

Working in a Cité des métiers

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This guide is intended for the use of counsellors and other personnel working in the various Cités des métiers in the International network of Cités des métiers and cannot be used in another context without authorisation and acknowledgement of the support it has received. It only reflects the points of view of the Cités des métiers Network. The European Commission is not responsible for the information in it.

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Olivier Las Vergnas

*Delegate for professional integration, training and activity
at the Cité des sciences et de l'industrie.*

- It isn't so easy to understand where one treads when one first arrives to work in a Cité des métiers. Of course it is an information and counselling centre like many others, focused in this case on providing people professional orientation, integration and career development. But beyond this first definition, the Cité des métiers will confront you with many particularities: multiple-partner teams, interviews without an appointment, open work areas and a broad variety of workshops and events.

Indeed, all of the characteristics of how a "Cité des métiers" works have been conceived, chosen and tested to improve the quality and relevance of the public services. Centred on individuals' own concerns, the Cité des métiers provides information and counselling based more on people's questions and needs than administrative or statutory questions. In this way they acquire three specific abilities: (1) ability to provide longer-term information, beyond changes in or combinations of statutes (temporary help, forced part-time, student workers, multiple jobs, small entrepreneurs); (2) ability to respond to people in transition (student dropouts, end of fixed-term contracts, workers in insecure jobs, return to work); and (3) ability to help compare diverse solutions in a framework where the individual's aspirations and the economic constraints can be more calmly put in perspective.

The Cités des métiers are able to be highly responsive and flexible thanks to their multiple partner structure and their sharing of resources: they know how to create workshops or clubs that respond "on a custom basis" to specific needs for support, relying on the complementary nature of their teams' skills and their proximity to users.



Olivier Las Vergnas, concept founder, during the inauguration of the Cité des métiers of Rome, 3 June 2009, with its president Mario Monge.

The label is also an asset for the professionals at the Cités des métiers. It lets them participate in an exchange network for resources and practices: With the Cité des métiers you discover that it has developed expertises and a common way of working in multiple locations. Indeed, on entering a Cité des métiers, you find a particular spirit. Working in a Cité des métiers means a willingness to listen to people and receive the public according to the Cités des métiers Charter, which requires a high degree of availability. Nothing is harder. The questions we are asked are complex and often the path to follow strays from the beaten track and requires retraining, further development and even mediation.

The strength of a Cité des métiers lies in the joint work and availability of the professionals gathered in this unique setting. You will quickly see how sharing resources, which lets us form multidisciplinary teams, is a lever to assist transitions to employment and helps improve the security of career paths.

Another common point of Cités des métiers is that people who work in one have a great sense of being useful, of working first and foremost directly on behalf of the public. In addition to this sentiment, we hope you will quickly feel like a stakeholder in a network that extends beyond the place that welcomes you. The goal of this employee handbook is to remind you of our values and principles so they can serve as points of reference.

Welcome to the Cités des métiers network •

History of a network

• • • • • The beginning

A destiny linked to the Cité des sciences et de l'industrie



- The Cité des métiers concept was born in Paris in 1993. The objective was to create an information and counselling area for working life and training. A purpose closely related to that of the Cité des sciences et de l'industrie: "Give everyone access to the advances in science, techniques and industrial know-how." Such a mission definition leads to a responsibility to provide information about changes in professions, trades and work. Tying pragmatic service and cultural, scientific and technical action with orientation and integration at any age is an effective way to interest a majority of people and help develop lifelong learning •

Services for everyone

- From the beginning, the idea was simple: identify people's concerns and create an open setting completely consistent with future users' inquiries. This involved creating a process where individuals would look for information on their own and talk about their concerns. In response, the Cité des métiers should offer the types of services that reflect everyone's questions and worries. The user would control the different steps in his information search. Consequently, a framework had to be created that differed from orientation in educational settings or a traditional local employment agency.

Four desks (upon opening in 1993), and then five, were established, organised by the competent bodies: CIO Média-com, ANPE (today the Employment Centre), AFPA, academic delegations for continuing education, CNED, CNAM, CLIP, Créteil CIBC, CESI, Paris DAVA, Paris Management Boutique and CIME, an association specialised in business creation.

Organised around these five desks, the Cité des métiers de La Villette in Paris offers a unique 600 sq.m. locale designed to listen and respond to all concerns. It offers users a set of interconnected resources, without a grill for speaking through at counters, nor any social control, nor an established queue. The Cité des métiers is a living system, in symbiosis with its environment and the different professional integration, orientation and career development networks. Its level of integration for services, publics and partners still shows today the concept's innovative character. With 5 million users over the first 16 years, the Cité des métiers de la Villette has proven its worth as a place for listening, counselling and informing the public with respect to professional orientation, integration and career development.



It constitutes a reference in the area. In line with the tradition of continuing education, the Cité des métiers offers individuals the means to build and/or implement their career objectives by encouraging their independence •

• • • • • A network is born

- In 1999, the Cités des métiers in Belfort, Côtes d'Armor and Nimes opened their doors, displaying the label of the Cité des sciences et de l'industrie. The next year two Città dei Mestieri e delle professionni opened on the same model in Milan and Genoa, Italy. Since then, the Cités des métiers network has continued to develop in increasingly diversified territories in terms of urbanisation, regional size and distance: major cities plus rural areas, regions and urban areas. After Europe, the network expanded to Latin America and more recently Canada and Mauritius.

In 10 years, a galaxy was created, comprised currently of 26 Cités des métiers opened and one proposed in eight countries: France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Switzerland, Chile, Republic of Mauritius and Canada. Some have even developed partner centres to better cover their territory. They can be recognised by their common logo comprised of two red squares: the upper square bears the Cité des métiers' name in the country's language and the lower square the name of the geographic area concerned with, if appropriate, the note "in the planning stage" or "provisional" •

• • • • • A label is created

- The Cité des métiers label was created at the request of the first Cités des métiers, which developed based on the model of the Cité des métiers de la Villette. To receive the label, the project leader for your Cité had to present a file in front of a labelling committee presided by the Cité des sciences et de l'industrie and comprised of directors of French and foreign Cités des métiers and, if appropriate, key outside personalities •



A label that has also evolved to do a better job of taking into account the reality of the territories that can be labelled

- In order to do a better job of taking into account the diversity of the territories and provide continuity of service, the Cité des métiers concept resulted in different variations.

La Cité des métiers: the term designates the physical space, but also the area where services are offered in the labelled geographic area. Thus a Cité des métiers can include several “sites” or “associated centres”.

The site: the term site is used when the centres governed by the same body are identical and respect all of the label's criteria, offering everyone the services of a standard Cité des métiers.

The partner centre: the term associated centre is used when the centre only offers part of the services of the parent Cité des métiers. The partner centre is not necessarily a dedicated locale. It can be located in a structure that, in addition to its usual services, is organised into Cité des métiers outlets.

The “associated centre” only offers a more or less comprehensive portion of the parent Cité des métiers' services.

The Réseau des métiers: the réseau des métiers concept is a version of the Cité des métiers concept adapted to low density rural areas. Established in scattered small urban centres, the network consists of centres operating based on the Cité des métiers charter principles, but with flexible business hours and one or two versatile counsellors. These centres' premises are smaller than 100 sq.m. and depend on a central governing body that coordinates and organises the sharing •

**Committing to the label means
committing to a continuous improvement process**

Two levels of labelling:

- The label is generally delivered in the form of a project label when the future Cité des métiers is in the project stage and then as an operating label when the future Cité des métiers is ready to fully open to the public. In some cases, the project label may be issued with an authorisation to open provisionally, before the facility improvements are completed or all of the functionalities are operational.

The project label indicates membership in the network as soon as the project is established and lets the sponsors move forward in building partnerships and negotiating resources.

The following situations are considered as provisional situations: the gradual opening of centres and the organisation of on duty activities to run full-scale tests and/or to gradually ramp up the activity.

The operational label certifies the existing system's compliance and the quality of the services provided •

A two-step label:

- The label is always issued in two steps. The initial issuance of the label (project or operational) entails a second presentation before the labelling committee to confirm its granting, either at the end of the provisional period or one year after the public opening.

Once confirmed, other than exceptional cases, the label is then extended by tacit renewal based on an annual self-assessment report. If necessary, the label can be revoked when it appears that the space no longer corresponds to the criteria that justified its issuance.

To keep the label, sticking to the aims isn't enough. One also has to pay attention to the best means of achieving the objectives •

• • • • • All the same, but all different



- Building a Cité des métiers involves bringing together the participants in a territory who share universal values and federating them around a concrete project to pool their resources (reception, counselling and relevant tools) in order to give everyone the desire and means to choose his work. Each Cité des métiers offers a unique space that groups the partners based on a joint assessment to meet inhabitants' needs as closely as possible •

Different territories have adopted and adapted the concept:

- Even if all Cités des métiers are designed on the same model and respect the same charter, they present specific characteristics that reflect the characteristics of the territory where they are established. Since the services offered are developed based on inhabitants' real concerns and not based on such or such institutional or political division, the formulation of these concerns leads to a variable number of counselling desks with names adapted based on the territory's social-economic characteristics.



A Cité des métiers is promoted and conceived by local partners who organise based on the local context. Project sponsors are most often public bodies like the area's public authorities. However, for some Cités des métiers, a Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Chamber of Agriculture, Chamber of Trades and Small-scale Industry, or a training organisation sponsored the project. Following the example of the Cité des métiers de la Villette, which was born in a museum, some Cités des métiers are integrated in larger bodies with a scientific or cultural mission or even involved in employment and integration questions. Sometimes, the project falls within the scope of a national policy as in Mauritius •



USERS' OPINIONS...

Estelle, 29 years old

"My first visit to the Cité des métiers was three years ago. At the time, I was looking for a job and I came almost every day. Today, I came to consult the technical documentation on the computer consulting profession because at present I am going to job interviews. In fact, I am reviewing the profession so I will be ready for the interviews... What do I like here? ... the calm and the setting. It is fairly easy to get to the counselling centres and someone is always available, even for a simple question... Yes, I am really satisfied..."

**Manon, 17 years old
(came with her mother)**

"This is my first visit to the Cité des métiers. I am in the sixth form and this year I have to submit my choice of university. It is quite stressful. Right now, I really need help to orient myself. I have already taken the tests at the CIO and we have discussed the studies, but it was my mother that finally pushed me to come here. Last year it was for my brother, so my mom already knew the place..."
"It's good we came today in spite of the public transport strike... since there are fewer people, the counselor gave us a lot of her time. What stands out for now? Well... something around cultural management... finally, I realise that I need to get a bit more information about the professions before I choose a faculty!"
"And it's far from over..." adds the mother, a bit fatalistic... "orienting children is a major moment of solitude for us parents."

Virginia, 32 years old

"This is my second visit to the Cité des métiers. The first time was yesterday. The management boutique advised me to come here for my project to create a business. I was able to easily meet specialised counselors both yesterday and today. Here, it is calm and friendly; it gives one a desire to spend some time... I have found lots of interesting documents, both on the market, the sector and the legal and regulatory aspects. Yes, it is an address to keep in mind..."



INTERVIEW



Bernadette Thomas - *in charge of the Cité des métiers Label*

<http://www.reseaucitesdesmetiers.com>

My job is to administer the Cité des métiers label and develop the concept in France and internationally. If I had to summarise it in three words, I would say I am in a way the "Chancellor" for the Label. But, in my mind, this is not simplistic because the mission is indeed larger in reality. It admittedly requires thoroughness, but especially an open mind and a high degree of availability. As in any system, one has to balance the attention paid to invariables, which are used to ensure faithful reproduction, and the openness that enables the essential long-term development that guarantees the Label's continuity. Adjustments need to be found between a charter's guiding character and the need to stay in contact with the changes in the environment and institutional contexts. In addition to organising Labelling committees, I am also in charge of supporting project managers before the labelling and helping them during the operational phase.

On a daily basis, I have to find multiple times in my agenda for visits, support, training, organisation and coordination while remaining available for everyone. Constantly listening to everyone's needs and what is going on with them is essential to make the connection. Since the Cité des sciences owns the label, I am based at the Cité des métiers of Paris and it is from here that the projects I coordinate for the network are put together and managed. It serves as a laboratory, keeping watch and maintaining our ability to innovate, a kind of research/action to test and try out new offers and assess their relevance for users and their compatibility with the label. One of the network's advantages is to appropriate good practices and to be enriched by the shared work. I am very attached to encouraging exchanges and developing sharing. Thanks to the European Commission's support, we were able to give a veritable transnational scope to sharing, to share tools and thereby to build a common identity step-by-step. Each Winter School is a high-point in the network's life, a time to revitalise the teams that exert their influence over the rest of the year. Because they are an opportunity to get together, they let people get acquainted, thereby creating a real network to exchange professional knowledge based on transnational experience. The job is anything but routine and one has to constantly be everywhere at once while making sure one isn't overwhelmed. In reality, the job sometimes overflows into my personal life... but hey! That's how it is when one is passionate about one's job.

• • • • • The force of a network



• The network was structured over time. It is first of all a story of men and women who bet on cooperation rather than competition. In 2001, the directors of the Cités des métiers wanted to regroup by creating an international association.

All of the labelled Cités des métiers belong to the association and pay an annual membership fee. Like any association, the Cité des métiers Network Association (ARCDM) has its own statutes, office and general member meetings. It is guided by the concern to produce shared tools and to promote the largest possible representation of its members... Consequently, every Cité is expected to participate in the network life by carrying out certain missions by delegation. ARCDM strives to be a living space. In addition to working with new members, other initiatives were created to strengthen the exchanges of practices and to share everyone's contributions. The Winter School is a perfect example of this. The European projects facilitate the construction of a common identity that favours the development of exchanges of practices, the transfer of methods and the co-construction of shared tools. In this sense, ARCDM is as much a social testing laboratory as an innovation showcase •

THE NETWORK'S CONTRIBUTIONS, AS SEEN BY:



Sergio Bollani - *manager of the Cité des métiers in Milan (Italy)*

Eight years after the Cité des métiers Network was formed, of which the Cité des métiers of Milan was a founding member, the assessment of its activities can only be positive: the network has expanded and many transnational projects were created thanks to the collaboration between the different Cités des métiers and the financial partners, including in particular the European Social Fund. The first "Winter School" was held in Milan in December 2006. Since then, it has become an annual gathering that lets the different Cité des métiers operators come together, exchange experiences and train.

The association is now more visible in its relations with the European Union, which helps improve the Cités des métiers' visibility and therefore their relations with local and national institutions. The AMPLI transnational project has enabled and still enables the participating Cités des métiers (the French ones and those from other countries) to enrich their knowledge and skills through training and collaboration activities and exchanges of good practices. The arrival of new Cités des métiers in the Network will always facilitate, through the contribution of new ideas and new energies, the realisation of the objectives that were established when the association was created in 2001.

• • • • • Tomorrow's Cité des métiers



• With the widespread access to virtual information, the Cité des métiers concept is still very relevant: the multiplicity of sources of information has increased the needs for counselling and assistance to have a clear understanding of opportunities. If the Cité des métiers concept is so durable, it is because the offer of counselling and interactive meetings constitutes its real added value and the Cités des métiers have managed to adapt and develop their services to continue to meet users' needs. It is by responding with tailor-made solutions to users' new needs for resources and counselling, including by adapting to the technological evolutions, that the Cités des métiers continue to demonstrate their relevance.

If the Internet has shaken up practices, it has also given birth to a new generation of tools that the Cités have successfully appropriated to optimise their line of services, like the virtual Cité des métiers (<http://enligne.citedesmetiers.org>). Tomorrow's Cité des métiers will have to combine a line of online services (social networks, virtual Cité des métiers, paperless services on Proxima mobile, etc.) with continuously renewed one-on-one services and initiatives encouraging both autonomy and the creation of social relations. Increasingly, in order to strengthen their effectiveness and to combat individuals' isolation, the Cités des métiers will be called on to become places for collective self-training and socialisation. Preoccupied by the relevance of the services they provide their publics, the Cités des métiers are constantly on the watch concerning questions of fairness and quality •

GETTING INVOLVED IN THE NETWORK LIFE



Laurent Mauroy - *Director of the Saint-Quentinois Cité des métiers (02)*

The Saint-Quentinois Cité des métiers, in Picardie, participates as much as possible since it joined the network in conceiving and developing cross-functional tools: we believe these tools are essential to support Cités des métiers' consistency as they expand in Europe and internationally.

In effect:

- sharing experiences and "best practices"
 - harmonising our counsellors' practices
 - helping new managers in their assignment
 - also helping to build new Cités
 - sharing network participants' information and events, and
 - ensuring assessment approaches and quality policies are consistent
- requires, we believe, entering a new phase in the network's life where we rely on common tools and information.

It was in this capacity that we were able to participate in preparing a shared approach in terms of quality of services, preparing guides for counsellors and managers, and coordinating the creation of a collaborative area based on our own management of such a tool in our organisation. By participating in these actions, we also benefited from many lessons on the practices of our colleagues, other regions and other countries in order to continually innovate and improve the relevance of our actions vis-à-vis the public.

Thus our involvement focussed on the win-win relationship of participants in a network worthy of the name, where the limits on formalism reduce the constraints: make your contribution (ideas, feedback, proposals, co-leadership of think tanks, etc.) and benefit from others' feedback. This relationship is what gives credibility to the Cité des métiers network's operation and we hope that it will continue to work to that end.

It is also in this frame of mind that we are building our next action plans. For example, we are thinking about how to design a local Web TV or simply a Web-Video report on local jobs, training, orientation assistance and business creation opportunities, based on a formula that could easily be adopted by other Cités. At this level, the skills, experience and opportunities that the Cité des métiers of Paris has to sponsor and access funding for innovative projects constitutes a key support.

As a relatively young member in the network (we opened in October 2008), we approach the network as follows: our humble contribution is compensated by feedback that helps structure our practices in return.

Cité des métiers, a concept, a frame of mind

If a Cité des métiers is primarily defined by its objectives, guided by a charter that also specifies the required resources, it primarily involves, for everyone who works in it, sharing a frame of mind and a different way of working in a multi-partner and multicultural setting.

• • • • • Missions of a Cité des métiers



• A Cité des métiers is a counselling and resources area for the public, which is looking for guidance, orientation and information about professions and all aspects of the working life. In a changing context where the forms of work and employment contracts continually change, such an area is more than ever useful and necessary to help users do a better job of managing their professional transitions, whatever they are, and be active participants in their working life. In order to offer users the means to develop and realise their professional objectives and support them in their choices, your Cité des métiers relies everyday on you and the alliance of skills and resources provided by the partners with complementary goals that you represent. A Cité des métiers is based on combining everyone's efforts to be present everyday to receive, inform and help the public develop action strategies.

This service is provided based on three methods:

- interviews with professionals from institutions specialised in the areas of orientation and working life
- self-service documentation about employment, professions, training programmes and business creation
- workshops, information days, seminars and meetings organised by all partners or co-produced with outside partners

To be ready to act in all areas of work and receive all publics irrespective of status, age, level of education or qualification, or membership in an occupational or geographic category, as stipulated by the Cité des métiers charter, the alliance of partners is essential. In order to offer relevant activities in line with current events assumes a sufficiently comprehensive multi-partner team as well as several occasional partnerships. The density, richness and renewal of these partnerships form the quality of each Cité des métiers •

• • • • • The charter, in brief



- **The area works in a spirit of public service.** It is open to everyone free of charge. Counsellors receive people without appointment or registration and provide counselling and as comprehensive information as possible, independent of any selective promotion on behalf of their own institution.

- **Services are centred on the user's needs** so he can explore his issues, reacquire a sense of purpose and reappropriate an action strategy at his pace and in complete independence. In a Cité des métiers area, one should be able to come and return at different stages of maturity in his professional choices to inquire about the existing systems, choose a service based on full knowledge of the facts and rebound towards other services. The services offered by a Cité des métiers take place before the institutions specialised in the work area get involved. They point the user to the services of these organizations.

- **The setting is based on multiple points of view and approaches.** It operates on the principle of cooperation and the confrontation of points of view to provide depth to the user's questioning. To work, this assumes counsellors constantly strive to share their knowledge and skills.

- **A Cité des métiers is an area of integrated offers** where counselling and resources interact. The variety and range of documentation are the essential conditions so the public can form its own opinion, discover the information and open up new paths of orientation, integration and training.

- **A public interview area founded on the quality of listening and advice:** Interviews without an appointment carried out in the heart of the Cité des métiers area constitute one of the offer's key components. The counsellor plays an important role, in interaction with the resources, which encourages learning based on alternating between independent research in the resources area and a guided approach in the counselling area. This condition is the prerequisite for creating autonomous spaces for all users, far removed from handholding.

- **More generally, the quality of the reception and the consideration given to everyone's specific characteristics and preoccupations** is decisive. Everyone contributes to this quality through their work, from reception agents to event organisers, counsellors, information officers, project leaders and managers.

• • • • • The three key points of working in a Cité des métiers

Services for everyone



• A Cité des métiers is a network of people exercising complementary functions.

Two types of function are necessary: those carried out directly with the public and those related to the coordination and organization of activities. On the one side are the counsellors who receive people in interviews and the reception agents who are in daily contact with the public, receiving users and directing them towards the counsellors and documentary resources in the self-documentation area. On the other side are the so-called "back-office" personnel who fulfil logistics functions (administration, communication, documentation, events organisation, etc.) or who are in charge of developing partnerships.

In reality, the frontier is not so well defined because counsellors' assignment includes conducting workshops and, conversely, "back-office" personnel can receive visiting groups. Everyone working in a Cité des métiers must be sufficiently knowledgeable of the structure and everyone's functions so they can provide the best response to the public.

• A horizontal organisation that leaves room for individual initiative can be found at all functional, organisational or strategic levels based on the projects or objectives: counsellors are grouped cross-functionally by Purpose and people by project so everyone can identify new needs, propose a project and, if necessary, coordinate the group-project based on his expertise and his interest.

• A more functional than hierarchical organisation: if a director represents each Cité des métiers, most of the time this person does not have direct line authority over the people working in the Cité des métiers since their home institutions delegate this authority to the director. For his part, the director of a Cité des métiers has to report on his activity to the strategic committee, Board of Directors or other ad hoc governance body constituted by the partners.

• Rewarding interdependence: this network operation means that everyone is important in the system and must be aware of his interdependence. Success is never due to a single person or subgroup, but to the fact that a Cité des métiers is a coherent and cohesive group that works as one.

An innovative way to work together:

- Interpersonal relationships are at the heart of the profession when one works in the multi-partner setting of a Cité des métiers.

Internally, a special, friendly and confident relationship is established with the public. It differs from other reception settings since the reception is personalised, but anonymity and open access remain the rule. The type of relationship in a Cité des métiers team is also special: respect for the diversity of origins, opening up through respect for everyone's characteristics and seeking out collaborations to enrich one's way of working. All of you are called on to participate in variable size workgroups based on the projects and timing, to constantly evolve and to harness all of your intelligence to work together to find the best solutions and the best practices.

Outside, the relationship is a key element in working together. This involves adjusting to people's needs while taking into account their constraints. Many partnerships are sought to put together events and produce activities.

With the circle of close partnerships formed by the counsellors' home institutions, it is crucial that the exchanges can take place in both directions. The mutual enrichment is optimised if people maintain contact with their home institution •

Sharing and mutual aid

- Working in a multi-partner setting assumes daily cooperative efforts to share one's tools and resources, but also constitutes an opportunity to develop and test innovative and effective action methods. Sharing constitutes the added value of grouping in a Cité des métiers: sharing of documentary resources, but also the methodologies and good practices that one can more easily identify and appropriate with the help of those that implemented them first. Sharing doesn't stop at the boundaries of your Cité des métiers. All Cités des métiers are interconnected and work within a vast international network, which lets them compare, assess, question and consolidate their practices and evolve in spite of the differences towards a common culture, beyond the national borders or language barriers.



Every year during the Winter School, the Cités des métiers are invited to present their innovations and best practices to the entire network. The opportunities to register in European or other projects where many Cités des métiers will work together also constitute a real asset for the network. Over time, through these types of actions, the network gets equipped with tools like the Intranet or the new collaborative platform and the means to facilitate exchanges and sharing.

Mutual aid and interdependence. Never having to face a problem alone, being able to solicit help, expertise or support, experiencing the pleasure of learning everyday, sharing your knowledge with others and co-developing new solutions together, all of that is an integral part of the lifestyle of the people and the structures. Mutual aid becomes a reality once the label is received: every new Cité des métiers that joins the network benefits from “training” with one or more experienced Cités des métiers and finds a setting where it can explain its problems without being judged, compare its experience and discuss with others to find its way. All of the collective richness is the work of each of you. It grows on the reciprocal exchanges of knowledge, more or less formal, but in any case quite real •

SHARING DOCUMENTARY RESOURCES



Anne-Sophie Berche - *Cité des métiers in Nord-Franche Comté, coordinator of the “information officers” group in the 2009 AMPLI project*

After the first meeting at the Cité des métiers of Paris in 2007, the information officers (a key position in a Cité des métiers) asked to meet regularly in order to exchange their practices and tools. Consequently, in the 2009 ESF AMPLI project, a working theme was dedicated to sharing between information officers. A meeting organised in Belfort on 4 and 5 May 2009, which brought together information officers from the Cités des métiers in Nanterre, Limoges, Paris, Guadeloupe, Côte D’Armor, Geneva, Marseille, La Rochelle, Haute-Normandie and Montbéliard, revealed a strong desire to exchange and share and served as the catalyst to launch a group process. Consequently, a “Google list” discussion list was created to communicate quickly and informally. It is managed by the Geneva Cité des métiers and used regularly by the information officers. During the meeting in Barcelona in September 2009, the assessment of the commitments taken in Belfort was very positive. Each Cité posted on the network site its classification plan, its documentary holdings, its bibliography

and the actions carried out during the employment week for people with disabilities. A critical database of resources (paper and multimedia) essential to a Cité des métiers was developed based on the work of groups at the September and December meetings in Barcelona. This Excel format database is organised by Purpose (find a job, learn about professions, find a training course, change your job, create a business). It contains precise references to resources (ISSN, ISDN), their price and information officers' opinion. This database, which has to be continually updated, will be onlined on the collaborative platform and will constitute a documentary reference for future Cités des métiers. If its national contents can't be used by Cités des métiers outside France, the methodology, on the other hand, can be used by the Cités des métiers in Italy and Spain.

THE MULTI-PARTNERSHIP AS SEEN BY...



Bertrand Creusy - DMIFE Director and manager of the Cité des métiers of Nord Franche Comté www.mife90.org

Our Cité des métiers is an integral part of the Maison de l'Information sur la Formation et l'Emploi (Home of Information on Training and Employment) created in 1999 at the initiative of the City of Belfort and the French Departmental Council. Spanning two sites, Belfort and Montbéliard, with a single label (Cité des métiers of Nord Franche-Comté) for both, we have a genuine showcase tool that lets us expand our services thanks to the bridges established between the centres for the reception, information and orientation function and the support actions offered by the MIFE. The Cité des métiers is truly a unifying force since we have 102 partners for all of the services we offer our public. Above all, we seek complementarities and synergies. This ranges from sharing documentation resources to major stakes like the orientation education actions we conduct with the assistance of France's National Education. This is so true that at present we are experiencing a critical size phenomenon, with partners that come to us because they aren't large enough... In any case, thanks to this major effort to mobilise and coordinate services, our publics are better oriented and, in particular, less bounced around...

The Cité des métiers, territories and networks

If a Cité des métiers is primarily defined by its objectives, guided by a charter that also specifies the required resources, it primarily involves, for everyone who works in it, sharing a frame of mind and a different way of working in a multi-partner and multicultural setting.

• • • • • Coordinated action, shared assessment

- The purpose of a Cité des métiers is to simplify and optimise the public's various approaches by offering them a personalized and coordinated service thanks to the presence under one roof of partners with diverse backgrounds: professionals that work together and apply their expertise on behalf of users. And yet the Cité des métiers' purpose is not to be seen as hegemonic in a territory and vis-à-vis its partners because alone it cannot meet all forms of needs expressed across a territory.

If the Cité des métiers' role is not to take the place of the institutions that work towards other purposes, which it embraces, its action in the initial stages helps improve the legibility of the services offered in a territory. It is above all a place where one circulates freely and acquires the habit of getting informed ahead of time in order to better organize future approaches to one's working life. The neutrality of the information lets the user decide in complete clarity whether it is useful for him or not to have his work experience accredited or his skills assessed at a given time in a given situation. A user who, based on the information received, can leave with all the information he needs to undertake the next step.

Because it aims to be federating, the Cité des métiers helps, along with its partners, develop better knowledge of the training, employment and other services offered and, in particular, to do a better job of identifying and mobilising the resources of the businesses and organisations within its territory.

Because a Cité des métiers is a living and open setting, it makes its premises and its resources (documentation, cyberbase and events) available to the institutions, local services, federations and companies in its territory, whether or not they are partners of the Cité des métiers.



Consequently, in order to make the offer of services visible and identifiable and to promote them more effectively to users, it is essential to organize visits of your Cité des métiers, to go out and meet current and potential partners, to develop partnership relations in the context of socially responsible actions and to succeed in getting clear commitments from all players working for employment and qualifications, with an emphasis on reciprocity and consistent with everyone's values and free will.

**That's the entire objective of a Cité des métiers:
work for one's territory, in all of its systems •**

THE TERRITORY PROCESS, AS SEEN BY



Catherine Gavériaux - Director of the *Vermandois Maison de l'Emploi (Job Centre)*, associated centre of the *Cité des métiers du Saint-Quentinois*. www.maisonemploivermandois.fr

Before we created the Job Centre in 2002, I wanted a Cité des métiers label but it proved impossible. So when the Saint Quentin Job Centre envisaged becoming a Cité des métiers, we wanted to work together so the rural territory could be a stakeholder in the project and we then became an Associated Centre.

The interest of this project is the interconnection between our teams in spite of the 25 km between us. We share events and personnel resources while cultivating our differences. It is a form of cooperation that helps develop a common culture...

As manager, I have to take the characteristics of my labour market area into account. I manage a Cité des métiers associated Centre with a rural makeup that has specific needs, both for the young people and adults. Moreover, we develop our offer of services based on the public's needs, in relation of course to developments in the territory.

Our considerations in a rural setting on how to implement events are not disconnected from what happens close to us: at present in the Nord Pas de Calais region, there is the major project to build the high-capacity Seine Northern Europe canal. This is an opportunity for us to launch a major review of the navigable waterway professions such as the canal digging trades, canal operating trades, etc.

And here we are working together, Associated Centre and Cité des métiers, and we are tackling the theme together even if we have different input data. The Cité des métiers is a veritable lever for accessing information about the professions and training, and a presence for everyone.

Cités des métiers around the world

If the concept today continues to endure and if it has demonstrated its flexibility, the life of a Cité des métiers is subject to uncertainties that it is sometimes hard to combat. Thus since the network was created, some Cités des métiers have disappeared or become inactive, while others have been reconstituted at a different scale in a territory. Many have been born, while others are still in the project development phase. Every year, participants from around the world visit the Cités des métiers. But it is you who, on a daily basis, are the best ambassadors for the Cités des métiers with the public.



POINT OF VIEW OF AN ELECTED OFFICIAL



Sophie Donzel, - *Deputy Mayor of Nanterre in charge of economic development, President of the Cité des métiers of Nanterre, Deputy President of the Cités des Métiers Network for shared projects.*

The Cité des métiers of Nanterre was born out of the determination of elected officials to offer Nanterre residents a service that didn't yet exist in the city: offer a place dedicated to people's career path where they could tackle their questions together without any registration prerequisite, without an appointment and close to quality counsellors. Four years after opening, the gamble has paid off: there are ever more users who find here what they couldn't find elsewhere.

But whatever its history and its partners, a Cité does a better job of meeting people's needs if it enriches its practices and continually renews them. This is what the Cités des métiers Network enables. By carrying out common projects, especially in the European context, by organising shared events (International Mobility week, Employment – Handicap week), everyone's know-how is made available to everyone's benefit. This "network effect" is precious. First of all it benefits our users, but it also profits the teams: in my eyes, the Cités should also be a resource locale for the people that run them, especially by enabling them to develop their skills.

Cités des métiers around the world

