

# CAREER COMPASS

A TOOLKIT FOR CAREER PROFESSIONALS



## Colophon

Title Career Compass  
A toolkit for career professionals

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# 1. Introduction

The Career Compass is based on research and practical experiences and is a practical tool for the career counsellor in the educational sector or in the business community. The driving force behind the description of career competences is Marinka Kuijpers, lector 'Pedagogy of professional training' at The Hague University of Applied Sciences.

In this publication the emphasis is placed on the application of the Career Compass in the educational sector.

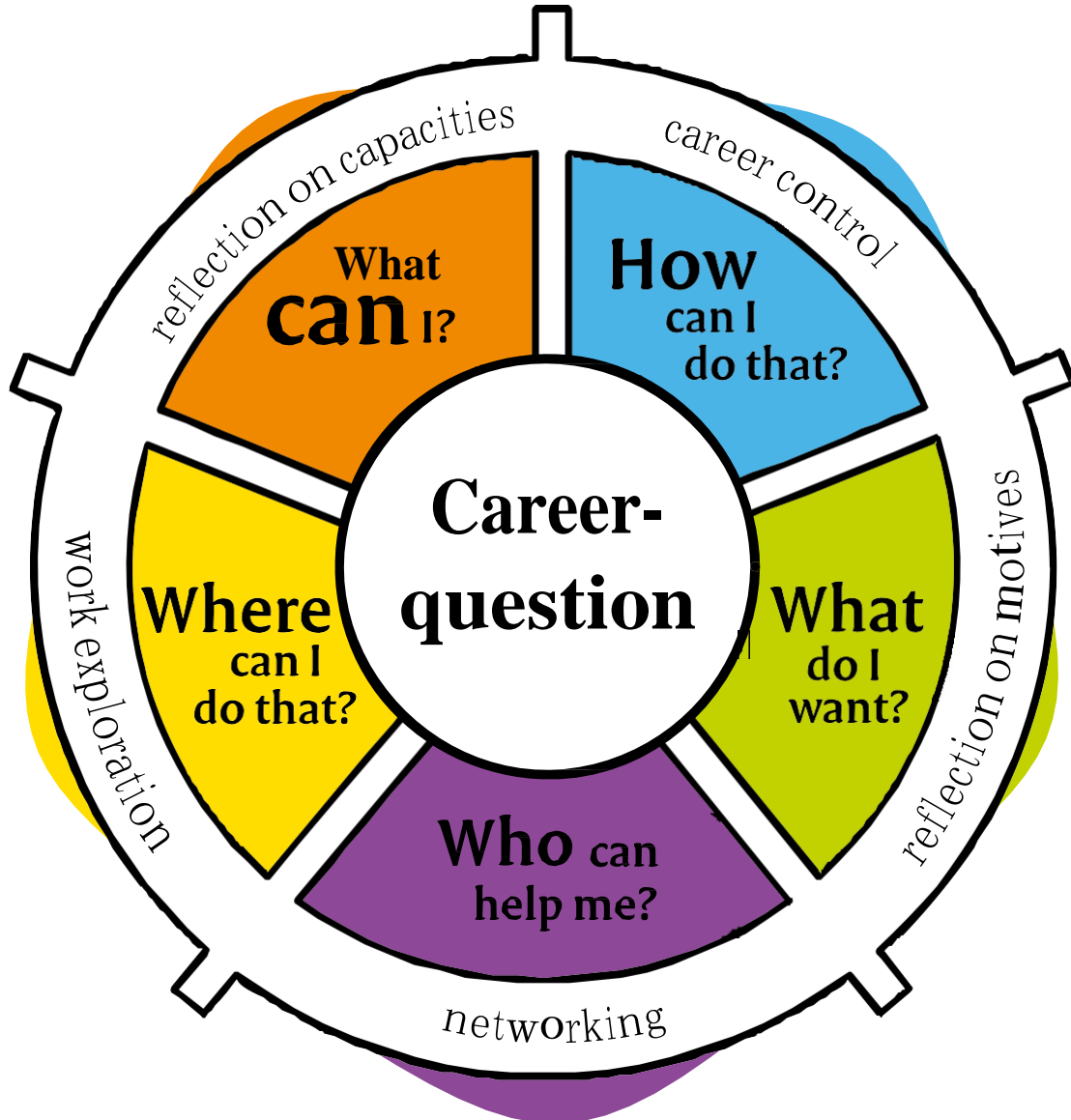
The Career Compass itself has been included in chapter 1. In the Career Compass essential career questions are reduced to the career competences as identified by Marinka Kuijpers.

Chapter 2 provides some theoretical background of the development of the five career competences and also contains a brief description of the application thereof. A powerful learning environment and, in particular, an approach based on dialogue appear to be essential for the development of the career competences. English sources have been included so that the non-Dutch reader can gain in-depth knowledge of the background of career competences and the required learning environment.

Departing from the career competences chapter 3 provides a blueprint for a career interview. A supplemental tool is provided by the questions included in chapter 4 that can be asked by a career counsellor per career competence (or that somebody who is examining his or her career can ask him- or herself). Chapter 5 contains a simple questionnaire that provides an indication of the progress of your career competences. Chapter 6 provides a questionnaire that gives an impression of how well your educational institution is handling career competences.

All in all this publication forms a useful toolkit for managers or career counsellors.

# Career Compass



How do you shape your career?

## 2. Background

Career competences are included in various research studies (Arthur, Inkson, & Pringle, 1999; Ball, 1997; Defillippi & Arthur, 1994; Eby, Butts, & Lockwood, 2003; Hackett, Betz, & Doty, 1985; Jones & Bergmann Lichtenstein, 2000). However, in these studies, the structure of career competences remains unclear. On the basis of literature research, qualitative interviews, and factor analyses of data from a large sample, Kuijpers and Scheerens (2006) addressed this point and established a multidimensional assessment of career competences. They distinguished between five career competences:

- career reflection, reviewing one's own competences with respect to one's career;
- motivation reflection, reviewing one's own desires and values with respect to one's career;
- work exploration, orientation toward matching one's own identity and competences to the required values and competences in a specific work situation;
- career control, career-related planning and influencing of learning and work processes;
- networking, setting up contacts that are relevant for one's career (see also Kuijpers, 2005).

Research results show that a powerful learning environment for career learning is associated with neither the use of instruments and techniques, nor – somewhat surprisingly – with the presence of a school counselor. Furthermore, neither the organization of classical consultations concerning study- and career-choice, the use of career guidance interest tests, nor individual meetings with counselors or mentors, actually contribute to the development of career competences (Kuijpers & Scheerens, 2006) or work-identity (i.e., a cognitive and affective bond with a specific type of work) (Meijers, 1998). To put it bluntly, the acquisition of career competences and work-identity are independent of the use of specific resources or techniques.

What does make a difference is a career dialogue, at school and in the real world. Career dialogue can be defined as a conversation that the student conducts with a trusted adult (preferably a teacher, counselor, or mentor), and in which the meaning of a student's experiences for his/her life and career, is central. Important is the explicit relation between relevant experiences of the individual student with the professional/working world and the development of his/her self image and work-identity. It is essential to stimulate both the internal dialogue (in which personal meaning is central) as well as the external dialogue (in which the social meaning of work is central). Research results demonstrate that a career dialogue at school and discussions on the work floor, both contribute to the career competences described earlier. Furthermore, these dialogues contribute to the application of these competences to a concrete choice and learning experience. Both dialogues have even more impact on the creation of career competences and work-identity, than do personal characteristics.



### 3. Blueprint for a career interview

Orientation phase	
<b>What am I going to do?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Welcome and making feel at ease</li><li>• Clarification of objectives and procedure of the interview (think about time, possibility of a follow-up interview and arrangements about reporting)</li><li>• Exploration of the content</li></ul>	
Core	
<b>What am I going to do?</b> <p>Reflection on actions of past period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Progress in career steps</li><li>• Progress in learning results</li><li>• Progress in wellbeing</li></ul>	<b>Questions that can help me with that</b> <p>Reflection on actions of past period: GIC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What happened? (G of what was Going on)</li><li>• What was important? (I of Important)</li><li>• What are your intentions or learning wishes? (C of Conclusions)</li></ul>
<b>Problem formulation phase</b> <p>Clarification of learning or career question and examination what career competences need to be worked on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Quality reflection</li><li>• Motive reflection</li><li>• Work exploration</li><li>• Career counselling</li><li>• Networking</li></ul>	<b>Problem formulation phase</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explain what you are good at</li><li>• What do you find important at work/school and why?</li><li>• Do you think you can easily find a job with this profession? Why/why not?</li><li>• On what basis did you opt for this work placement?</li><li>• Who can help you gain a good picture of the profession you want to perform?</li></ul>
<b>Constructive phase</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Agree on specific arrangements from the problem formulation phase</li><li>• Ensure that the learning or career activities are specific and measurable so that the student is supported by it</li></ul>	<b>Constructive phase</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How can you work on your learning or career question?</li><li>• What solutions can you think of?</li><li>• What does this mean for your development?</li><li>• What activities are you going to undertake? When?</li><li>• Who are you going to ask for additional help?</li></ul>
Concluding phase	
<b>What am I going to do?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Summary of the interview</li><li>• Reflection on the course of the interview</li><li>• Follow-up agreements</li><li>• Conclusion and goodbye</li></ul>	





## 4. Questionnaire about career competences

### Reflection on capacities

- 1 When and how did the career competence 'quality reflection' assisted you in shaping your (study) career?
- 2 What are the results of personal reflection at earlier defining moments/transitions in your career?
- 3 What quality are you proud of and why?
- 4 What does the difference between competence and talent mean to you?
- 5 What personal quality would you want to develop further? How will you handle this?
- 6 What do you occasionally receive a compliment for?
- 7 What do you excel in at school?
- 8 What do you not excel in at school?
- 9 What do you excel in at home or at a (sports) club?
- 10 What do you not excel in at home or at a (sports) club?

### Reflection on motives

1. When and how did the career competence 'motive reflection' assisted you in shaping your (study) career?
2. How did you find out what you want to be?
3. What else do you want to accomplish in your career and why?
4. What are the results of motive reflection within the framework of career counselling?
5. About which (study) career options did you doubt the most and why?
6. What is important when selecting a training?
7. What do you think is important to you in a profession?
8. How important are spare-time or hobbies to you?
9. How important is money to you?
10. Do you prefer to work alone or together?

### Work exploration

1. When and how did the career competence 'work exploration' assisted you in shaping your (study) career?
2. Who assisted you in gaining a realistic professional picture? How did that go?
3. With hindsight, to what extent was your professional picture realistic?
4. What did work exploration mean to your (study) career?
5. Where would you search for information about opportunities on the employment market?

6. Where can you find the work you want to do?
7. Is there a lot of work in the profession you want to perform?
8. Where in the Netherlands can this work usually be found?

### Career control

1. When and how did the career competence 'career counselling' assisted you in shaping your (study) career?
2. What would you, looking back at your career counselling, recommend somebody to do? And what not?
3. What characteristic or competence assisted you in shaping your career?
4. How do you look at career counselling in respect of your own career?
5. How would you handle the preparation of a next step in your career?
6. What steps can you take to find out what you really want?
7. How can you find out which training you need, to do the work you want to do later?
8. How can a work placement assist in selecting a department?
9. How important is it to attend an open day when you select a training?

### Networking

1. When and how did the career competence 'networking' assisted you in shaping your (study) career?
2. What people assisted you in forming a realistic professional picture?
3. What current networking contact can give you information about your possible career options?
4. Who from your network was important in terms of this choice and why?
5. How did you approach people during a previous career question and/or choice?
6. Who can assist you in examining which professions you like?
7. Who can assist you in discovering what a specific profession entails?
8. How can your parents/caretakers assist you in selecting a department/training/workplace?
9. How can the mentor/career counsellor assist you in selecting a department/training/workplace?



## 5. Indicator for prognosis career developments and competences

*Regarding the positions below, please indicate to what extent you agree with this position, or to what extent applicable for you. Important is what you actually do or what you think is important.*

	Totally disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Totally agree
	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Reflection on motives</b>					
• I talk with others about what kind of activities connect to my personality					
• My work instigates to think about what stirs my career					
• I think it is important to find out what motivates me in my work					
• I find out for myself why I want to learn things					
<b>Work exploration</b>					
• I am well informed on changes in my work that can influence my employability 5 years from now					
• When I applied for my current job, I checked the goals of this organisation					
• Before I applied for this job I checked which code of conduct was demanded for this job					
• I think it is important to orient to the labour market					
<b>Career control</b>					
• I intentionally change activities to positively influence my career					
• If I undertake a learning activity, I assure myself that this activity is connected with what to learn for my career					
• I find out for myself which learning activities I need to realize my career plans					
• In the past half year I made clear to my (coming) executive that I can tune my career wishes to the organization goals					
<b>Networking</b>					
• I use my network contacts to get information on new developments in my working field					
• Every month I make new contacts with persons who can help me developing my career					
• For me it is important to build a network for my career					
• I can use my network to get another job					



**Regarding the questions below, please indicate how often the situation appears.**

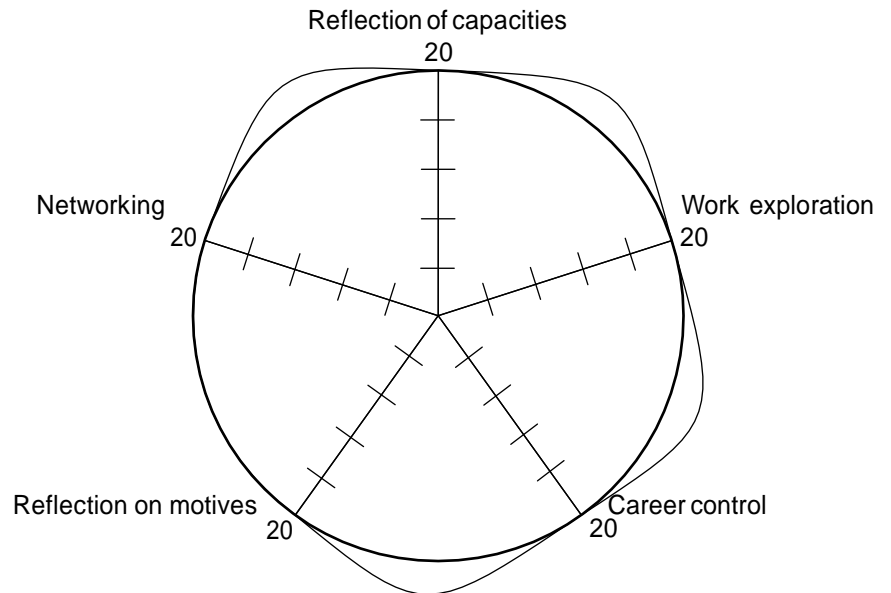
**It's about what you actually do.**

(Hardly) ever	Only when searching another job	Once – two times a year	Every trimester	Every month or more
1	2	3	4	5

Reflection on capacities				
• How often you consciously ask yourself if – regarding your strong qualities – you are in the right place in your current job?				
• How often do you ask others how they think about your good and bad qualities?				
• How often you consciously ask yourself what are your good and bad qualities?				
• How often you consciously question yourself which acquired competences could be of importance for your further career?				

### Comparison of the competences

**Count the scores of the different competences and fill these in on the lines in the diagram**





## 6. Questionnaire about career guidance within schools

**Keep in mind the school(s) you are working for. Please mark only one answer for each question.**

### **What does the school mainly do to let students discover which work suits them?**

1. There is no attention (yet) within the school
2. Mainly through tests
3. Mainly by using written tasks
4. Mainly by interviewing students, at which the opinion of the teacher is the most important
5. Mainly by interviewing students, at which the opinion of the student is the most important.

### **What does the school mainly do to sketch a picture of the work a student is learning for?**

1. Nothing
2. Mainly give examples of practice in the lessons
3. Mainly by get students acquainted with diverse directions within school.
4. Mainly by apprenticeships, at which the school or the company decide what the student has to do
5. Mainly by apprenticeship, at which the student decides what to do what he/she thinks is important for his/her future.

### **What does the school mainly do to teach students to build up a network of vocational professionals?**

1. There is no attention (yet) within the school
2. The school brings the student in contact with vocation professionals, building up a network is seen as a responsibility of the student
3. Student mainly gets information on how to build a network
4. The teacher/counsellor points out which contacts students have to build up during their studies
5. The teacher/counsellor mainly guides students with building up and maintaining contacts the students regard important themselves for their future.

### **What does the school do on career orientation and guidance?**

1. There is no attention (yet) within the school
2. Mainly tests are taken or a method is being used
3. Mainly discussions within the lessons
4. Mainly through individual discussions if a student has problems
5. Individual discussions with each student take place on a regular base.

### **Do students use a portfolio?**

1. No/Yes. If yes for which purpose is it mainly used?
2. Mainly for the study career within this school (progress of study)
3. Mainly for the transfer to continuing education
4. Mainly for development of a career (as a preparation for work that suits their qualities and motives)
5. Mainly for their life course of life (shape your life in a good matter).

### **Do the students use a personal development plan?**

1. No/Yes. If yes, for which purpose is it mainly used?
2. Mainly for the study career within this school (progress of study)
3. Mainly for the transfer to continuing education
4. Mainly for development of a career (as a preparation for work that suits their qualities and motives)
5. Mainly for their life course of life (shape your life in a good matter).





## 7. Resources

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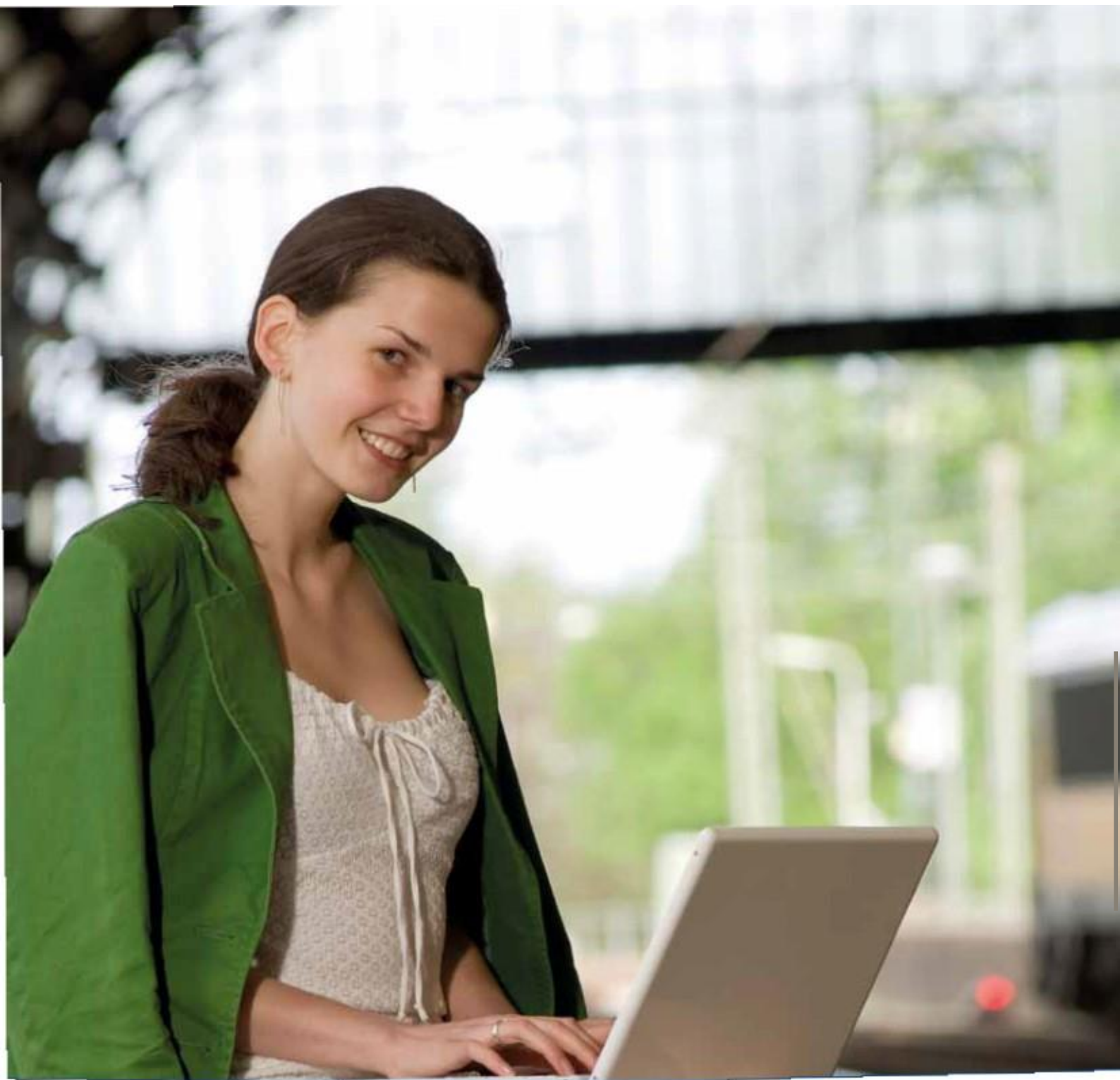
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