

Images of Organisations

Using Images of Organisations to Explore the Issues around Life Long Learning



NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Using Images of Organisations to explore the issues around lifelong learning

This set of images was carefully chosen and drawn to represent a set of feelings and emotions that people described when asked about their experience of working in organisations. The images are in many cases familiar metaphors: a small cog in a wheel, spinning plates, being at a crossroads.

The imagery is intended to focus an individual's thinking on personal experience and to encourage sharing and discussion.

There are no 'expected answers', although many people respond in similar ways to the stimulus of the pictures. The images are presented to students or young employees to help them to recognize the positive and negative emotions they are likely to experience in the process of seeking, finding and beginning work.

It uses a range of learning methods that encourage active learning. It is collaborative, problem-based and generative, drawing upon appropriate past experience and using it in a new context.

There is no reason why you should not follow the instructions and run the activity exactly as described in the accompanying notes for adult use.

Many of the questions are relevant to students and will make them reflect upon personal experiences, values and beliefs. Where the supporting cards make reference to 'your organisation' it is often possible to substitute 'your team', 'your class' or even 'your family'.

Specific student-centred use of the images

The focus is on:

1. How the students feel about their current situation
2. How they experience the process of learning and growing
3. How they feel as they look ahead to the world of work
4. Their hopes and aspirations
5. How they can prepare for the transition from studying to employment

These cards are best used in small groups, where there is some support and coaching available. They may also be used in conjunction with the cards from the parallel set 'Images of Resilience' which help students to consider their own strategies for dealing with pressure and stress.

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A focus on performing skills to a high level

What are you good at? What are the skills you believe you have that other people value?

How did you learn those skills? Can you use those learning strategies to learn other things that you find difficult?

What would you like to be able to do, that you currently can't do? How might you learn?



A focus on personal growth and development

What do you need in order to help you to grow and develop?

What personal attitudes and beliefs will help you?

What type of environment do you flourish in? What type of help and support do you enjoy?



A focus on goals and aspirations

What would you really like to achieve? What is important to you about this ambition?

What ideas do you have about how to achieve your goals?

If your aspirations prove to be just out of reach, what alternatives do you have? What else could you do that would give you the same sense of satisfaction?



A focus on support

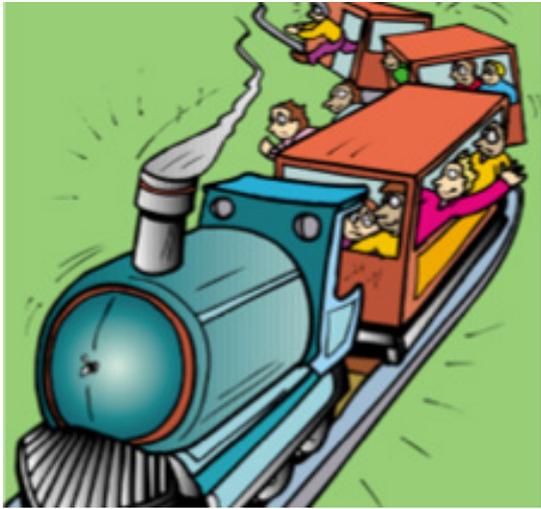
How important are other people to you, in helping you to "climb your mountains"?

Who are the best people to encourage and support you? How can you improve your relationships with them?

What support can you offer to others? How do you feel you contribute best to team efforts?

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A focus on change

When things are moving fast and changing, how do you feel?

Do you find uncertainty exciting or stressful?

What helps you to cope when things seem to be getting out of control?

How do you decide what level of risk to take?



A focus on direction and leadership

When decisions need to be made, how do you feel about taking the lead?

Are you able to give direction to others? Are you equally able to take directions?

If you are faced with a difficult decision how do you go about making your choice?



A focus on cooperation

Do you enjoy working in collaboration with others or do you prefer to work alone?

What are the things that frustrate you about working with other people and what helps you to overcome these frustrations?

Do you enjoy 'performing' or would you rather be working in the background, supporting others?



A focus on prioritisation

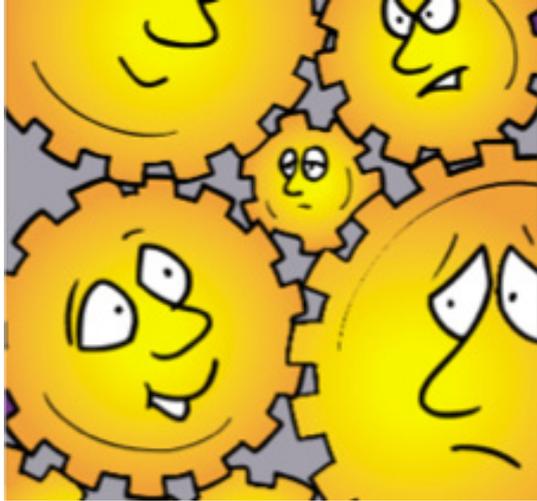
When you are studying or working, do you find that you can prioritise tasks? How could you improve your personal time management?

How do you stay calm when there is too much to do?

If you didn't have enough time to do all the things you enjoy, which interests and hobbies would you prioritise?

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A focus on confidence

When you begin further study or work, you may feel like a very small part of a big machine. What things will help you to look after yourself and find your place?

How can you make sure that other people do not take advantage of you?

How can you build your personal confidence?



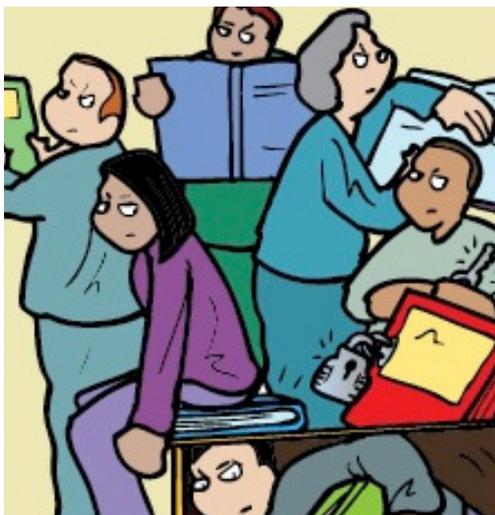
A focus on working under pressure

How well do you work under pressure?

Do you seek out pressure or try to avoid it?

If you start to feel stressed, do you have ways of coping with stress? Could you improve these?

What things do you do that help you to relax?

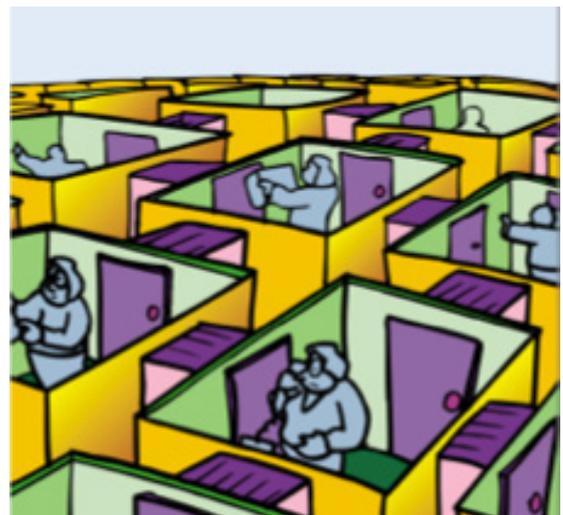


A focus on trust

How easy do you find it to trust other people?
Do you worry about trusting people too much?

What things help you to trust other people?
What can you do to show other people they can trust you?

How important is it to you to be honest and open? Is it possible to be 'too honest'?



A focus on working alone

Sometimes academic or working life requires you to work alone. Do you enjoy independent work?

Do you need time to spend alone and 'recharge your batteries'? How and where do you find this personal time and space?

How can you learn to enjoy your own company and trust your own judgement?

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A focus on dealing with frustration

When things aren't going your way, how do you deal with frustration?

Do you think of yourself as a patient or impatient person? How does this affect you?

Many jobs are much more boring than you might imagine! How do you keep yourself interested and motivated even when life isn't exciting?



A focus on achieving high performance

How important is it to you to do a really good job? How do you measure your success?

How do you go about improving your performance?

How do you feel about getting feedback on your work? How can you use feedback (positive or negative) to your advantage?



A focus on competition

How do you feel about being in a competitive environment? Does competition motivate or demotivate you?

How can you use your competitiveness to your advantage, without upsetting other people in the process?

How important is 'winning' to you?



A focus on keeping going

When you start in a new school or a new job, it is easy to feel lost and disorientated.

What helps you to keep going? How do you make sure that you are getting the help and support you need and not falling behind?

Do you know where to go if things get really difficult and you need more specific help?