize the discipline structure optimization, equip the school's student working team with related discipline knowledge structure and achieve the goal of cultivating college counselors' vocational capability.

4.2.2 Subdivide Counselors' Disciplines and Vocational Development Direction

Focus on cultivating counselors with related discipline background, encourage them to develop in the direction of professionalism, establish special research centers conducting ideological and political education, party, organization and class construction, academic guidance, psychological health education and consultation, daily routine management, occupational planning and employment guidance work, and employ industry experts to offer instructions for team building and development. Provide policy and capital support for college counselors' specialization subdivision, exchange and cooperate with related schools to solidly implement specialization construction work. Provide some counselor teams owning different discipline advantages with opportunities for mutual study and communication, to achieve the optimizing allocation of college inside talent resources through complementing each other's strengths.

4.2.3 Establish Counselor Industry Association and Effectively Formulate Different Levels, Discipline Topics and Periodical Training Contents

In recent years, many provincial level and city level counselor trainings are major in general knowledge with discipline contents covering a wide range of no pertinence. With different specialty backgrounds, college counselors should acquire various discipline knowledge. Therefore, related departments should work out discipline training plans with strong pertinence according to the specific discipline backgrounds college counselors. Training

in different hierarchies and disciplines can improve counselors' expertise and comprehensively optimize counselor team structure so as to bring more effectiveness into college students' ideological and political education work. Education sectors and colleges should raise specific requirements for counselors' vocational capability based on their discipline backgrounds, provide policy support and offer various learning opportunities on provincial level and city level platforms. Meanwhile, in college counselors' daily routine work, conduct regular or unscheduled trainings, secondment for getting experience, or interschool counselor work shift and exchange so as to improve the professionalism of counselors' daily routine work, strengthen their vocational capability fundamentally and fulfill the goal of talent cultivation in colleges and universities.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, the professional ability is directly related to the quality of the daily work of College counselors. The education departments and schools should be based on the actual situation of college counselors, based on the perspective of their existence, discipline foundation and daily work problems were clearly defined, and take a variety of ways to improve college counselors' occupation ability, so as to enrich the theory of knowledge service daily learning and life consciousness of discipline foundation and solid for colleges and universities the students, improve the teaching quality of higher education,

promoting the construction of college counselors fundamentally.

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