DE'FEAT Card Sort – Brief User Guide

DE'FEAT – Cards Sort (© S. Rochat, 2021)
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Purpose	Failure refers to the unsuccessful outcome of an undertaking, a lack of success, or a temporary setback (Académie française, 2019). It can be a source of learning, provided it is analyzed objectively and constructively.
Background	DE'FEAT is based on Ford and Smith's (2020) model of optimal functioning, which distinguishes four broad categories of factors involved in performance and adaptation: motivation, skills, biological functioning, and context. The cards sort's eight domains provide a practical operationalization of these categories.
Rationale	DE'FEAT aims to support the career counseling process by helping participants to: • Develop a systemic perspective by identifying the internal and external factors that contributed to a failure. • Analyze how controllable these factors are in order to develop strategies to prevent them from recurring in the future. These factors can also be explored using an inventory, but sorting cards encourages dialogue, collaboration, and reflection rather than an assessment-oriented approach.
Process	With reference to the 5As model of career counseling, DE'FEAT is particularly relevant to two phases: • Accompanying planning: identifying risk factors that may hinder the implementation of the plan. • Accompanying action: developing strategies to overcome or work around these factors.
Content	DE'FEAT contains 56 cards, each describing a risk factor for the project. 28 cards refer to external risk factors and 28 refer to internal risk factors. The cards are organized into eight domains, each described by seven cards: • External factors: social, material, sociocultural, and natural context. • Internal factors: biological functioning, motivation, skills, and traits.
Administration	1. Invite the participant to sort the cards according to the extent to which each factor contributed to the failure (or could pose a future risk). 2. Rank the selected factors according to how controllable the participant perceives them to be. 3. Explore together the actual room for maneuver and concrete strategies for counteracting these factors on a future occasion.
Interpretation	The letters and pictograms on each card can help identify patterns among the factors: EXT = external; INT = internal; = social; = material; = institutional; = natural; = biological; = motivational; = skills based; = traits.
Further Reading	• Mapping career counseling interventions (Chapter 9.5). • Les 5As du conseil en orientation (Chapters 5.1 and 5.2).
References	Ford, M. E., & Smith, P. R. (2020). *Motivating self and others.* University Press.