

Spain: Career talks at Colegio Legamar

Offering secondary-school students opportunities to examine and explore the relationship between education and employment through career talks.

[Analysis of international longitudinal datasets](#) identifies Career Talks, by guest speakers from the world of work, as a career guidance activity that is commonly linked to better employment outcomes for young people.

[Colegio Legamar](#) in Madrid, Spain is a private, non-denominational educational institution that covers early childhood, primary, lower and upper secondary educational stages (ages 1-18). Since 2017, Ms. Fuencisla Gómez, a teacher and guidance counsellor at Colegio Legamar, has organized and hosted monthly sessions of career talks for students between ages 15-18, highlighting occupations related to academic subjects studied within the Spanish Baccalaureate, an to upper secondary academic qualification. For example, the designated subject one month might be Medicine, followed by Information Technology the next, and followed by Law and Business Administration the month after.

Each session lasts for an hour and a half (Fridays between 3:30pm – 5:00pm), and features three volunteer professionals. Each volunteer is given 15 minutes to speak about their occupation. After all volunteers have spoken, they engage in a 45-minute Q&A discussion with the students.

The volunteers are selected mostly (and preferably) from the school's alumni network of former students, but may also be drawn from other networks including relatives of the students. When possible, Ms. Gómez strongly prefers to book volunteers who defy gender stereotypes in occupational choice. This include female engineers, architects, and police officers, as well as male early childhood teachers, nurses, pharmacists, and tour guides. In addition, Ms. Gómez tries to ensure that volunteers come from different higher education or vocational institutions. This allows students to be exposed to, and make comparisons between, the offerings of different institutions, including their operations, the type of scholarships they offer, and the agreements they have with companies.

At the end of each session, the students complete an assessment survey, which asks them to provide their reflections on the talks, as well as to add suggestions for future talks. The career talks are advertised three weeks in advance on the school's bulletin board as well as the school's social media channels, and students are encouraged to register online for them. Student attendance to the talks is voluntary.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Colegio Legamar began delivering career talks virtually via Microsoft Teams. They have also used Microsoft Teams to have speakers from other countries join the talks as well.

Readers may also be interested in viewing Ivan Diego Rodríguez's [presentation](#) at the 2021 OECD Disrupted Futures conference, which provides a guide for schools wishing to establish alumni networks.