WASTE PICKER: A PROFESSIONAL OF THE 21st CENTURY

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A PROFESSIONAL

A person with the knowledge, abilities, skills, traditions, values and tools to systematically provide a good or service relevant to society.
COMPONENTS OF THE PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

1. The name
2. The problem that it solves: the good or service provided
3. The space or scope of action
4. The tools
5. The method
6. The organization
7. The symbolic universe
8. The ethic universe
9. Public opinion
1. THE NAME

It is said that naming is a “Gods’ task.” The name positions and provides identity within diversity. The name of a profession or work seeks to synthesize a sense of the task and the problem it solves. In recent years, we know new names for new professions.

In a globalized world, the names of the profession are a significant problem.

The name must be understandable internationally and it should also inspire respect.
NAMES

- Reciclador (Grassroots recycler)
  - Catador
  - Cartonero
  - Ganchero
    - Ciruja
- Recuperadores urbanos
  - Recolectores
  - Waste pickers
2. THE PROBLEM IT SOLVES: THE GOOD OR SERVICE PROVIDED BY THE PROFESSION

Every profession solves or responds to a society problem by providing a good or service.

The importance and value of a profession depends on the public relevance that society attributes to the good or service provided.
THE GOOD OR SERVICE OF RECYCLING

Income to overcome exclusion and unemployment

Caring for and sustainability of the urban environment
Caring

When we love, we care; and when we care, we love (...) caring is the key category of the new paradigm of civilization that is struggling to emerge all over the world...

Caring serves both to prevent future damage and to repair past damage...

Leonardo Boff
3. THE SPACE OR SCOPE OF ACTION AND POWER

Every profession or work has a scope of action, a physical or institutional space. And within that space the professional or worker may legitimately deploy a set of decisions and actions that are associated and recognized to their role.
THE SPACE OF THE WASTE PICKER

The street and the bag -------------------------- Industrial Recycling Center
4. THE TOOLS

Industrial kit:

Hand-cart ------------------------ warehouses
machines
negotiation, lobby
5. THE METHOD

Collects
for himself  ------------------------    process
gather
transform
6. ORGANIZATION

• Not being organized is one of the biggest poverty indicators
• The first step out of poverty is organization
• Organizing allows us to become social actors because through it we can engage in stable transactions, build convergence of interests and access social protection
WASTE PICKING AND ORGANIZATIONS

- Alone
- Pre-coop.
- Regional
- National
- International

- Family
- Cooperative
- Regional
- National
- International
7. SYMBOLIC UNIVERSE

• Every profession or job will develop, over time, a set of languages, signs and symbols that involve or summon certain actions or decisions.
7. SYMBOLS AND WASTE PICKING

Imagined
Stigmatized --------------------

Profession recognized by its added value
8. ETHIC UNIVERSE

Fight for
Recognition------------------  Influence
and Dignity

on public policy,
democracy
and human rights
9. PUBLIC OPINION

• The nature and social identity of a profession is built through the set of judgments, opinions and values expressed both by actors in the profession and outside observers. It is this set of private and public opinions what defines a profession or job. When both opinions match, the profession attains a high social profile.
WASTE PICKERS AND
OPINION

Homeless                                A professional
Dangerous ----------------------------- key to the
Useless                                 protection
Of the planet.
THE NEW SKILLS OF THE 21st CENTURY

- CARING
- SOLIDARITY
- COMPASSION

TRAITS ALREADY PRESENT IN THE WORLD OF WASTE PICKERS