COVET

Continuing Professional Development in Vocational Education and Training

Career Counselling

–

Employment Interviewing

Inspiration for online teaching

In the COVET project, we have collected many great examples of teaching that have been transformed from the classic off-line version into a modern online learning method.

These sample lessons have been created by VET teachers from different EU countries. We present them to you as inspiration for your work.

The lessons are particularly suitable for vocational teachers, but can also serve as a training tool for teachers, trainers and lecturers in other educational settings.

All sample lessons, training materials as well as all information about the project are available at:
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Career Counselling - Employment Interviewing

Off-line version of the preparation

Goal

In this lesson, students will practice job interview skills, discuss and recognize the do's and don'ts, and participate in a mock interview.

Students will:

- Practice good job interview skills
- Explain the purpose of an interview
- Recognize the do's and don'ts of good interview skills
- Determine the use of their personal resume
- Participate in a mock interview

How does an employer determine who will get hired? What does the process entail? In this lesson, you will prepare for and participate in a "mock" job interview!

Materials

- 25 essential interview questions and how to answer to them
- Completed job applications
- Props to display examples of what to wear and what not to wear to an interview (examples may include: wrinkled clothes, gum, cell phone, big clunky jewelry, dark lipstick, watch, baseball cap or hat, tennis shoes, t-shirt with logo or inappropriate wording)
- Samples of student resumes
- Classified section of local newspaper

Provide each student with some essential Interview questions that employers typically ask. After allowing students to review the questions, have them brainstorm how they would answer the interview questions.

Role Play Activity
Ask a student to play the role of the employer and you (the instructor) play the applicant. In front of the class, demonstrate how to give a firm handshake. Have them practice with each other.

Interview v.1

Use examples for inappropriate responses such as complaining about the directions to the interview, talking about how your day is going and other things not related to the interview. You may even choose to wear something "inappropriate" and chew gum throughout the interview.

This will allow students to see, first hand, what an "ineffective" interview looks like to an employer.

Interview v.2

On the second interview, model appropriate interview skills. Make good eye contact, have good posture, display a positive attitude, and answer/ask appropriate questions.

As a class, discuss the interviews. Stress the importance of making a good first impression.

Pair students and allow teams to role-play an employer and applicant. Allow them to use the 25 Question material and all their previous created materials (resumes, letter of motivation, etc.).

Have students switch roles after 5 minutes.

Discuss about the experience and what they have learned that will help them in a future job interview.

Online version of the preparation

The essential missing part of this lesson was exactly the direct face-to-face interaction between the students and the experience they could have by being involved in the role-play.

The online approach was cutting off almost everything so I needed to consider how to switch the activities into an online environment and keep the exercising of the skills as much as possible for each student.

I considered transforming the goal of the lesson and include the Online interview subject as a particular study-case for the students, given the fact that nowadays, this kind of interview is more and more often used by companies who will hire remotely and will use maybe only online recruitment tools. Therefore, students could prepare for such online interviewing and build the new skill, according to the requirements of the employers.

It was essential to have a safe online environment for students to participate in the online lessons. School decided to use the Google Suite for Education – Google Platform and dedicated accounts have been created for both teachers and students.

First, I had created my classes in the Google Classroom Platform. Students first had to roll-in into the class, using the code I provided for each one. Some of the students have been invited by the teacher directly to the class. The enrollment has been done prior to the beginning of the course, in September 2021.

In the class, in the Classwork section I created topics corresponding to the program and inside the Topics, I have uploaded all the materials necessary for each class, always 1 week in advance for the following class.

For the Employment interview, the materials uploaded included: How to prepare for an interview, How to dress up for an interview? (the employment dress-code), How to present yourself to an interview, The body language during the employment interview.
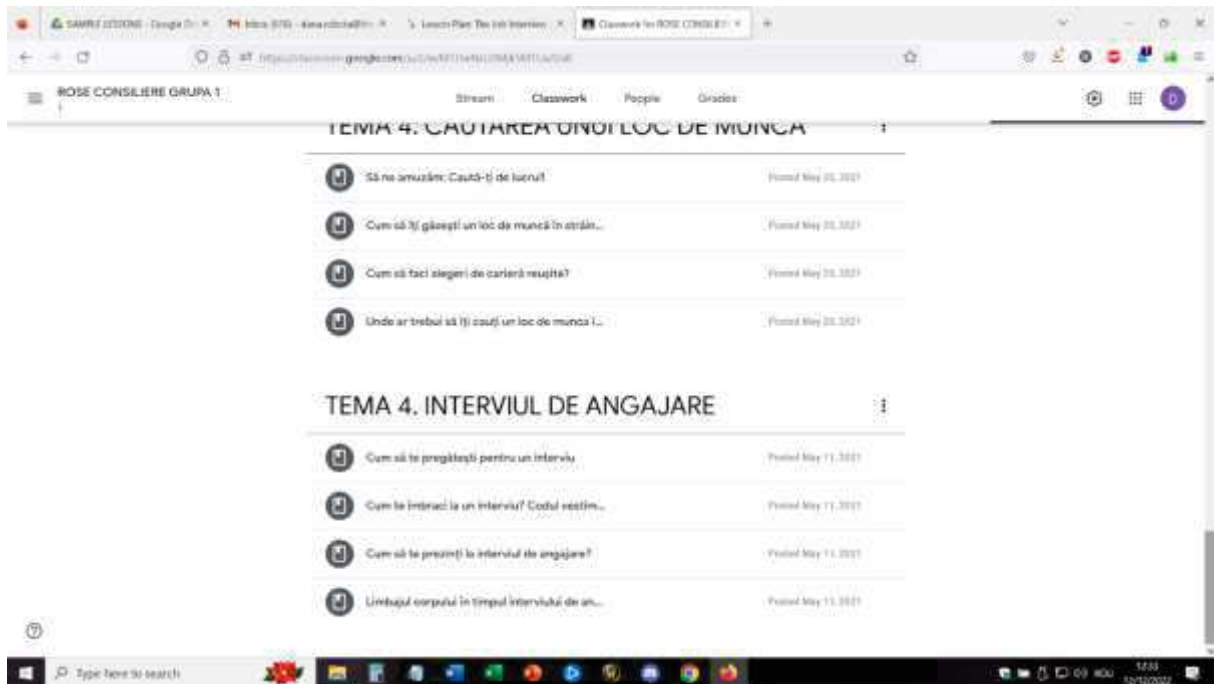
Students have one week to go over the materials (some of them are short video presentations, others are presentations and main ideas schemes) and get a general idea about the topic of the future class.
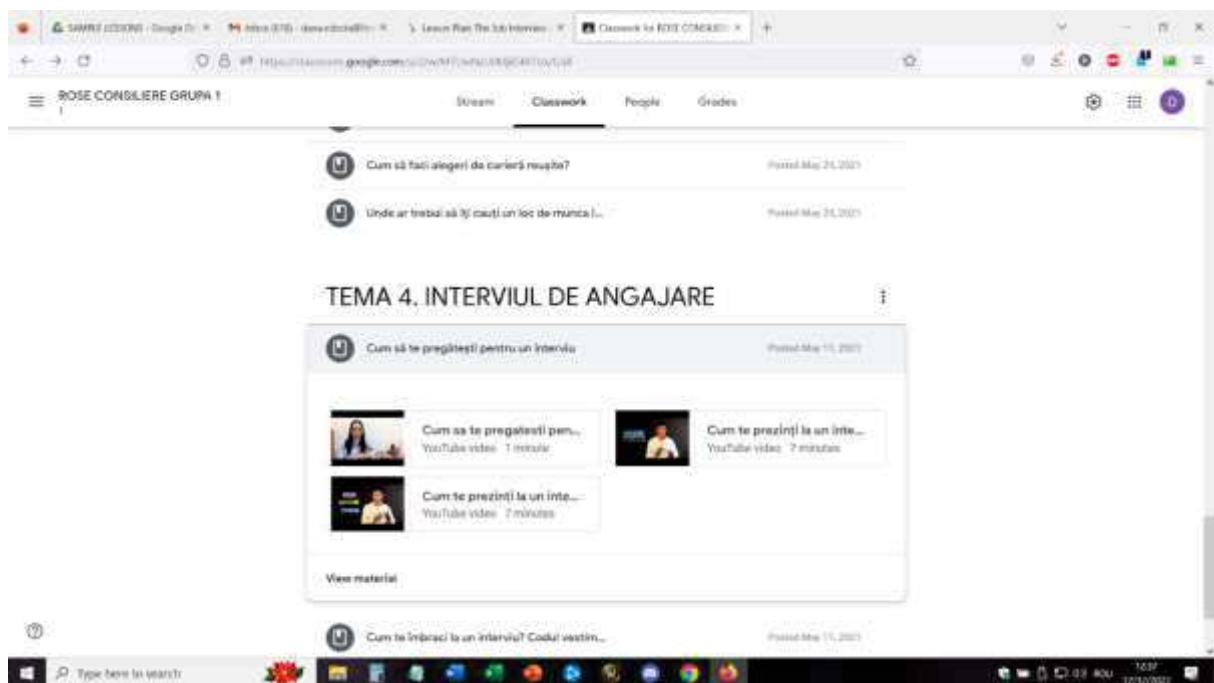
For this lesson I also created Breakout rooms in advance, using Google Calendar events. (I had to learn how to make this and once I mastered it, it was very easy for me to create Breakout rooms in

advance – either with pre-established participants into each room or shuffled to mix the groups). For this lesson there were 5 breakout rooms with 4 participants in each room.

For the lesson, students will login in with the appropriate account and join the Google Meet environment.

First part of the lesson would consist of a direct online dialogue with students about the materials they had to checkout and their feed-back on these materials.

Some incentive questions could be: How important is the interview in an employment process? If two candidates are on the same level on the basis of their resume, how will the employer choose between the two? Which could be the absolute do's and don'ts in an interview? Which could be the top 5 questions to be asked by an employer at the interview?

I presented the online video interview topic and together with the students we debated about the similarities and differences between the direct and the online interview.

Interview v.1 and Interview v.2 have been then adapted to the online interview topic and I have illustrated them as a protagonist, whilst some of the students have been the interviewers. Other students have been observers.

Then, students entered breakout rooms and to participate in the role-play in turns: employer and applicant (switch at 5 minutes) in order that all 4 students from each breakout room be applicants once. Students have been encouraged to use the 25 essential questions material or the top 5 questions discussed in the first part of the lesson.

I, as a teacher, supervised each room and encouraged students to be involved, answered questions and observed the activity.

After 20 minutes, the groups rejoined the whole class and all students could give their feedback on the activity. We made new observations about the interview requirements and also we could identify better the differences between the online and direct face-to-face interview.
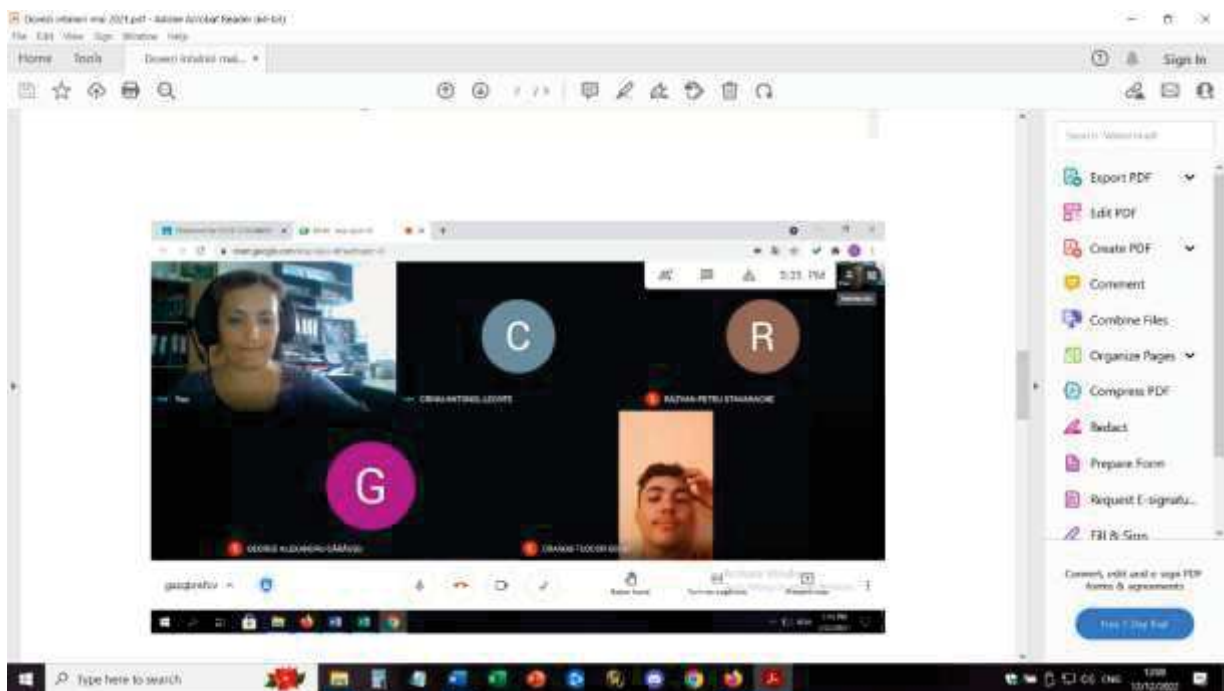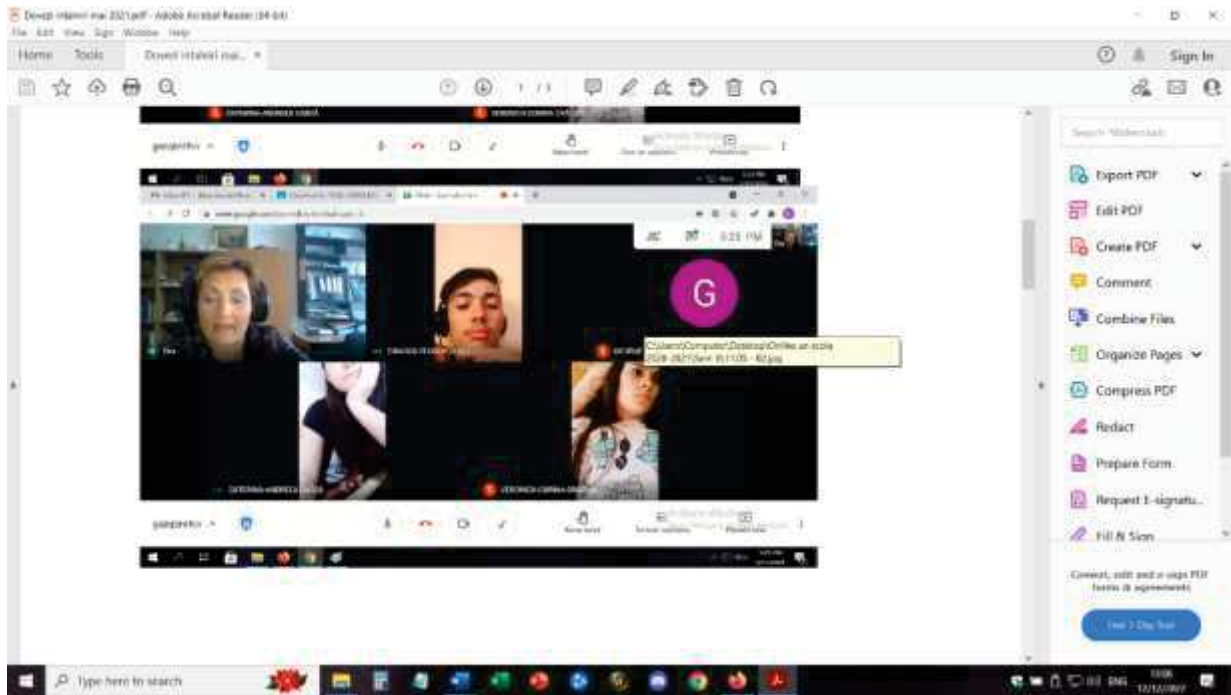
Feedback from the lesson

Good equipment and good internet connection are absolutely essential in order to implement such an online activity. Students need to have access to cameras and microphones too. These need to have enough quality in order to provide good image and sound and ease the communication.

It is easier to participate in this activity if using a laptop/PC than using a phone or a tablet.

For the teacher, I would consider it almost impossible to hold the lesson from a phone or tablet.

Students and teachers should get comfortable with this kind of setup. If the platform and the set up are used for the first time, it may take longer for the students to adjust to the activity and participate actively.

Participating requires a proper space (quiet room, silent environment) in order to facilitate direct communication between the participants. Also for the teacher, it is necessary to be in a good environment in order to implement the lesson.

Teachers and students need to speak slowly and clearly and have patience for the communication to happen, in turns. Online communication is slower than face-to-face communication and this is an issue that needs practice in order to adapt.

The best thing is that all these observations are also valid for the topic of this lesson – how to have a successful online video interview!

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