

and current jobs through a complex set of networks. Sometimes the networks were useful in suggesting the opportunity; sometimes they were useful in offering transportation; sometimes they helped in getting the first interview. There are two responses to this factoid: 1) it may mean that people who appear to have no networks can not get a job (Kantor, 1994; Kazis & Goldberger, 1995; Newman & Lennon, 1995) – that is not the case; 2) it can mean that people who think they have no networks do in fact have them (Grubb & Bradway, 1995) – that is true. The point here is that students need to recognize and make use of as many sources of information as possible about the paths into various jobs. Third, students need a detailed, enriched narrative of a typical day and week on a job.

Collisions of expectations and visions with reality can make a potential job seem overwhelming and/or demeaning, rather than being recognized as a complex pattern of job elements, some of which are routine and some of which are unique, that come together to form the fabric of work and a persons' place in it. The presentation will explore these three themes with reference to the ways they re-arrange our conceptions of what it takes to join the world of work and how we can make that process more manageable.

**Lemos, Marina S.**

### **Coping strategies in the classroom: The functions of students' goals**

Based on a field study, this paper explores students' strategies for dealing with potentially stressful classroom circumstances in relation to their goals.

This study empirically examined students' reactions to specific academic stressors. For this purposes, forty-four 6th grade students were individually interviewed, focusing on their emotions, behaviors, and goals, following the presentation of ten vignettes describing a student who is faced with such specific classroom stressors as failure, ambiguity, lack of support and information, low choice, and pressures to behave in certain ways. Students' responses were classified according to five dimensions of analysis: goal-oriented behavior, behavioral and cognitive involvement, goal-behavior coherence, emotional responsiveness and adaptability. The classification of students' reactions yielded four distinct strategies formed from combinations of the classifications of students' responses along the five dimensions. These include strategic flexible action, strategic rigid action, passive behavior, and disorganized behavior.

Results are analyzed focusing on the extent to which goals bear a special contribution to the distinction among strategies, on the characteristics of goals involved in the diverse strategies, and on the associations between goals and other dimensions of the coping strategies.

Altogether, results suggest that three inter-related goal functions might be implied in students' coping strategies: a directing function, that helps in the selection and concentration on relevant activities, an organizing function, that facilitates the coordination of activities, and a monitoring function, that allows the evaluation of progress, and subsequent adjustments.

**Lencastre, Leonor**

### **Reading comprehension difficulties-psychology students' perception**

Students' reading comprehension ability is a topic frequently discussed by teachers. Even at an university level reading comprehension difficulties seem to persist and interfere with learning and instruction process. In an attempt to present students point of view about reading comprehension difficulties concerning a specific content study area, this study characterizes first year students of Psychology degree, concerning theirs reading interests, reading frequency, perception about reading comprehension difficulties and perception about reading ability. Students assessment about the degree of reading comprehension difficulty concerning specific texts of first year's curriculum of Psychology degree is also analyzed. The participants in this study are all the students, attending the first year of Psychology degree at Faculdade de Psicologia e de Ciências da Educação - University of Porto, Portugal.